The Contrast of Modernism and Post-modernism in Yavuz Turgul's Cinematography*

Yavuz Turgul Sinemasında Modernizm ve Postmodernizm Karşıtlığı

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ABSTRACT

This study is a sociological analysis of cinema that examines how the modernist understanding of art and Yavuz Turgul's critical stance toward Turkish modernization shape his cinematography. While the conflict between tradition and modernity became evident in Turgul's early career, which began with Arzu Film, his mature films, such as The Bandit (*Eşkıya*, 1996), Lovelorn (*Gönül Yarası*, 2004), and For Love and Honor (*Kabadayı*, 2007), are positioned around the tension between modernism and postmodernism. Although the director critically discusses modernism, his cinematic language fundamentally maintains a modernist quest for order, meaning, and moral consistency. The aspects of Turkish modernization that produce exclusion, silencing, and cultural discontinuity are evident, particularly through character positioning, spatial representations, symbolism of names, and motifs of silence. The study utilizes critical discourse analysis to examine these discursive structures since it enables the analysis of linguistic and/or visual signs, power relations, the positioning of the modern subject, and the representation of postmodern ambiguity in the films. The research focuses on the following questions: 1) How does Turgul's modernist discourse evolve over time? 2) What ideological codes of Turkish modernization are his critique of modernism associated with? 3) How does the postmodern condition produce the uncertainty and value erosion are represented cinematically? The study's central argument is that, despite his critiques of modernism, Turgul's cinema maintains a fundamentally modernist vision of the world; amid the atmosphere of fluidity and instability of the postmodern era, he clings more strongly to modern categories: order, rationality, and moral consistency.

Keywords: Sociology of Art, Turkish Cinema, Modernism, Postmodernism, Yavuz Turgul.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Yavuz Turgul'un sinemasında modernist sanat anlayışının ve Türk modernleşmesine yönelik eleştirel tutumunun nasıl şekillendiğini inceleyen bir sinema sosyolojisi analizidir. Turgul'un Arzu Film bünyesinde başlayan erken dönem yapıtlarından itibaren gelenek ve modernlik ekseninde kurulan çatışma belirginleşirken, Eşkıya (1996), Gönül Yarası (2004) ve Kabadayı (2007) gibi olgunluk dönemi filmleri modern-postmodern gerilim etrafında konumlanır. Yönetmen, modernizmi eleştirel biçimde tartışsa da sinema dilinin temelde modernist bir düzen, anlam ve ahlaki tutarlılık arayışını sürdürdüğü gözlemektedir. Türk modernleşmesinin dışlama, sessizleştirme ve kültürel süreksizlik üreten yönleri ise özellikle karakter konumlandırmaları, mekân temsilleri, isim sembolizmi ve sessizlik motifleri üzerinden görünür kılınır. Çalışma, bu söylemsel yapıları incelemek için eleştirel söylem analizi yöntemini kullanmaktadır. Eleştirel söylem analizi, filmlerdeki dile ait ve/veya görsel göstergeleri, güç ilişkilerini, modern öznenin konumlanışını ve postmodern belirsizliğin temsil biçimlerini çözümlemeye olanak sağlar. Araştırma şu sorulara odaklanmaktadır: 1) Turgul'un modernist söylemi zaman içinde nasıl dönüşmektedir? 2) Modernizm eleştirisi Türk modernleşmesinin hangi ideolojik kodlarıyla ilişkilendirilmektedir? 3) Postmodern durumun ürettiği belirsizlik ve değer erozyonu sinemasal olarak nasıl temsil edilmektedir? Çalışmanın temel argümanı, Turgul'un modernizme yönelik eleştirilerine rağmen sinemasının özünde modernist bir dünya tasavvurunu koruduğu; postmodern dönemin akışkanlık ve istikrarsızlık atmosferine karşı modern kategorilere -düzen, rasyonalite ve ahlaki tutarlılık- daha güçlü biçimde tutunduğudur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sanat Sosyolojisi, Türk Sineması, Modernizm, Postmodernizm, Yavuz Turgul.

Introduction

Yavuz Turgul has established a unique position in contemporary Turkish cinema as both a screenwriter and director, consistently maintaining a modernist cinematic approach in his work (Bayburtluoğlu, 2005; Hepkon, 2011). However, Turgul's modernist stance does not position him as an indifferent supporter of Turkey's modernization; rather, his filmography offers a comprehensive critical perspective on the cultural ruptures, identity tensions, and historical discontinuities it creates (Çatalbaş, 2012). This study examines precisely this dual structure (a cinematic language in which modernist aesthetics and critique of modernization coexist), drawing on Turgul's work spanning many years.

Accordingly, the primary aim of this study is to analyze the modernism-postmodernism opposition in Yavuz Turgul's cinema from a sociological and historical perspective, and to clarify how the director's modernist stance has been reshaped in the context of postmodern fluidity and uncertainty. The study focuses on the following fundamental research questions: 1) How does Turgul's modernist cinematic language transform as he moves from his early films, which explore the dilemma between tradition and modernity, to his maturity period, where he confronts the postmodern condition? 2) How are the director's modernist aesthetic preferences related to critiques of Turkish modernization? 3) Through which characters, conflicts, and symbols do phenomena such as postmodern ambiguity, identity dissolution, and value erosion become visible in Turgul's narrative world?

Within the framework of these questions, the study examines Turgul's cinema in two periods: the first period encompasses his films, spanning from the Arzu Film years to Shadow Play (*Gölge Oyunu*, 1992), which center on the conflict between tradition and modernity; the second period encompasses his maturity period, encompassing works such as The Bandit (*Eşkıya*, 1996), Lovelorn (*Gönül Yarası*, 2004), and For Love and Honor (*Kabadayı*, 2007), and where the modern-postmodern dichotomy

is intensely explored. The scope of this study is not to provide a detailed analysis of the director's entire filmography, but rather to offer an in-depth examination of these three films from his maturity period, when modernist discourse is most visible. Therefore, the study does not include extensive comparative readings or a comprehensive discussion of the broader historical transformation of Turkish cinema; it focuses on Turgul's discursive choices along the axis of modernism and postmodernism. This selective approach is also the study's most fundamental limitation.

