



Chronotope, Dialogue, and Simulation: A New Perspective on Memet Baydur's *Kamyon*

Kronotop, Diyalog ve Simülasyon: Memet Baydur'un *Kamyon*'u Üzerine Yeni Bir Bakış

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Abstract

This article analyzes *Kamyon*, the two-act play by Memet Baydur in 1990, and interprets it within its basic structural features. *Kamyon* deals with the events that develop in the context of the relationships between the workers and the villagers after a cargo truck breaks down on a deserted road; the characters wait in an unresolved situation, and the cycles of waiting bear reflections of Türkiye's political and social transformations. Within this framework, first, the chronotope structure of the play and the performative, discursive and imaginative elements on which this structure is built, are discussed. Secondly, the dialogical interactions that are the carriers of the discursive content of the play are presented. The sections where dialogical interactions are concentrated and can be called 'play within the play' are specifically interpreted in terms of the general socio-cultural context of the play and the political contradictions that the characters are holders of. Since the general structure of the play exhibits simulative features, the roles of structural and content-based features in shaping the simulacra order were examined and their composition in the play in terms of the world of meaning was attempted to be understood. The primary conclusion reached by the research is that the play was established as a critical simulation, in the final analysis, it was shaped around a socio-political background centered on Türkiye after the eighties, and a *fin de siècle* theme. As a result, in this article, *Kamyon* is subjected to a text-based analysis and interpretation, and in this manner, the meaning of the play is attempted to be reconstructed for the audience.

Keywords: Memet Baydur, *Kamyon*, chronotope, dialogical interactions, simulation.

Öz

Bu makalede Memet Baydur'un 1990 senesinde kaleme aldığı *Kamyon* isimli iki bölümlük tiyatro oyunu çözümlenmekte ve temel yapısal özellikleri çerçevesinde yorumlanmaktadır. *Kamyon* oyununda bir yük kamyonunun ıssız bir yolda arızalanması sonucu kamyonunda çalışan kişiler ve köylüler arasındaki ilişkiler bağlamında gelişen olaylar konu edilmekte, karakterler çözümsüz bir durum içerisinde beklemekte ve bekleyiş döngüleri Türkiye'nin siyasal ve toplumsal dönüşümleri ile izdüşümler taşımaktadır. Bu çerçevede ilk olarak oyunun kronotop yapısı, bu yapının üzerine kurulduğu edimsel, söylemsel ve imgesel öğeler ele alınmış, ikinci olarak ise oyunun söylemsel içeriğinin taşıyıcısı olan diyalojik etkileşimler serimlenmiştir. Diyalojik etkileşimlerin yoğunlaştığı ve 'oyun içinde oyun' olarak adlandırılabilir bölümler oyunun genel sosyo-kültürel bağlamı ve karakterlerin taşıyıcısı oldukları siyasal çelişkiler bakımından özel olarak yorumlanmıştır. Oyunun genel yapısının simülatif özellikler göstermesi sebebiyle, yapısal ve içeriksel özelliklerin simülakra

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düzenini şekillendirmedeki rolleri incelenmiş ve oyunun anlam dünyası açısından konumu anlaşılmaya çalışılmıştır. Araştırmanın vardığı temel sonuç oyunun eleştirel bir simülasyon olarak kurulduğu, son tahlilde seksenli yıllar sonrası Türkiye'sini merkeze alan bir sosyo-politik arka plan ve *fin de siècle* (çağın kapanışı) teması etrafında şekillendiğidir. Sonuç olarak bu makalede *Kamyon* oyunu metin temelli bir analize ve yorumlamaya tabi tutulmaktadır ve bu yolla oyunun anlamı izleyiciler için yeniden inşa edilmeye çalışılmaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Memet Baydur, Kamyon, kronotop, diyalojik etkileşimler, simülasyon.

Introduction: The Subject and Scope

Memet Baydur invites researchers to interpret his works. Beyond being a rhetorical invitation, this stems from the semantic complexity of Baydur's texts drawing those who encounter them into their own reality while necessitating an interpretive effort. Baydur's characters, places, and the 'situations' around which the plays are shaped incorporate multi-perspectives that are determined outside the automatic perception of the audience as Yüksel (2013, p. 217) states, and this necessitates a hermeneutic approach to develop an in-depth understanding.¹

The subject of this article, *Kamyon*, is a play about the encounters of six characters in a deserted place. The event that brings the characters together is the breakdown of the cargo truck carrying four of the characters and chests, and the emergence of a 'situation' that causes a long wait. The play is structured in a single location and in a way that gives the impression of cyclicity in time. Throughout the play, characters with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds reveal their own social positions in their dialogues and become aware of their relationships with authority.

When the literature examining *Kamyon* is taken into consideration, it is seen that the play is interpreted by focusing on the change in the Turkish economy after 1980, the consumer culture, the alienating effect of the market economy on people migrating from villages to cities (Şener, 2011), criticisms on the socio-economic structure of Türkiye with relationships between characters indicating contradictions of identity and personality to class-based conflicts (Erol, 2013a), criticism of moral corruption motivated by greed for profit (Erol, 2013b), alienation and changes in the rhythms of daily life (Bozdoğan & Bozdoğan, 2022). These interpretations address different aspects of the play within a considerably common framework. Without negating the common themes of the literature indicated, this article is aiming to analyze *Kamyon* within an alternative theoretical framework and to reveal the different dimensions of the play in referred to the concepts of simulation, chronotope, and dialogical interactions.