Methodologically, the research examines Turgul's films through discourse analysis and intratextual (Genette, 1997) deconstruction, tracing the director's modernist perspective through character placement, names, settings, conflict patterns, and symbolic themes. Thus, it reveals how cinematographic choices intersect with historical and ideological debates surrounding Turkey's modernization.

The study's fundamental argument is that, although Yavuz Turgul is an artist critical of modernism, his cinematic language, at its core, maintains a modernist search for order, meaning, and ideal. Turgul constructs a cinematic language deeply disturbed by the uncertainties of the postmodern era, representing the dissolution of values, anomie, and the fluidization of identity as forms of cultural loss. Turgul's films combine the sadness of failing to realize the ideals promised by modernity with a critique of the disarray of the postmodern world. Therefore, his cinema can be considered both a reflection and a critical rewriting of Turkey's modernization narrative.

Following the framework outlined in this introduction, the article first examines Turgul's modernist aesthetic, considering theoretical debates. It then provides a comparative analysis of the director's early and mature films based on the modern-postmodern dichotomy. The final section discusses the ideological and cultural relationship between Turgul's cinema and Turkish modernization and offers a general assessment.

Methodology of the Study

This study relies on critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine how the tension between modernism and postmodernism is established in Yavuz Turgul's cinema and how this tension relates to the ideological, cultural, and historical codes of Turkish modernization. Critical discourse analysis offers a holistic approach that examines not only linguistic signs but also representational practices, power relations, identity constructions, hegemonic discourses, and secondary mechanisms such as silence, exclusion, and invisibility. This comprehensive framework of CDA allows us to analyze how a modernist subject is constructed in Turgul's cinema, how it is positioned against postmodern uncertainty, and what cinematic strategies represent the failures, ruptures, or bottlenecks of Turkish modernization.

According to Roland Barthes (2015; 2018), language determines our lives in its entirety, and language finds its way through signs. Where there are signs, there is also the signified, but these roles are not permanent. In the dynamic flow of life, the signifier can become the signified, and the signified can become the signifier, and each signified is, in fact, the signifier of another signified. In other words, language flows within a world of interconnected signs, but signs cannot be confined to mere writing. In his work, Mythologies (2023), he argues that almost everything, from fashion to visual communication, is a sign. In this respect, he also aligns with the work of the renowned French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (2022), who argues that taste is shaped by the habitus in which we live. Given that all forms of communication involve language, and that this language is composed of signs, we can say that all these signs are in dialogue with each other (dialogism) (Bahtin, 2020). However, before proceeding to this, one must keep in mind that all artistic productions (regardless of their political or class-based nature, such as bourgeois art or social art) are texts. If each text interacts/communicates/dialogues with another, an intertextual reading is also possible. In other words, we can interpret any visual, verbal, or written production in terms of its relationship with different texts. Julia Kristeva (1980[2024]) defined this phenomenon as intertextuality.

The study's dataset consists of three films from the director's maturity period: The Bandit (Eşkıya, 1996), Lovelorn (Gönül Yarası, 2004), and For Love and Honor (Kabadayı, 2007). These three films are where Turgul's modernist discourse most clearly emerges; they were selected because they dramatically explore the dilemmas of tradition-modernity and modernity-postmodernity, and because they reconstruct characters, settings, and relationships at the ideological level. Scenes from these films with particularly pronounced discursive intensity (for example, the encounters between Baran and Cumali, the sequences in which Nazım confronts family conflicts, and the debates over the moral order between Ali Osman and Devran) were treated as units of analysis for CDA. In the analysis, elements such as dialogue, character positioning, spatial use (especially Istanbul's lost cultural memory), strategies of silence and invisibility (e.g., the representation of Kurdish, femininity, or non-Muslims in the cultural memory), and naming symbolism were evaluated as carriers of discursive production.

In this context, CDA aims to reveal how discourse in films is organized at three levels: 1) at the textual level: the language used by characters, the discourses of morality and morality, the discursive oppositions that establish conflict, and how postmodern ambiguity is named; 2) at the discursive-practical level, the positioning of the modernist subject, authority relations, the reproduction of social hierarchies, and the cultural manifestations of power; 3) at the socio-ideological level, the representations in films of the centralizing, exclusionary, disciplinary, and normative aspects of Turkish modernization. These three levels make visible both the continuity and the internal tensions of modernist discourse in Turgul's cinema. Thus, the films are read not only as aesthetic products but also as ideological sites of memory regarding Turkey's historical modernization process.

The limitations of the study should also be considered within the scope of CDA. Rather than encompassing Turgul's entire filmography, the analysis is limited to the three films that yield the most discursively dense data; this may hinder a holistic assessment of the director's oeuvre. The interpretive nature of CDA inevitably necessitates that the researcher's theoretical positioning influences the analysis; therefore, this study aims not to produce absolute conclusions but to produce interpretations that are theoretically consistent and grounded in intra-textual data. Furthermore, the research excludes external factors such as the film industry's production conditions, audience reception, or the economic context; it focuses solely on the internal dynamics and ideological production processes of the director's cinematic discourse. However, the multilayered structure of CDA offers a suitable and in-depth method for analyzing Turgul's cinema within the context of both modernist aesthetics and postmodern social uncertainty.

The Ambivalence of the Post-modern Condition

The modern world is grounded in a deterministic understanding of reality, built on the assumption that all phases of life can be predicted. Modern thought assumes that life is measurable, controllable, and ultimately predictable, and this assumption is imposed upon societies. The age of ideologies has therefore been shaped by debates over which direction this determinism should take. Yet life itself is inherently uncertain and often unfolds spontaneously. It resists rigid planning and predetermined programs. For this reason, modernist fatalism must inevitably be reconsidered and rewritten in more ambiguous terms. This realization serves as a modest reminder that modern humanity, despite its ambition to play God, cannot even attain the status of a demigod.

Modernity is despotic, as Zygmunt Bauman (2003) convincingly argues. Modern life is despotic because of the precision of numbers, the passion for measurement, and the imposition of the duality it establishes between black and white. Modern society is despotic because it is constructivist. After all, no construction process is pluralistic but imposing. However, ambiguity implies uncertainty. This uncertainty is essentially a pathology of language. The world we live in is a world determined by language. In other words, we, humans, try to make sense of the life we live with language, and a structure that produces ambiguity itself renders the rest of life ambiguous. As Bauman (2003, p. 10) posits, "language strives for the maintenance of order, the rejection or suppression of randomness and contingency." He further claims that "because of our ability to learn/memorize, it is in our interests to maintain the orderliness of the world. For the same reason, we are uncomfortable with ambivalence and perceive it as a threat. Ambiguity upsets probability calculations, confusing the context of memorized action patterns" (p. 11).