Theoretical Propositions: On the Simulative Potential of the Theatre

Fink (2016, pp. 78-79) grounds the special 'world' of plays by pointing out the two-level structure, which consists of real and role-based activities. In phenomenological studies, the concept of 'world' is defined as lived experience between individual consciousness within linguistic, sensory, and mental phenomena (Fortier, 1997, p. 29). This kind of conceptualization of the 'world' indicates a transitive relationship between perception-play-reality in the context of theatre. In this regard, Fortier (1997, p. 31) summarizes the essence of phenomenological reading of theatre as follows: "(...) action itself (...) is a larger potential field or medium which theatre actualizes in particular circumstances; works of dramatic art, however, are also 'ways of seeing' which allow us to think through our relation to action and reality." In this respect, theatre produces the possibility of specific establishment of ways of seeing and experiencing, and even specific relationships between reality and fiction. Jiří Veltruský relies on a similar theoretical starting point when he argues that theatre brings together different faces of reality outside the usual form and therefore undertakes a social function by showing different ways of seeing and understanding the world (Deák, 1976, p. 89). Thus, while a theatre play appears on the stage as a performance symbolizing the world on one side, it can also be a self-referential order of simulacra that replaces the world on the other. To put it briefly, theatre practice implicates

¹ For the basis of the hermeneutic analysis of drama and literature, see: Bennett (1992), Shaffer (1993), Wolff (1993, pp. 63-67).

constructing a reality by performing series of signs. Alter (1990, pp. 21-22) states that signs must necessarily be understood as elements that refer to something other than themselves, and within this framework, a text of a play also refers to future performances, the stage-space on which the actors will act, and the dialogues. In this respect, the symbolic exchanges and linguistic relations that establish a play are also decisive in shaping the meaning-world of it.

According to the simulation theory developed by Baudrillard, a certain arrangement of signs, i.e., simulacra, results in the formation of a simulative order and mechanisms. Baudrillard (1994, p. 1) defines simulation as the production of 'reality' through the procedure of models. In this respect, as Baudrillard (1994, p. 2) indicates, simulation emerges as the modelling of 'reality' with artefactual 'reals'. Baudrillard (2016, p. 87) formulates the historical development of the order of simulacra as a three-step procedure: The classical period developing around copying, the industrialization period developing around production, and the contemporary simulation period determined around codes.² He argues that the first period appeared as the "perfect theatre" and that the theatrical form dominated the social life after the Renaissance (Baudrillard, 2016, p. 89). On the other hand, Baudrillard states that the structure of the second period eliminated theatricality and replaced it with automatons (2016, p. 93). Even if Baudrillard's thesis can be considered partially valid, the internal connection of experimental works conducted on 'alienating' theatrical practices aimed at overcoming theatrical representation of automated people and automatic reception with the simulacra order should not be negated. Baudrillard (2016, pp. 127-128) evaluates that the world of simulation in the third period has, in the final analysis, erased all the qualities that carry the characteristics of stage, interlude, gaze or spectacle and created a kind of total theatre.³

To interpret these arguments a play should be evaluated as a kind of particular simulacra order to the extent that it establishes the play-actor-audience relationship in a way that preserves the symbolic distance. In this kind of simulacra order seen in classical dramas, the audience is established as a subject who contemplates a world outside of oneself and is shaped by its values, either the reflection of one's own social world of values or by presenting the idealized values of a particular social group to other social beings. In this framework, a particular order of simulacra emerges as an order of a reality that affirms the dominant position and the decisiveness of the values of a certain social group, class, and authority structure.

In the second case, a play can represent the real world. While the ontic unity of a play and the world is constructed through representation and dramatic fiction, the relationship between the audience and the play corresponds to a symbolic separation rather than an ontological unity in that case. Thus, the simulative construction of the play emerges in the mediation between reality and the audience. This structure can also be observed in the workers' theatre experiments of the late 1920s. For example, the basis of the plays of a famous left-wing theatre group that was very influential in Germany from the 1920s to the 1930s -*Das Rote Sprachrohr*- was not only the narration of an event but also the presentation of the contradiction inherent in this event; but according to the analysis made by Steinke (1978, p. 53) the scenes in which this aim was attempted to be realized were based on abstractions and could not take the form of 'concrete reality'. Steinke (1978, p. 53) states that the audience of these plays cannot directly connect an abstract and a general reality with their own concrete and particular reality, thus making the line of such play examples in the field of abstract generality visible.

On the other hand, when the symbolic distance is eliminated and all three elements can interact in ontological integrity, the same relationship turns into a simulacra mechanism that procreates reality. Thus, in the final analysis, a play transforms into the 'world' itself; an audience who is the subject in the real world is re-established as both a part of the play and a simulative agent. According to the total theatre approach the articulation between actor/audience/stage/place of spectation in a way that integrates the audience and the event (Şener, 2014, p. 263), likewise brings about the audience's attraction towards the experience of agency in the theatrical world -and within the real social relations

² For typologies of simulative mechanisms, see also Pawlett (2010, p. 197).

³ For a critical history of theatre that bears reflections of Baudrillard's theory of simulacra, see: Fisher-Lichte (2002).

of which it is an extension. Another element supporting this transformation is establishment of a dialogic context where different social segments can encounter each other without simplex-determination. Thereby, the characteristic that distinguishes a play from ordinary communication is its discursive and performative context, in other words, its simulative formation.

The simulative potential of plays is possible when the constitutive elements of theatre function within appropriate compositions. If the elements of theatre are considered in a general level, a basic framework can be mentioned, albeit with minor differences. Williams exposes main elements of drama as speech, movement, design, and sound (1968, p. 175). According to composer and theorist of drama aesthetics Otakar Zich, the structural elements of drama consist of conceptual elements (dramatic action, persona, plot, space) and observable elements (text, actors, stage design, clothes, audience) (Yüksel, 1995, p. 64). In the structuralist view elaborated by Tadeusz Kowzan, these elements are listed as such: Word, intonation, mime, gesture, movement, make-up, hairstyle, costume, accessory, decor, light, music and sound effects (Deák, 1976, p. 87). To sum up, it is possible to think of the simulative structure of a particular play as being formed in the context of its spatial, temporal, discursive, actional elements and props. These elements can be divided regarding their external and internal position in the play or be evaluated more vaguely, especially with the development of experimental forms (e.g. Piscator, 2010, pp. 58-59). On the other hand, it cannot be negated that, in any case, temporal and spatial elements have peculiar importance in establishing the semantic world of the play.