The same logic applies to art: modern art is fundamentally calculative. It glorifies the artist because the modern artist is conceived as an individual (historically and predominantly male) endowed with a mission. Positioned at the top, the artist assumes the role of a quasi-divine figure who seeks to elevate and guide the masses. Yet, as in other domains of modern life, art is also characterized by ambiguity. Ambiguity implies uncertainty, unpredictability, and incalculability. In this sense, modern art, much like modern life itself, carries a latent despotic tendency. The artist, imagined as standing above society, transmits what emerges from the crucible of inspiration to those below and expects it to be received and understood. Art thus becomes untouchable, while the artist is placed among the intellectual elite, believed to shape the design of society. Within modern art, the boundary between *kitsch* and *high art* is sharply drawn, and a cultural elite claims the authority to determine what belongs to each category. Entropy (or disorder) is perceived as an unacceptable assault on art, which is protected by a form of symbolic inviolability. Revered works of art are accumulated in spaces deliberately separated from everyday social life - museums and galleries that are visited almost like sites of pilgrimage. In

this way, modern art reproduces a hierarchical structure in which ordinary people remain distant from the act of art itself. We, mortals, are largely excluded from touching or participating in it - at least until our own time, when many of the consecrated idols of modern thought began to be shattered.

The fluidity of the postmodern condition, of course, has an impact on art as well. Donald Kuspit states in The End of Art (2010) that high art may appeal to the happy few, but not to the unhappy majority. High art is too intricate to help this minority understand the people, places, and things they encounter in their daily lives. It lacks what seems human because it lacks common contact. High art lays claim to man's entire existence as if there were no other alternatives, which gives a person a chance to get away for a bit and thus a mental health different from the mental health required to exist in this life (p. 18). However, the artworks are also open to interpretations, and these interpretations are never singular and are feminine, that is, fertile. Postmodern openness to interpretations has a nature that multiplies as it is interpreted; hence, it is ambiguous. It is not known how to interpret it; interpretation cannot be imposed. The postmodern critical literature is full of manifestos against such impositions. In a way, the intolerance of modern art theory and the understanding of post-modern criticism lie here. Art and artists have been displaced. The concept of *kitsch* holds a central place in postmodern criticism. There is no longer any "God" artist or consecrated art. In a way, everyone is an artist; everything becomes art now. Categorical distinctions have lost their meaning; in an age of "anything goes", temples have been rejected, and art has been using the language of the street. Art has "fallen out". The dethronement of art and the artist is, in a sense, a blow to the legislature, in Bauman's (2012) words. The right to have a say in what counts as art now belongs to the individual. Dictators have been displaced, and despotism has ended. The central issue now is entropy; a new understanding of art is emerging from fragmentation, and the concept of *kitsch* is now free of pejorative connotations.

Art is free from partitions. New branches and sub-branches that are not included in the classical classification have emerged. Going even further, all borders have been removed, and art has been integrated into everyday life. In other words, the idea of branching is left unfounded. One can find art at any moment of life and does not have to answer to anyone or be afraid of anyone. There is no concern for originality or uniqueness in new art or at the end of art. Reproduction, meaning shifting, deconstruction, and pastiche, are in the foreground. This attitude, of course, laid dynamite under the modern understanding and destroyed the hierarchical structure.

Yavuz Turgul is a filmmaker (both a screenwriter and director) who occupies a significant position in contemporary Turkish cinema. While remaining connected to the broader tradition of Turkish filmmaking, he has developed a distinctive style of his own. Throughout his career, Turgul has constructed a unique cinematic discourse and a recognizable film language. As he himself has stated, his work seeks to combine elements of "artistic cinema" with those of "commercial cinema" (Yüksel & Tok, 2011, p. 18). His filmmaking approach is notably structured and deliberate, reflecting a highly calculated and almost mathematical sensibility in the construction of his films. In this regard, Turgul can be described as a filmmaker whose cinematography reflects the principles of modernist cinema.

As this study explains, Yavuz Turgul is a modern artist with a modern mindset. His modernity is reflected in the discursive language in his works. Moreover, his audience can trace patterns of modern cinema throughout his works. This modernist attitude in Turgul's works inevitably leads to a discussion of the 'what-ness' of modernity. Modernity is a deterministic worldview. In this respect, it is a struggle against ambivalence, and it is utopian (Bauman, 2003). Modernity is an age of utopias; utopias that are believed to be realized. However, this era has been heavily criticized for failing to deliver on its promises. Modernity has not been realized and has also led to tragedies.

In general terms, it can be argued that Yavuz Turgul has developed a cinematic discourse that runs parallel to the trajectory of Turkish modernization (Çatalbaş, 2012). At the same time, Turgul does not refrain from adopting a critical stance toward this process. Such a critical perspective is visible in nearly all his films and covers a broad thematic range. His films articulate critiques that extend from women's issues to the ideology of the Turkish Republic, and from Arabesque culture to questions of ethnic identity. Nevertheless, despite this critical orientation, Turgul can still be situated within the orthodox framework of Turkish modernization. This is largely because he does not fundamentally challenge modernism itself; rather, his cinematic language remains modernist, and his films reveal a clear positivist inclination. The presence of didactic narrative elements in his work is too evident to overlook. As an auteur, he readily conveys social messages, educates audiences, and cultivates social awareness in his films. In this regard, Turgul does not position himself in opposition to the ontology of Turkish modernization; instead, his cinema reflects a stance that largely parallels its general characteristics.

Turgul's perception of modernism not only feeds on societal problems but also emphasizes historical transformations in his works (Erkılıç & Erkılıç, 2011, pp. 105-106). As someone fully aligned with his modern identity, Turgul approaches reality with a dualist perspective. In almost every one of his works, he puts his stories in various dualist structures. These dualities can be diversified as East/West, traditional/modern, rural/urban, worker/bourgeois, and woman/man in Yavuz Turgul's cinema. However, attempting to understand the world through such dualities leads to seeing intermediate colors as disturbing elements. Yavuz Turgul is committed to modernity, yet he approaches the problems created by Turkish modernization critically. Still, he longs for modern values and ideals that have eroded amid the changing world (the postmodern condition). This article analyses Turgul's attitude within the modern/postmodern dichotomy in Yavuz Turgul's cinema. While doing so, this study aims to prompt

the reader to reconsider the differences between modern (determinism, idealism) and postmodern (liquid) situations.

One can understand from Turgul's cinematic language how deeply the uncertainties of the postmodern era disturb a modernist artist. As the audience, we see the clearest examples of his disturbance in the films The Bandit (Eşkıya, 1996), Lovelorn (Gönül Yarası, 2004), and For Love and Honor (Kabadayı, 2007). Although Turgul's other films (for example, The Broken Landlord [Züğürt Ağa, 1985] and The Shadow Play [Gölge Oyunu, 1992]) deal with similar themes, these three films best reflect Yavuz Turgul's reactivity to the post-modern situation. However, this study draws on his other films in its discourse analysis as necessary. It is important to note that this paper focuses solely on the modern and postmodern conditions, rather than modernist cinema. Hence, when the study refers to modernism or postmodernism, it does not imply modern or postmodern art but a condition.

Modernism and Post-modernism in Yavuz Turgul's Cinematography

Yavuz Turgul has developed a distinctive style in Turkish cinema and has played an influential role in shaping a particular period of its development. He first left his mark on the industry through his screenplays in the 1980s and later moved into directing in the 1990s. Today, many of his works (both as a screenwriter and as a director) are regarded as classics or cult productions within Turkish cinema. In the early stages of his career, Turgul wrote numerous screenplays for films produced by Arzu Film, collaborating with the well-known actors associated with the company. Most of these early works belonged to the comedy genre. Among them were *Tosun Paşa* (1976) and *Davaro* (1981), which later became cornerstones of Turkish comedy, written by Turgul. Nevertheless, Turgul is a filmmaker deeply engaged with Turkey's social issues, and this engagement becomes increasingly visible throughout the evolution of his cinematic work. His career, which initially began with comedy productions, gradually

shifted toward more serious and drama-oriented narratives. This transformation did not occur abruptly; rather, Turgul managed the transition through films that combined social themes with prominent comedic elements. The most notable examples of this transitional phase are *Çiçek Abbas* (1982) and *Züğürt Ağa* (1985), both written by Turgul and addressing processes of social change while retaining elements of comedy.

In the 1990s, Yavuz Turgul appeared before the Turkish audience not only with his screenplays, but also with the films he wrote and directed. Director Yavuz Turgul has a sharper tone. In his films, drama outweighs comedy, with more dignified acting replacing it. Turgul brings a similar change to the famous actor Şener Şen, with whom he loves to work. Şener Şen, a master of Turkish comedy cinema who left his mark on a period with the types he played, entered a new phase in his acting in the 1990s and began to take on more dramatic roles in Yavuz Turgul films.

Yavuz Turgul establishes the central conflict of his early 1980s films between tradition and modernity (Yüksel, 2013). The characters at the center and the main story revolve around the axes of modernization, meeting the modern world, breaking away from tradition, and the splitting of consciousness experienced during these transitions, which are reflected on screen through the story's flow. In the films of this period, Turgul again takes a stand in favor of a modern understanding, contributes to societal transformation by incorporating didactic elements, and employs a style that calls for societal transformation in some parts and for the state in others.

The situation is slightly different in the films of the second period since the 1990s. The axis of the fundamental contradiction is not established between tradition and modernity, but rather between the post-modern situation and modernity. There are, of course, conjectural reasons for this to happen. In post-1980 Turkey, postmodern discourse began to infiltrate, following the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union,

and the end of the Cold War, which led to paradigm shifts and intra-ideological confrontations at both macro and micro levels. Yavuz Turgul also benefited from these transformations and confrontations, and this article interprets and investigates his three films from the second period, defined by the 1992 film Shadow Play. This study focuses on three films (The Bandit [Eşkıya, 1996]; Lovelorn [*Gönül Yarası,* 2004]; and For Love and Honor [*Kabadayı*, 2007]) that Yavuz Turgul produced as a screenwriter and/or director in the period that is described as his second period in the study.

Yavuz Turgul as an Auteur

As noted in the introduction, Yavuz Turgul can be described as a filmmaker whose work is shaped by a modernist discourse. This characterization rests on two central features of his cinema. First, Turgul's cinematic language reflects a highly controlled and calculated stylistic structure. Elements such as camera techniques, scene composition, lighting, and dialogue are carefully organized in accordance with the conventions of modern cinema. In Turgul's films, almost every component of the cinematic narrative is positioned through meticulous planning and calculation (Çatalbaş, 2012, p. 29). Indeed, Turgul himself has suggested that the making of a good film is closely related to a form of mathematical precision. As a result, his camera avoids capturing superfluous details, scenes are structured with deliberate regularity, and even the distribution of dialogue is arranged to minimize ambiguity. Second, Turgul's films are structured around a strong sense of catharsis. The central character typically undergoes a form of maturation or rite of passage, confronting a series of challenges throughout the narrative. These accumulated conflicts are resolved in the final sequence in a way that allows the audience (who have identified with the protagonist) to experience emotional relief. In this respect, Turgul's cinema can be understood as a modern articulation of the classical notion of catharsis. Since Aristotle, catharsis has been associated with the emotional purification experienced by audiences who identify with the characters in dramatic works. This principle, fundamental to the logic of

theatre, has persisted in modern cultural forms by being reinterpreted within modern discursive frameworks. With the emergence of cinema as a narrative medium, the mechanism of catharsis has likewise been incorporated into filmic storytelling, and Turgul's work offers a clear example of how this classical aesthetic principle operates within modern cinematic discourse.