Analysis of the Play I: Chronotopic Context

The subject of this article, *Kamyon*, has a complex characteristic regarding the use of the constitutive elements mentioned above. While conducting the analysis of the play, its time-space context will be considered within the analytical perspective and the structure of the play's semantic world will be attempted to be revealed.

The Concept of Chronotope

The common feature of narrative genres is that having a certain time-space structure in terms of their semantic relations, and the research conducted in this regard can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century. For example, Nikolay Zelinsky determined that the time-space structure of Homeric epics was organized according to the principle of chronological incompatibility; thus, more than one event did not occur simultaneously in the narrative (Propp, 1984, p. 22). Furthermore, Propp (1984, pp. 22, 25) who compared folk narratives and examples of the modern novel, states that folklore is created within the empirical time and space surrounding the action of the narrative hero at a certain moment, whereas the simultaneous development of actions is included in the modern novel and novellas. M. Bakhtin, who elaborated conceptual framework of the time-space element in narrative genres revealed the differences between epics and novels in terms of time aesthetics and examined the establishment of narratives in relation to the spatio-temporality within the concept of chronotope (Morris, 2003, p. 180; Bakhtin, 2008a, pp. 7, 16). Bakhtin (2008b, p. 84) argues that time and space form a single concrete whole in literary creations and that this form of integrity is decisive in the development of literary genres. Bakhtin (2008b, pp. 110-112, 131-32, 168, 225, 248) formulates six basic chronotope typologies formed in Western literature; (i) abstract and mechanical chronotope (adventure-time), (ii) metamorphic chronotope (a mixture of adventure-time and everyday time), (iii) biographical chronotope (public-self-consciousness time), (iv) Rebelasian chronotope (equivalence between time and space), (v) idyllic chronotope (concrete and integrated space - time as an infinite cycle), (vi) threshold chronotope (time and space shaped in the encounter-rupture relationship). Finally, he draws attention to the fact that there are various chronotopes under the main typologies and that these can be articulated with each other (Bakhtin, 2008b, p. 252).

Chronotopic Structure of the Play

Temporality in Kamyon

First, *Kamyon* is performed in a ‘waiting’ situation establishing the chronotopic relationship between the play-actor-audience. The audience’s waiting presents temporal integrity with the waiting within the play; in this respect it unites ontological ground, and ‘waiting’ is realized as a performative participation of the audience into the play. The reality of waiting has lost its effect in some places, along with the *diagoge* provided by the elements of humor. Since Baydur shapes the play’s dialogues of in the comedy genre, he often masks the direct ontological solidity of the act of waiting with the ontic appeal of humor. Thus, while Baydur presents the relation between the play-actor-audience within the ontological integrity of time, dialogues discursively fragment it and alienate the audience through laughter. To elaborate on this dual relationship, Baydur maintains the discursive distance between the event and the audience and does not provide a direct participation of the audience into the play. On the other hand, the contradiction between ontological integrity and ontic fluidity is precisely the simulacra order of the relationship that the audience interconnected with the ‘reality’ of Türkiye embedded in the play. The significant point here is that the audience, immobilized by ontological integrity, cannot contribute to the play discursively, and is consistent with their subaltern position in the already given political reality. In this respect, the play-player-audience relationship cannot still be considered completely solid when the structure of the play is considered. This characteristic in the structure of the play becomes apparent especially from the second part onwards and the simulacra order becomes particular and breaks the integrity of the play-player-audience relationship.

Burcu and Ezici (2018) stated that the action element within the spatio-temporality is stuck in situations in Baydur’s plays. It can be determined that the characters’ actions in *Kamyon* are stuck in the situation of being stranded on the road. In Şener’s words, there is a situation of suspension of time (as cited in Burcu & Ezici, 2018). Yüksel (1997, p. 144) also comments on *Kamyon* that the characters who overrun their ordinary functions are stuck in an uncertain time. Although both comments can be considered partially right, they do not sufficiently consider the non-overlapping between the empirical and symbolic structure of the play. First of all, time is not suspended in *Kamyon*; on the contrary, it crushes the characters with its cyclicity and establishes a direct ontological unity between the audience and the play. For this reason, the act of ‘waiting’ can constitute the center of the play. Moreover, this entrapment does not cause monotony as the situation necessitates, but instead causes the emergence of social settings. Secondly, the characters are not stuck in an uncertain time. On the contrary, time corresponds to the recent history of Türkiye.

The time form used in the play is the cyclical time belonging to the idyllic chronotope. As the playtime progresses, as the subject is opened and developed through the actions and discourses of the characters, when the audience is led to believe that it is progressing diachronically, it presents its essential character by returning to the point where the play started again. To put it concretely, the beginning of playtime sets with the opening of the first chest containing toys; events occur but cannot reach the end and return to the beginning with the opening of the second chest. This process continues cyclically until the opening of the third chest. Thus, the stability of the play-space is completed by the cyclicity of time and forms a consistent chronotope.

Spatiality in Kamyon

The spatial context of *Kamyon* is framed by a three-layered structure. These layers can be listed as the establishment of the play-space as the stasis, the establishment of the play-space geographically, and the establishment of the play-space socio-politically. All three spatial contexts bear the traces of the establishment of the space through discursive interrelations.

The Establishment of the Play-Space

Kamyon is based on classical principles, and the unity of place-time-event is preserved in the play. The scene opens on a deserted road, and an eight-hour period is given uninterruptedly until the play ends. Although some main characters leave this place during the play, they mostly return. Since the breakdown of the truck reveals the subject of the play, the problem cannot be solved and therefore the waiting situation is not eliminated, spatial stasis continues throughout the play.

The cyclicity of the play-time as mentioned above is articulated with the stasis of the space and forms the chronotope of the play. For this reason, it corresponds to a country trapped cyclically in the same socio-political spatio-temporality. In the play's last scene, the characters' disappearance further elaborates the spatio-temporal structure that demonstrates the deadlock of the world constructed by the play by destroying the subjects and thus offers a kind of a *fin de siècle* (end of the century/age) experience.