The second is the way Yavuz Turgul positions his characters. The central character in Turgul's films is modern, emphasizing the modernist attitude and understanding. The characters positioned against or around the central character are either traditional or postmodern; more precisely, they are outside modernity. Yavuz Turgul adopts the central character's perspective, engaging the audience by depicting the character's anguish on screen throughout the film. Overall, the film has a manipulative feel. This is closely related to Yavuz Turgul being an "auteur" (Çatalbaş, 2012, p. 30). As an auteur, Yavuz Turgul wants to enlighten the audience. Being an auteur basically means having authority. A person with authority has the right over those to whom he can direct his authority. He is responsible for them and is concerned about guiding them to the right path. The auteur is a modern phenomenon, and discussions of the concept of auteur are closely related to the theory of the novel. In Western languages, the author is related to "authority", the person with absolute authority in the creation. In his relationship with the reader, the modern writer is almost like a god (Barthes, 2016). Although the concept originated in literature, it also found its place in cinematic expression.[1]

Finally, the lack of femininity (or "womanless-ness") as a fundamental element immediately draws attention in Turgul's cinema. The image of women finds a place in Turgul's cinema to the extent that it is functional (Çatalbaş, 2012, p. 39; Şentürk, 2017). I do not express this proposition in the sense that the woman is not seen at all; it means that the woman remains in a secondary place in the

world of men. Although this attitude is conscious, it can also be read as a subconscious reflection of the modern mind's exclusion of women. It is a conscious attitude, because we live in a male-dominated society, and women can be seen as much as they are in the world of men. The same holds in Turgul's films. Women are positioned in the secondary plan alongside men, finding a place in the men's story to the extent that they touch the central theme.

On the other hand, the state of "womanless-ness" (i.e., absence of women) in Yavuz Turgul's films is also a reflection of the subconscious of the modern world. The modern situation has ignored, suppressed, and marginalized women. Feminist literature is full of narratives of this phenomenon (for some examples, see Wolff, 1985; Ryan, 1994; Kandiyoti, 1998; Jardine, 2019). In the mind-heart dichotomy, the woman falls on the heart side. It is the negative pole of the dialectic. As a modern artist, Turgul pushes women into the background with a very modern attitude. To the extent that women become masculine and come into contact with men's world, they find a place for themselves amid men's confusion. The stories told in Yavuz Turgul's cinema are usually about men, and, in a way, women complicate things for them.

Three Movies: The Bandit, Lovelorn, and For Love and Honor

The modernist discourse/attitude of Yavuz Turgul regarding the postmodern condition in these three films is the most obvious. The conflict between the old and the new, which we see in most Yavuz Turgul films, is also present in *The Bandit* (1996). However, the apparent difference here is that the difference between the traditional and the post-modern bandits is explained by omitting the bandit of modern times. This void will then be filled later, in 2007, with For Love and Honor, because the movie examines the differences between the modern bandit and the post-modern bandit without skipping a generation in between. Baran's character in *The Bandit* is the unfinished

1   For more on the theory of auteur-ship in cinema, see: (Sarris, 1963; Wollen, 1969).

(and traditional) version of *For Love and Honor*'s Ali Osman. Cumali in *The Bandit* corresponds to Devran in *For Love and Honor*. The protagonists (Baran in *The Bandit* and Ali Osman in *For Love and Honor*) are men who have a moral sense, whose lives are not ordinary, but live in an orderly manner, and who have a "reason" (racon).[2] The antagonists (Cumali in *The Bandit* and Devran in *For Love and Honor*) are individuals who disregard all rules and destroy everything related to "racon". The ignorance of these antagonists harms others as well as themselves. They are not very inclined to think ahead. Turgul is clearly developing a discourse that is distant from the slippery moral ground of postmodernism. We, as the audience, can clearly understand the difference between a kabadayi (modern) and a gang leader (post-modern) from the scene where Ali Osman discusses with his son:

"Ali Osman: You don't know how dark these guys are. They are able to kill you without even stepping into the courtroom. They don't listen to anyone (in the sense of: they don't care about the consequences).

Murat (Ali Osman's son): Maybe they listen to you. After all, you are an ex-mafia guy.

Ali Osman: (With a surprised and displeased face) What did you say?

Murat: (With an unshaken, unimpressed, and stubborn stance) I said you are a mafia, you would come to terms with them.

Ali Osman: (Angrily hits the table with his fist) What are you saying, ulan? Shut your mouth. Who said I am a mafioso? I am not a mafia; I have never been. I didn't have anyone in the police or politics who backed me up. I didn't sell drugs, guns, or women. I handled my business alone, I faced my enemies alone, and I have paid the price for all the things I have done. Who the hell are you (that

say to me that I am a mafia guy) [cannot finish his words as his condition strikes at this moment]."

Of course, what is meant here is not just banditry and its evolution. A sociological reading is made of the indicator of banditry. The country is in transition, and the director's primary focus is to guide this transformation. The audience can feel that Turgul takes a side throughout the movie. It is as if he believes that change would not be for the better; change is always detrimental. Of course, Turgul does not neglect to use secondary elements to elicit this (for example, the disappearance of non-Muslims and the vanishing culture of Istanbul, elements he frequently employs in his films) (Esen & Kayadar, 2009, p. 160).

The theme of Istanbul has an important place in Yavuz Turgul's films. Many of his films are set in Istanbul itself. Anyone who follows Yavuz Turgul's films can also learn about the legacy of a lost city. The keyword here is "(being) lost". The same is true for non-Muslims. The audience constantly contemplates the dwindling and invisible non-Muslims theme in Turgul films, as if confronting the republican ideology. The inhabitants of the *Cumhuriyet Oteli* (Republic Hotel) in *The Bandit* almost symbolize all the minorities of the Turkish Republic; all are losers, and/or lost.

In *For Love and Honor*, on the other hand, Ali Osman represents modern times. He is a character of modern times, shaped by modern values. Modern times are characterized by the importance of people having a set of values and life goals, as well as a sense of order. Devran, on the other hand, belongs to the postmodern era, when utopias were destroyed, values have eroded, and disappointment is felt most acutely. In this film, Yavuz Turgul (as a screenwriter, not a director) seeks to convey his critique of the postmodern period and its lack of values. He is uncomfortable with ambivalence because, in

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2 'Racon' in the Turkish mafioso language is the name given to the set of rules and principles within the Turkish mafia tradition. Not every mafia leader can 'put a racon' (racon kesmek). The mafia, who is able to put a racon, is the one who has been able to impose his personality and set of values on others.

his modern understanding, an ambiguous life is uncomfortable. The modern mind made a promise to us that it could not have kept and has failed to deliver. Turgul is aware of these unfulfilled and/or failed promises of modernity, yet it was a sweet dream, and waking from this utopia is disturbing. How can we feel comfortable in a world where everything is contingent?

Devran's name tells us a lot. This is not a randomly chosen name, as is common in almost every Yavuz Turgul film. We do not know what fate/kismet has prepared for us, or what it will prepare. Devran[3] is contingent. In the 80s and later, Turkey started adopting and adapting to the so-called postmodern situation. As mentioned above, Turgul conveys his discomfort with this situation through his films. After the '80s, Turkey is a country that has stopped facing itself, albeit vaguely and embarrassedly. In his later works, as I call his second period in this study, Turgul also tried to contribute to this showdown from his perspective.

In the movie *Lovelorn* (2004), Turgul moves away from the mafia world and focuses on more ordinary people. In this movie, which features a powerful metaphorical narrative, a modern person (a teacher, Nazım[4]) falters in the face of changing conditions and must confront his past. At this time in his life, he crosses paths with a bar singer (Dünya[5]). Dünya's ex-husband (Halil[6]), a diametrically opposite character, engages in a secret, unfair rivalry with the teacher Nazım. The relationship between Halil and teacher Nazım is quite ambiguous. It is a volatile relationship between a retired teacher and a passionate young man. The most interesting aspect of the movie is the characters' names. The names carry all the metaphorical burdens of the movie. Teacher Nazım and his family are clearly depicted with references to the famous Turkish poet Nazım Hikmet Ran.

Teacher Nazım himself is already a fan of Nazım Hikmet. His daughter's name is Piraye (the name of Nazım Hikmet's wife), and his son's name is Memet (the letter "h" is dropped, as in Nazım Hikmet's son's name). Furthermore, there are, yet again, two men in love with the Earth, which serves as a metaphor for chasing the world (i.e., being worldly). Teacher Nazım embodies giving order to the world, and he is a modern person down to his cells. Nevertheless, there is an unordered world in the middle. The film is like a lament sung after the failure of the modernist utopia in Turkey.

As the movie progresses, we, the audience, learn more about Nazım's life. Teacher Nazım's two children are also distant from their father. In a conversation with her father (somewhat tense, perhaps emotional), we learn from her daughter that, once upon a time, teacher Nazım held ideals for which he sacrificed much. So much so that he could not take care of his daughter because of his passion to devote himself to his students, his daughter was infertile due to an illness she had when she was little, and that is exactly why she broke up with her husband. The father (Nazım) is unaware that his daughter got divorced because of this. In this part of the story, Turgul seems to be referring to the sterility of modern society. The whole movie is essentially a lament for the failure of modern ideals to take root. Among the many conflicts presented by the director, one key conflict is the need to understand the republican ideology's approach to designing society and its success in doing so. On the one hand, while affirming the republic's values and claiming its "gains of the republic," the director had to question whether the republic was a failed project.

As Turgul comes to terms with the Republic, he also comes to terms with himself. The Turkish intellectuals have always thought of the state and

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3   In Turkish 'devran' means '1) the wheel of fortune; fate; 2) era; time'. The word includes and implies a certain ambiguity.

4   In Turkish this Arabic origin word means 'regulator; legislator; the one who puts order'. It also the first name of the famous Turkish poet Nazım Hikmet Ran who had a socialist worldview, and had to flee from Turkey to Soviet Russia because of the prosecutions in the Cold War atmosphere.

5   Dünya means 'the World, the Earth' in Turkish with Persian origin.

6   Another Arabic origin name with a meaning of 'pal; fellow; (true) friend'.

could not isolate themselves from it. Expectations from the government have always been high. This situation is not only the disability of intellectuals, but a common problem for the whole Turkish society. As the famous Turkish author Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar aptly puts it, "Turkey does not allow its children to be busy with other things than the country itself" (quoted by Dellaloğlu, 2012, p. 208). Therefore, movements that are independent of the state cannot develop, civil society remains obsolete, and the semi-transparent, semi-concrete organism called the state rises to a semi-divine position in society. In the movie Lovelorn, the sins of this semi-divine organism are made visible, sometimes vaguely, sometimes with obvious metaphors. In this film, a woman remains silent, a leitmotif that appears in many of Turgul's films. In this case, she is Dünya's daughter, Ayşe, and as far as we can tell from what we have been told, the main reason why she chose silence is domestic violence. However, from a different perspective, the silence is not only Ayşe's, but a whole language; in particular, Kurdish. Ayşe is just a metaphorical reflection of the Kurdish language on the screen. The same metaphorical expression is visible in The Bandit, too. Keje, Baran's childhood love, fell silent when she was forced into marriage with Berfo, the movie's main antagonist. Considering the ethnic roots of Keje (which are not openly revealed in the movie but implied), Turgul, here too, refers to the Kurdish language, which the state has silenced.

Conclusion

This study examines Yavuz Turgul's cinema within the context of the tension between modernism and the postmodern condition, examining how the discourse produced in his films relates to the cultural and ideological codes of Turkish modernization. Critical discourse analysis is employed to reveal the tools used to construct the modern subject in Turgul's films, the representation of postmodern fluidity, and the discursive transformation between the two periods. Within this framework, the study focuses on three fundamental questions: How does Turgul's modernist narrative transform over time? Through what cultural and ideological indicators does his

critique of Turkish modernization become visible? And how are elements of the postmodern era, such as uncertainty, dissolution, and devaluation, represented in cinematic discourse?

Yavuz Turgul is a modernist director, and one can determine his modernist stance in two ways: 1) the modern narrative techniques in his movies. The most basic determinant here is the phenomenon of catharsis. Referring to the audience's emotional satisfaction with identification, Turgul employs catharsis in many of his films. Also, as a form immanent to modernity, Turgul is an 'auteur'. The term can also be replaced with 'author', a concept describing the omniscient narrator (God-author) in the modern novel, in reference to Yavuz Turgul, a filmmaker. Finally, a highly deterministic style is evident in his films, as he admits it. That is, every element in the scene is placed with a design that serves a specific purpose. This meticulousness is a product of the modernist cinematic understanding. 2) The way he positioned his characters: In Yavuz Turgul's films, the positioning of the characters tells us a lot. He has a purpose in character creation and tries to influence the audience by reflecting his discursive background on his characters. This attitude is also related to didactic elements. The central character is also the center of the conflict, and we observe how he overcomes the problems he encounters throughout the movie and how he transforms as he faces them. The nature of the conflict is determined by the split in consciousness experienced. In a changing world, the challenges people face and the strategies they develop to address them shape the story's flow. Modernity is always on the screen, and Turgul does not hesitate to show his side. The audience knows from the very beginning where Turgul stands.