Imaginary Geography of the Play-Space

The unity principle that dominates the concrete space-time of *Kamyon* is not seen as valid in symbolic space and time. Despite the uniformity of the space seen on stage, the shadow of the imaginary spaces continues to affect the play. The concept of "imaginary action space", which was introduced to the literature as the contribution of Otakar Zich, refers to the fact that the play-space cannot be considered as consisting only of the space seen on the stage; on the contrary, the space of the 'unseen' events is also included in the play-space (Veltruský, 1981, p. 232). *Kamyon* also includes more than one imaginary space, as will be presented below.

Baydur states that the truck was loaded from Antep and went to Istanbul and that if it had not broken down, it would have taken the goods back to Antep. In the notes presented to the director, Baydur (2016, p. 345) states that the truck probably broke down near Denizli. Moreover, it was noted that the driver and the assistant driver are from Central Anatolia, one of the workers is from the Black Sea region and the other from Eastern Anatolia. The Aegean region is stated as the origin of the villagers. All these distinctions are emphasized in the first part of the play through differences in local accents, cultural and geographical elements. Another detail is the connection of the Angut Memet/İsmail character, who is present in the play in absentia, with the city of Hamburg in Germany. Although not presented in the observable universe of the play, these references establish the imaginary space of the play as Türkiye with its historical and cultural background.

Socio-Political Construction of the Play-Space

Firstly, the establishment of the play's setting as Türkiye is elaborated by the characters' performance of this setting as cultural codes. Secondly, the establishment of the socio-political setting embodies on the referential existence of the truck. In this respect, the characters' cultural differences and the truck simulacrum articulate the play's socio-political setting.

All the characters are of village origin as was indicated the dedication note (Baydur, 2016, p. 320). As a result of the disruption of traditional village life, they have become a part of capitalist relations in one way or another and have become the subjects of modern contradictions. The driver and assistant-driver characters (Necati and Recep) are represented as people of central Anatolian origin. Since they are in the positions of authority, they exhibit a certain identity with the political character of Ankara, the center of bureaucracy. Another character, Şaban, is represented as a young Laz worker. Abuzer is an Eastern-origin character with no explicit information about his ethnicity, but his Kurdish origin is implicitly mentioned in the dialogues. Zeynel and Zülfü are villagers and represent the local perspectives on the 'other'. The construction of the 'other' in question also has a spatial dimension, as it is based on a village/city distinction. The truck, which is red, reminiscent of

the Turkish flag, has taken a wrong turn and broken down, causing everyone trouble, yet it still simulates Türkiye as an element at the center of all characters' lives.⁴

Another dominant theme of the socio-political establishment of the play-space should be addressed in the context of gender relations. All the characters are male. Since the simulative space of the play emerges as Türkiye, the fact that male domination in characters also means the establishment of Türkiye as the space of masculinity.

Analysis of the Play II: Dialogical Relations as the Medium of Simulation

The meaning of *Kamyon* is dialogically coded, with its basis in the representation of the social contradictions (class, hierarchy, social role, ethnic difference, rural-urban distinction, cultural distinction, migration, etc.) underlying the subtext of the play by dialogues and actions. The play exhibits *heteroglot* characteristics due to the diverse worldviews, ethnicities, and class differences of the characters. The various roles they take in power relations increase the polysemy, while the time-space context of the play brings the power relations and contradictions they encounter to a common ground.

Dialogue and Dialogic Interactions

The textual content of a play consists of the specific relationships of the characters, dialogues, decisive acts or events, objects, rhythms, and messages. In dramatic texts, the construction of characters, setting and events emerges as the basic function of dialogues (Aston & Savona, 1991, p. 52). Alter (1990, p. 11) states that the story told in a play can be conveyed by many means other than dialogue; however, none of them completely exclude dialogue from theatre practice in general. In this respect, dialogues -together with other physical referents- are the mediators of the textual existence of the characters and the dramatic world (Aston & Savona, 1991, p. 53). Moreover, the dialogue structure of a text is also often the primary site of the forms of consciousness. Bakhtin's (2016, p. 114) proposition that "expressing oneself means being able to make oneself an object for another and for oneself" also constitutes a starting point for the analysis of dialogues between characters in a play. A dialogue essentially means that a character establishes himself for the 'other' through linguistic signs and recognizes himself through his reflection in the 'other'. For this reason, even if dialogue is considered a linguistic interaction on its surface, it is essentially a multi-layered relationship in which self-consciousness is established and, in this way, forms of social consciousness are simulated. The dialogues of characters who sit in a certain social background and are surrounded by power relations in the play include how present themselves to the characters in front of them and how the playwright presents these characters to the audience.

In general, lines in a play are performed under monological and dialogical forms. Monological form is defined as "discourse that is not directed to anyone and does not expect a response" (Bakhtin, 2016, p. 122). In contrast, dialogical form corresponds to discourse performed within an intersubjective communicative relationship connected to each other with a semantic correspondence. However, monological lines in a play can become potentially dialogic elements while used for to interact with the audience. In this respect, it is necessary to examine the discourse forms in a play under a general dialogic approach, and monological elements should be explicitly analyzed by considering their dual existence.

Bakhtin suggests that dialogue and monologue have two ontologically different statuses and that monologue is of secondary importance to dialogue, belonging to an unreal, illusory nature (Holquist, 2002, p. 57). Besides this, there are two types of dialogic discourse forms. These are listed as narrow forms and complex forms. Narrow forms of dialogue can be listed as discussion/polemic/parody, while complex forms of dialogue can be listed as discourse and reception forms dependent on authority, agreements, statements containing deep semantic dimensions and expressions that in contrast with norms (Bakhtin, 2016, p. 126).

⁴ On the use of the truck as a symbol of Türkiye, see also: Erol (2013, p. 825).