To facilitate a cinematographic reading of Yavuz Turgul's work, this study divides his cinematic development into two main periods. The first period extends from his early works to *Shadow Play* (*Gölge Oyunu*, 1992), while the second period begins with *The Bandit* (Eşkıya, 1996) and continues with the films that followed. Within this periodization, *Shadow Play* occupies a

transitional position, signaling an important shift in Turgul's cinematic perspective and marking the emergence of a new understanding in his work as both screenwriter and director. In the films of the first period, Turgul constructs the central conflict around the tension between tradition and modernity. The characters at the center of the narrative and the overall storyline revolve around themes such as modernization, encounters with the modern world, and the process of breaking away from tradition. The fractures and tensions produced by these transitions are reflected in the narrative flow of the films. In this phase, Turgul largely adopts a position aligned with modernist thinking; through the use of didactic narrative elements, his films frequently emphasize the necessity of social transformation and, at times, appeal either to society itself or to the state as agents of this transformation.

In the second period, however, the central axis of conflict shifts. Rather than being structured around the opposition between tradition and modernity, the fundamental tension emerges between modernity and the postmodern condition. This transformation can be understood within the broader socio-historical context. In post-1980 Turkey, postmodern discourse increasingly began to permeate intellectual and cultural life. At the same time, major global developments (such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union) significantly reshaped world politics. The end of the Cold War brought about a shift in dominant paradigms, redirecting both macro- and micro-level conflicts toward new forms and concerns. Turgul's later films reflect the influence of these transformations, and the works of this second period should therefore be interpreted within the framework of these changing social and intellectual conditions.

Yavuz Turgul cannot be considered a filmmaker operating outside the context of Turkish modernization; rather, his cinema can be seen as a product of this historical process. Although he raises various criticisms of the practices of Turkish modernizers, a modernizing sensibility remains embedded in the language of his films. Despite these criticisms, Turgul does not reject modernization itself. On the contrary, he shares with Turkish modernizers the objective of fostering a modern consciousness within society, even though he differs from them regarding the direction and implementation of modernization policies. For this reason, the ideological foundations of Turkish modernization can be discerned throughout his filmography.

In this regard, Turgul's cinema generates a dual discourse that simultaneously reflects both the affirmative and the critical dimensions of modernity. His films engage with the anxieties produced by the erosion of the modern order, the ruptures that emerge when confronting the uncertainties of the postmodern condition, and the exclusionary codes embedded in the Turkish modernization project. From this perspective, Turgul's works should not be viewed solely as aesthetic productions; rather, they function as a cinematic archive of the cultural, ideological, and social tensions that have shaped Turkey's experience of modernization. By bringing to light the multilayered structure of Turgul's cinema, the present study reveals how the debate between modernism and postmodernism is reflected in the Turkish context.

The reflections of the postmodern era in Turkey have also permeated Yavuz Turgul's cinema, and the director's discomfort with the collapse of modernist discourse finds its place there. The failure of Turkish modernization, which has become more evident in the postmodern era, is reflected in Yavuz Turgul's cinema as both a lament in some places and a ruthless critique in others. While pursuing great ideals and facing great defeats is lamentable, his criticism has focused on clumsy, insensitive, and somewhat unsuccessful practices that cannot keep pace with the changing world.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Bu çalışmada, bir yönetmen/senaristin çalışmalarından hareketle sanatçının genelde modernist sanat anlayışı, özelde ise Türk modernleşmesine yönelik eleştirileri tartışılmaktadır. Türk sinemasında kendine has bir yere sahip olan Yavuz Turgul modernist bir yaklaşıma sahiptir. Bu modernist tutumu kariyerinin bütün basamaklarında ortaya koyduğu yapıtlarında gözlemlenebilir. Bu çalışmada,

Yavuz Turgul'un eserleri iki döneme ayrılmıştır. 1970'li yıllarda Arzu Film çatısı altında ortaya koyduğu çalışmalardan başlayarak 1992 tarihli Gölge Oyunu adlı filmine kadar olan ilk dönem filmlerinde gelenek ile modern arasındaki ilişkiyi merkeze alarak, gelenek ile modern arasındaki çatışmaya odaklanan Turgul'un, modernizme eleştirel yaklaşmakla birlikte, modernist bir tavır takındığı gözlenmektedir. 1992 tarihli Gölge Oyunu adlı çalışması bir geçiş dönemi çalışmasıdır. Postmodern dönemle birlikte bulanıklaşan gerçeklik duygusunu işlediği bu filmde, Turgul zemini kaymış, akışkan bir toplumda hayal/rüya ile gerçek arasındaki çizginin ne kadar inceldiğine vurgu yapmaktadır. 1996 tarihli Eşkıya filminden günümüze kadar gelen olgunluk dönemlerinde ise daha çok değişen dünyada cari olan modern-postmodern çatışmasına odaklanan sanatçı yine modern anlayıştan yana bir tavır alarak söylem geliştirmektedir. Ancak Yavuz Turgul'un modernist tutumu moderniteye eleştirileri de içermektedir. Sanatçı moderniteyi mutlak bir olgu olarak ele almamaktadır. Özellikle de Türk modernleşmesine yönelik kimi eleştirilerini filmlerindeki karakterler, mekânlar ve isimler üzerinden ortaya koymaktadır. Bu çalışma, Yavuz Turgul'un postmodern duruma karşı çıkışlarını yönetmenin modernizm eleştirisiyle birlikte ele almaktadır. Çalışma yönetmen-senaristin yapıtlarını yapı-söküme tabi tutarak, söylem analizine dayanmaktadır.