Kamyon is based on the dialogic structure. Although monologues are encountered in part, these can be read as the expression of an 'incompatible' state of consciousness. The dialogic features of *Kamyon* emerge in the small games and conflicts between the characters, and the characters' social positions become meaningful within *heteroglossia*. Baydur (2016, p. 345) explains the *heteroglot* structure of the play with the director's notes that the method he uses to write the dialogues is mentioned as "underlining the contradictions in the speech of the characters and integrating this contrast into the play." These contradictions crystallized in each character's speaking in different local accents and the complex integrity of metropolitan and rural language use. Baydur (2016, p. 345) describes the language of the dialogues as television and/or 'soup' Turkish which refers to the eclectic use of contemporary language. As a result, the discursive structure of the play is shaped by the irreducible complexity of the language used by the characters.

Secondly, the basic characteristic of *Kamyon* can be indicated as the installment of plays or games within the play. Each play/game increases the evocative profundity of the play in terms of revealing the differences in the worldviews and cultural backgrounds of the characters. To the extent that games mediate the differences in social roles and statuses, they become a simulation of a dialogic multitude. As Yüksel (2013, p. 215) states, playfulness is the distinctive characteristic of the plays of Baydur –which is also notable for *Kamyon*. At the center of the discourse-action context of *Kamyon* are toys and the games/plays played around these toys; thus, games, toys and acting should be considered as the three basic elements that brace the meaning of the play in general. In this respect, the different appearances of the games to various characters change depending on their social roles, in other words, their positions in power relations.

'Play within the Play' or Games of Dialogical Interactions

Plays/games within the play function as a small order of simulacra, enabling the characters to explore their social existence dialogically. Since these 'small games' often be acted around certain types of toys, the play is ostensibly an act between the characters and refers to the relationships between forms of social existence. In this context, two 'games' in *Kamyon* will be briefly examined.

The Game of Prohibition and Metis

The first play/game is at the beginning of the first tableau of *Kamyon*. The characters are stranded on the road because the truck broke down and are looking for various ways to pass the time. The first way that comes to mind is to open the chests in the truck and see what is inside. However, a fundamental obstacle exists; characters do not own the chests. For this reason, Necati considers himself responsible for the security of the chests and opposes violating property rights. However, Necati notices that one chest has already been opened (Baydur, 2016, p. 322). Thus, the prohibition of the authority has been violated and an explanation or punishment is required. When the dialogues that developed after this point are examined, it is seen that a dual game of pressure-apology/pressure-resistance has begun. The main subject of this game is the power struggle between the authority of its representatives and the recognition or disregard of this authority.

Three characters are playing this game (Necati, Recep, and Şaban), and three moments of the game can be mentioned: The 'chase' game between Necati and Recep, the 'recognition/misrecognition' game between Şaban and Necati, and the 'race' between Abuzer, Şaban, and Recep. From the first to the third mini-game, it is seen that the symbolic depth of the discourse-action relations increases, and they evolve into a simulative presentation of power relations.

The 'chase' game between begins when Necati notices that one of the chests has been opened, while the driver's assistant, Recep, is with him. The other two main characters of the play, Şaban and Abuzer, are not on stage because they have left the truck for a while. Therefore, the subject of the game is Necati's investigation of the opening of the chest and Recep's attempt to evade responsibility. In this game, the chasing party is Necati, representing authority on the active/aggressive/demanding side, and the being chased is Recep, representing the subordinate position, the passive/defensive/apologist side.

When Necati asks why the chests were opened, Recep's first response squeals his friend Recep and seek an excuse by stating that they did not open the other chests (Baydur, 2016, p. 322). Necati is not satisfied with Recep's answer and emphasizes that the prohibition cannot be broken for any reason. Thereupon, Recep continues his act to refuse responsibility and seeks for a reasonable ground: The chest was opened because there might be food in it. The conflict between Necati and Recep finally reaches its peak with Necati attacking Recep and his escape, but it ends with a kind of reconciliation. Necati threatens to kill Recep if he gets off the truck he escaped from; in return, Recep continues to treat Necati with respect and completely accepts his authority (Baydur, 2016, p. 323). In the face of Necati's aggressiveness, Recep becomes cynical and, in this way, is saved from being subjected to violence. In the rest of the dialogue, the intensity of the contradiction gradually decreases, and finally, the two characters reconcile.

Secondly, the recognition/misrecognition game occurs between Şaban and Necati, and starts when Şaban enters the stage. The contradiction between Şaban's Dionysian joy and Necati's Apollonian search for reason-oriented control lies at the heart of the game. In this regard, Şaban represents an active but non-aggressive position, while Necati represents an aggressive/demanding but reactionary position. When the characters meet, Şaban enters the stage singing a joyful folk song. Necati responds by telling Şaban to stop singing, or else he will 'turn his teeth into prayer beads' (Baydur, 2016, p. 324). Şaban does not pay any attention to this threat and continues to sing. In return, Necati calls on his character to act 'rational/well-behaved' (Baydur, 2016, p. 324). In the meantime, the first phase of the game between Şaban and Necati is completed. Necati's threat was inconclusive; Şaban did not respond to Necati's efforts to make him a docile subject and continued with his own action. For this reason, Necati had to justify his own position, and thus a result emerged in favor of the former, between Dionysian joy and Apollonian rationality. In the continuation of the dialogue, the positions of the game change briefly, with Necati seeming to represent 'madness' and Şaban seeming to represent 'reason'. Şaban states that he walked on one side of the road for half an hour and did not encounter anyone (Baydur, 2016, p. 324). In response, Necati mocks him by saying, 'Did you encounter yourself at least?' (Baydur, 2016, p. 324). Şaban also gets confused when faced with this question and lists the things he sees as mountains/hills/flowers/insects/birds. Necati asks if he has encountered anything useful, and Şaban returns to his previous position by saying, 'Aren't birds useless?' (Baydur, 2016, p. 324). Similar to the first game between Şaban and Necati, a kind of balance situation has been re-established here, in which Şaban takes the lead. Moreover, at the end of the dialogue between them, Şaban asks Necati, whom he has angered, to give him his bag, regardless of his attitude, and adds that he is going to sleep. Necati throws the bag at Şaban's head; Şaban ignores it and thanks him mockingly. The dialogue ends with Necati's authority being parodied (Baydur, 2016, p. 325). The conflict between the two characters can be called the recognition/misrecognition game that Necati constantly reminds Şaban of the authority he attributes to himself, however, Şaban does not recognize this authority, or mocks and 'misrecognizes' him.

The third part of the game between Şaban and Necati begins with a riddle. Şaban mutters a riddle to himself, and Necati completely loses control in response. Despite threatening Şaban, Necati cannot stop him from asking a riddle. He attacks Recep again; this time Recep takes Şaban's side and does not see asking a riddle as something to be angry about (Baydur, 2016, p. 328). Thereupon, Necati agrees to the riddle being asked again and begins to think about the answer to the riddle. Thus, the dominance of the Apollonian mind is eliminated, and the determining position passes to Şaban. This situation means that the misrecognition is reversed, and the one who demands recognition becomes the recognized one, which means he loses his status. As Necati tries to solve the riddle, he fails and gets angry, becoming aggressive again. He pressures Şaban to tell him the answer to the riddle and claims that he will make him say 'like a donkey', takes out a knife from his back pocket and threatens him (Baydur, 2016, p. 330). In this case, the 'game' seems to have gotten out of hand and the discursive dialogue directly turns into symbolic violence. Şaban advises Necati not to interfere with him, Abuzer supports him, Recep tries to calm Necati down, Abuzer indirectly threatens Necati and finally Şaban pulls out a knife twice as big as the Necati have, and the conflict ends (Baydur, 2016, p. 330). Baydur did not allow this game becoming violent, so he finally reversed and concluded it. Necati is now mumbling the riddle and Şaban is answering the riddle. The general meaning of this game is that

authority is dependent on recognition and an unrecognized claim of authority is always ready to transform symbolic violence into physical violence. In contrast the defense based on violence against the threat of violence is the only way to equalize the conditions. The subtext is that subordinate individuals under authority are prone to support the counter-authority figure when there is a threat from authority.

The third game is a metaphorical race game between Abuzer, Recep and Şaban. While the three characters are chatting, Abuzer proposes racing the wind-up teddy bears. Before this offer, there is a dialogue between Şaban and Recep about opening the chests and looking through their cargo. In this dialogue, Recep opposes Şaban's idea of looking at the other chests by stating that they should not open them. This means that Recep reminds the authority of the prohibition and replaces Necati, who represented the authority in the previous game. On the other hand, Abuzer and Şaban approve of the opening of the chests and take an anti-authority position. When considered within the general structure of the play, the race game has multi-layered symbolic meanings.

Firstly, the 'bear' analogy has been used as a language game since the beginning of the text and has become a symbol associated with the characters. Secondly, the idea of a race between bears also refers to a certain logic of social positioning since it is a competition between Recep and Şaban. The entrance of the 'bear' into the discursive world of the play first occurs when the character Şaban recalls a memory from looking at teddy bears and tells it to the other characters that his wife compares a bear cub to him (Baydur, 2016, p. 325). Upon this memory, Recep assumes that Şaban negatively reacts to being compared to a bear but is surprised that it does not bother him (Baydur, 2016, p. 325). At this point, Necati joins the dialogue and establishes a dichotomy between civilization and savagery. According to Necati, it is necessary not to stray away from civilization to benefit from the opportunities offered by city life, such as gas stations/coffee shops/houses/factories, (Baydur, 2016, p. 325). Necati sees Recep, who took them on a side road and brought them to a deserted mountain, as the cause of their straying away from civilization and accuses him of being a 'bear' (Baydur, 2016, p. 326). Thereupon, Recep displays his cynical character and defends himself by making fun of Şaban (Baydur, 2016, p. 326). In this response, Şaban is seen to be partly disturbed by the description of 'bear', but he does not react directly to it and softens the 'insult' by playing with the meaning of being a 'bear'. In response, Necati ends the dialogue by claiming that Şaban is a 'distinguished bear' and Recep is the 'king of bears' (Baydur, 2016, p. 326). The symbolic structure of this dialogue, in which the 'bear' analogy is first established, can be formulated as follows: Necati likened two people working under his authority to 'bears' (also donkey and cow) and established his own social existence by the assertion of being 'civilized'. In this respect, it is necessary to consider that the analogies are references related to subordinated and ruling, subaltern and prestigious social positions.

The competition stage opens when Recep states that wind-up teddy bears are 'beautiful things' (Baydur, 2016, p. 332). This statement is a direct reference to the first use of the 'bear' analogy, thus internally connecting the two sections and containing the instrumentalist premises of authority. The 'beauty' in question here is identical to being functional in terms of fulfilling the authority's purposes. Secondly, in this section, there is a short discussion between the characters about whether it is right to open the chests again (Baydur, 2016, p. 332), and the existence of this discussion turns the following game into a game of prohibition and *metis*. The discussion's specificity is that it includes a description of the relations between the chests and the people who carry them, which can also be interpreted regarding the political economy. Abuzer states that he has been a porter for years, but this is the first time he has encountered that he is prohibited from touching the goods he carries (Baydur, 2016, p. 332). According to him, what is important in carrying is the load's weight and how far and high it will be carried, not the contents of the box (Baydur, 2016, p. 332). These statements by Abuzer, in which he summarizes the relationship between the carrier and the cargo, basically refer to a work description. The carrier is not the owner of the goods, and the act of carrying corresponds to a transaction in space as a work controlled by the actual owner. This description ultimately corresponds to an analogy between a wind-up toy and a transport worker. Like a machine, the worker performs the work expected of him without questioning it; in this respect, the labor process becomes a tool controlled by someone else. In essence, this relationship corresponds to a form in which the relationship between the

laborer, the object of labor, and the product is broken, akin to the Marxist theory of alienation (also see: Bozdoğan & Bozdoğan, 2022, pp. 26-31).

The competition episode begins with the determination of the competition boundaries. While Şaban and Recep try to determine the starting and finishing points of the race, one will suggest that it should be from where they are standing to Trabzon, while the other will mockingly suggest that it should be all the way to Munich (Baydur, 2016, p. 333). These proposals extend the imaginary space of the competition into the real world and remind the audience of the story's simulative nature. Abuzer solves the problem and suggests that competition should be held from the truck's back tire to the front tire (Baydur, 2016, p. 333). When it is remembered that the truck is related to the socio-economic order of Türkiye, the subtext becomes visible that the competition between wind-up toys (or actual members of the working class) can only occur within the boundaries of the actual social formation. In the rest of the text, Şaban and Recep set up the teddy bears, kneel, and intend to start the competition. However, in the meantime, a dialogue between the two delays the start of the game. Recep makes offensive jokes about the bears twice, referring to Şaban (Baydur, 2016, p. 333). Thereupon, Şaban threatens Recep by stating that he was patient twice and would retort the third time (Baydur, 2016, p. 333). Abuzer supports Şaban's reaction, in which it is possible to find traces of class-based solidarity against the figure of an oppressive authority.

Several points needed to be emphasized in this dialogue. First, in the dialogue above involves the dialogic construction of the 'bear' analogies. The first meaning in the dialogic relationship is the definition of 'bear' as a beautiful animal. This definition is included in his wife's comparison of Şaban to a bear. Secondly, the 'bear' analogy corresponds to how the sovereign views his subordinate as a symbolic expression of authority relations. After Necati described Recep and Şaban as bears, the superior position in question began to be represented by Recep as well, and Recep insistently implied that Şaban was a 'bear'. Moreover, Recep's finding the teddy bear 'beautiful' corresponds to the interpretation of this analogy in terms of functionality in power relations. The difference between the positive and negative meanings of the 'bear' becomes apparent in Şaban's positive reaction to the situation where he is compared to a bear by his wife, while his harsh reaction to Recep's insinuations becomes apparent. In this context, the contrast focused on the 'bear' analogy which centers on Recep's effort to become a representative of authority, like Necati. In this context, the competition between bears essentially means the competition of two figures who are both 'bears' in the eyes of the authority, that is, who can be considered subordinate regarding class position. As a result, the race becomes a simulacrum of the struggle of lower-class members to be the representatives of authority in the real world. Thus, the game based on 'racing bears' corresponds to the competition of the working class in the context of real social relations or to their behavior following their position in the eyes of the authorities. On the other hand, Abuzer's analysis of the social position of the working class and his support of Şaban can be interpreted as a process of conscious development. Abuzer's expression of his own situation as "we are constantly going from one place to another. This is not... setting out on a journey" (Baydur, 2016, p. 333), becomes an expression of this forming social consciousness in terms of summarizing the exhausting and repetitive, but fruitless nature of capitalist work relations for the worker. In the continuation of the dialogue, two new villagers (Zülfü and Zeynel) enter the scene, Necati takes control of the situation again and orders Şaban to collect all the bears, put them in the chest and close the lid of the chest tightly (Baydur, 2016, p. 334). Şaban's failure to oppose this order refers to the disciplinary nature of the competition, even if the competition does not take place. In the final analysis, it is seen that Necati's authority-position has been strengthened, but this position will be undermined in the next mini-game.

The Two Faces of Civilization or the Impossible Game of Exchange

The second tableau presents the impossible exchange game to the audience. The subject of this game is to reach a person with technical knowledge to repair the truck and ensure that the villagers named Zeynel and Zülfü act as mediators. Since the villagers are unwilling to help directly, they must be persuaded.

Zeynel and Zülfü enter the scene while the main characters are about to have a teddy bear race. They ignore the broken-down truck and continue their way quickly without waiting. Thereupon, Necati sends Recep after the two people and orders him to take them and bring them (Baydur, 2016, p. 334). The first encounter between Necati and the villagers occurs with a salutation in which cultural differences are made visible regarding secular and religious word choices (Baydur, 2016, p. 334). In the later parts of the dialogue, both groups of characters compare their social positions. Zeynel and Zülfü state that they are from Yanbolu village, an hour away, and a gas station is on the road (Baydur, 2016, p. 335). In the second series of dialogues, the villagers provide information about the car mechanic and the gas station's owner, Angut Memed. According to this information, Angut Memed is described as a person who learned mechanics in Germany, stayed in Istanbul for a while, and brought the first television to the village (Baydur, 2016, p. 335). Thus, the character's connection with 'civilization' is presented to the audience in this way. The main characters can only reach Angut Memed through the mediation of Zeynel and Zülfü.

In the rest of the play, it is seen that the villagers do not make a special commitment to call Angut Memed. When it comes to calling Angut Memed to the truck, the villagers imply that he cannot find this place, he may not trust their words, and he may not come if someone goes to call him (Baydur, 2016, pp. 338-39). Villagers, who change the course of the dialogue, are curious about the cargo; they learn about and want to buy toys (Baydur, 2016, pp. 336-37). In this case, another contradiction emerges: the toys are not Necati's property. Although Necati stated that he would give these toys as gifts if they were his own, the villagers stated that they could not accept them as gifts but instead could buy them. At this point, the impossible exchange game begins. The reason why the game is called 'impossible exchange' is that the main characters need the villagers to continue the road, the villagers are unwilling to help and want to buy the toys first, the toys are not Necati's property, the villagers do not want to accept gifts, in other words, reject a mutual/traditional relationship like gift-giving.

During the play, Necati is willing to sell the toys and tries to resolve the conflict between the parties in this way. The villagers bargain with Necati to buy toys, and Necati agrees to sell them by offering an underprice (Baydur, 2016, p. 338). The justification of the 'illegal' sale is formulated by Recep, who makes up a lie to tell the owner that the toys got wet because of the rain and therefore were missing (Baydur, 2016, p. 338). However, Necati and Recep's skill in creating a 'state of exception' or inventing tricks does not solve the problem. The villagers take a partial compromise by saying that they can help but can only give a person a ride to the gas station.

The subtext of this part of the play reveals the dark and unease side of 'civilization'. First, while telling the life story of Angut Memed, it is stated that Zeynel went to Germany like him but was scammed there, and although his musical recording sold well, he was unable to get paid and returned to farming (Baydur, 2016, p. 335). In a way, this represents the suppressed side of the dream of 'civilization'. As the character of Angut Memed mobilizes upward in class relations, Zeynel becomes an agricultural worker. Secondly, the story of Angut Memed coming to Zülfü's brother-in-law to ask for a repair tool, the owner of it is reluctant to give it to him, Angut Memed saying *erkanı harp* (officer of war) and a fight breaking out can be interpreted within this framework. Depending on the context of the use, this word can be considered partly a diminutive and partly a complementary expression. When used towards villagers as *çarıklı erkan-ı harp*, it means cunning. In this discussion, Angut Memed's use of this expression and his implication that all villagers are cunning and the villagers' response of 'this is Yanbolu village, it is not like Hamburg' (Baydur, 2016, p. 339) ultimately expresses the urban/rural contradiction as a founding political difference. In the continuation of the text, it is seen that Angut Memed's position is also imposed on the villagers by Necati (Baydur, 2016, p. 340). At this point, the theme of the fallacy of civilization is intertwined with the fear of 'being deceived' in the way the 'civilized' view to the villagers. In fact, Zeynel and Zülfü bought the toys by deceiving Necati. In this case, Baydur presents the 'civilized/uncivilized' contradiction to the audience as a relationship in which both sides deceive each other, and it is not possible to make an absolute ethical distinction. However, while underlining this meaning, the author sets up a distorted exchange game in which representatives of both sides are involved. At first, a mutual relationship is distorted when Angut Memed is unable to take the repair tool and the villagers are not helping the truck. In the second

plan, the villagers do not accept a gift-giving relationship and prefer a buying relationship, thus ‘cunningly’ getting what they want without taking on a mutualist burden. If a second reading is made in this context, it can be observed that the villagers do not behave according to the norms ‘expected’ from them as being helpful. It is a known feature that the characters in Baydur’s plays behave in a ‘strange’ manner and contribute to ‘playfulness’ (Yüksel, 2013, p. 215). The basis of this manner is the fact that the traditional cooperative structure of the village has long since dissolved; the road passing by the village, the workers going to Germany to work, television, gas stations, and monetary relations have also changed the villagers’ attitudes. This situation can be interpreted as the second face of ‘civilization’ showing itself. On the other hand, Baydur (2016, p. 340) also makes the audience sense that the villagers still partially interpret this within traditional moral judgments and do not have a competent consciousness about their situation. Thus, the structural contradiction brought about by modernity is reinterpreted as a moral contradiction within traditional life codes.

Conclusion: Critical Simulation and *Fin de Siècle*

In this article, Memet Baydur’s play, *Kamyon*, is considered a simulation of Türkiye. The elements that establish the simulative structure are examined under the concepts of chronotope and dialogic interactions.

Kamyon can be considered within a common framework with narratives using the ‘truck’ motif constructed by writers such as Nazım Hikmet, Sabahattin Ali, and Orhan Kemal. However, one of the fundamental distinguishing points lies in its chronotopic structure. First of all, the chronotopic structure of the play is based on stasis. While this structure simulates the continuity of contradictions in Turkish political history on the one hand, on the other hand, it makes us experience the approaching moment of catastrophic dissolution of this staticity, regardless of whether it is established through political, economic, or cultural means, within the framework of contrast formed by dynamic dialogues. In this respect, the idyllic chronotope is constructed using cultural, geographical, and political elements within the combination of cyclical time and static space, while the dialogic interactions of the characters emerge as both a part of the static world construction and the carrier of dynamic contradictions that are its ‘gravediggers’. These contradictions become visible in the intertwined and practically uncertain relationships of categories such as the acceptance of authority and resistance, prohibition and prohibition-breaking, civilization and rural life, solidarity-based traditional communities and modernization, and dominant and subordinate roles.

In this context, Baydur’s simulation of Türkiye has at least two levels. The first level of the simulation is that the play unites the audience and the characters within the same idyllic chronotope and posits them on a common ontological ground within the generality of the play’s imaginary space. At this first level, it is impossible to separate reality and simulation from each other. At the second level, the ‘plays/games within the play’, where social contradictions are particularized, offer a dynamic simulation of the first level through relations and objects where stasis and continuity are crystallized. The second level in question is shaped by dialogic interactions and attempts to deconstruct the first level simulation rather than constructing a simulative reality. In this respect, the second level is not an example of a consistent and absolute reality but of fragmented fluidity and dissolution. In this context, the secondary simulations that develop within ‘games’ question the reality and meaning of the relations that constitute the primary level.

Kamyon ends with the dissolution of the relationships that bind the characters together, the disintegration of the chronotope, and the insolvability of the problematic situation. In this context, *Kamyon* can be considered a kind of critical simulation: It is critical because the simulation does not exhibit any consistency; it is surrounded by destructive contradictions directed at itself, the problems of the simulative world, which is suspended in the air, are unsolved, subject positions are incapable of interpreting it in its entirety, and the subjects are too weak and dispersed to change it. Baydur’s criticism throws a world that has lost its practical and ideological integrity in front of the audience; thus, the play turns into an experience of a *fin de siècle*. As Bozdoğan and Bozdoğan (2022, pp. 30-33) state, the rhythm that holds the world together has disappeared, arrhythmia irreversibly fragments the simulation, and it is not possible for the social segments that come to life in the characters to

reintegrate reality. The truck's journey ended, just as the ongoing socio-political conditions of Türkiye from the 50s to the end of the 80s that were changed with an irreversible rupture.

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