Yavuz Turgul modernist bir sinema insanıdır. Onun modernist duruşunu iki şekilde belirlemek mümkündür: 1) Filmlerindeki modern anlatım teknikleri: Burada en temel belirleyici katarsis olgusudur. Seyircinin özdeşleşmeden duyduğu duygusal doyuma gönderme yapan Turgul, birçok filminde bu katarsis yöntemini kullanmıştır. Ayrıca moderniteye içkin bir form olarak Turgul bir 'auteur'dür. Romanda "tanrı yazar"ı tanımlamak için kullanılan 'auteur' kavramını sinemacı Yavuz Turgul için de kullanabiliriz. Ayrıca kendisinin de itiraf ettiği üzere, filmlerinde son derece determinist bir üslup belirgindir. Yani sahnede kullanılan her öğe belirli bir amaca hizmet edecek bir tasarımla yerleştirilir. Bu titizlik modernist sinema anlayışının bir ürünüdür. 2) Karakterlerin konumlandırılması: Yavuz Turgul'un filmlerinde

karakterlerin konumlandırılması bize çok şey anlatır. Karakter yaratmada bir amacı vardır ve kendi söylemsel geçmişini karakterlere yansıtarak izleyiciyi etkilemeye çalışır. Bu aynı zamanda didaktik unsurlarla da ilgili bir tutumdur. Ana karakter aynı zamanda çatışmanın da merkezinde yer alır ve seyirci filmin sonuna kadar karşılaştığı sorunları nasıl aştığını, bu sorunlarla yüzleşirken nasıl dönüştüğünü gözlemler. Çatışmanın doğası, deneyim sahibinin/karakterlerin bilinçlerindeki bölünmeyle belirlenir. Bir başka deyişle, değişen dünyayla birlikte insanların karşılaştığı zorluklar ve bu zorluklara karşı geliştirdikleri stratejiler hikâyenin akışını oluşturur. Modernlik her zaman ekrandadır ve Turgul da tarafını göstermekten çekinmemektedir. Seyirci olarak bizler, Turgul'un nerede durduğunu en başından beri biliriz.

Bu çalışmada sinematografik okumayı kolaylaştırmak amacıyla Turgul'un sanatsal gelişimini kabaca iki ana gruba ayırmıştır: a) ilk dönem çalışmalarından 1992 tarihli Gölge Oyunu filmine kadar olan dönem ve b) Eşkıya (1996) filminden günümüze kadar olan dönem. Bu çalışmada bu dönemselleştirme ekseninde Yavuz Turgul'un sinematografik gelişimi de analiz edilmiştir. Bu dönemlendirmede Gölge Oyunu (1992) filmi arada yer alan ve bir geçiş filmi niteliğinde olup, senarist/yönetmen açısından bir dönüşümün ve yeni bir anlayışın işaret fişeği olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Turgul ilk filmlerinde anlatısının ana çelişkisini gelenek ile modernlik arasında kurar. Merkezde yer alan karakterler ve modernleşme, modern dünyayla buluşma, gelenekten ve gelenekselden kopma eksenleri etrafında dönen ana hikâye ve bunlar olurken yaşanan kopuşlar hikâyenin akışı içerisinde ekrana yansıtılmaktadır. Davaro, Çiçek Abbas, Züğürt Ağa gibi artık Türk sinemasının kültleşmiş filmlerinin senaristi olan Turgul, bu ilk dönemine ait filmlerinde yine modern anlayıştan yana tavır alır, didaktik unsurlara yer vererek toplumun dönüşümüne katkıda bulunur, bazı yerlerde toplumun, bazı yerlerde ise devletin dönüştürülmesine çağrıda bulunan bir üslup kullanır. Gelenekten moderne geçerken modernist tutuma sahip olsa da modernizmin de yıkıcı etkilerine işaret etmekten geri kalmaz.

İkinci dönem filmlerinde durum biraz farklıdır. Temel çelişkinin ekseni gelenek ile modernite arasında değil, postmodern durum ile modernite arasında kuruludur. Bunun gerçekleşmesinin elbette konjonktürel nedenleri vardır. Postmodern çağın getirdiği belirsizliklerin modernist bir sanatçıyı ne kadar rahatsız ettiğini Turgul'un sinema dilinden anlayabiliriz. Bu rahatsızlığının en güzel örneklerini Eşkıya (1996), Gönül Yarası (2004) ve Kabadayı (2007) filmlerinde görmekteyiz. Ancak söylem analizi yaparken diğer filmlerine de yer yer atıfta bulunulmuştur. Bu noktada, bu yazının modernist sinemadan ziyade sadece modern ve postmodern koşullara odaklandığını belirtmekte yarar var. Dolayısıyla yazı boyunca modernizm veya postmodernizmden bahsedildiğinde modern veya postmodern sanat değil, durum kastedilmektedir. Netice itibarıyla bu çalışma Yavuz Turgul'un senarist ve/veya yönetmen olarak katkıda bulunduğu olgunluk dönemi üç eserinden (Eşkıya-1996, Gönül Yarası-2004 ve Kabadayı-2007) hareketle postmodern değişim karşısında Turgul'un almış olduğu modern tavrı incelemekte ve sanatçının değişen dünyaya karşı rahatsızlıklarının kökenlerine inmeye çalışmaktadır. Bunu yaparken de metodoloji olarak çalışma boyunca söylem analizi çerçevesinde bir değerlendirmede bulunulmaktadır.

İkinci dönemin miladı olarak Eşkıya (1996) filmini alabiliriz. Filmde karakterler üzerinden vurgu yeteri kadar net değildir fakat bir şeylerin değiştiğinin farkındadır ve Kabadayı (2007) filminde daha net vurgularla konuyu bir kez daha irdeler. Eşkıya filminin Baran'ı, Kabadayı filminin Ali Osman'ının bir prototipidir. Cumali ise Devran karakterine tekabül eder. Protagonistler bir ahlak anlayışına sahip, hayatı, hayatları sıradan bir hayat olmasa da bir düzen içerisinde yaşayan, bir "racon"ları olan adamlardır. Antagonistler ise hiçbir kural tanımayan, "racon" namına ne varsa ezip/yıkıp geçen kişilikte insanlardır. Kural tanımazlıkları kendilerine olduğu kadar başkalarına da zarar verir. Açık bir şekilde post-modernizmin kaygan ahlaki zeminine mesafeli bir diskur kurmaktadır Turgul.

Yavuz Turgul filmlerinin ekseriyetinde gördüğümüz eski-yeni çatışması bu filmlerde de vardır. Dönüşmekte olan bir ülke vardır ve bu dönüşümün ne yöne doğru gittiği, yönetmenin esas soruşturmasını oluşturmaktadır. Turgul'un her bir film boyunca eskiden yana tavır koyduğunu hissederiz; adeta değişimin olumluya doğru olmayacağına inanıyor gibidir ve bunu seyirciye sezdirirken ikincil öğeler kullanmayı da ihmal etmez sanatçı (örneğin, diğer filmlerinde sık sık kullandığı öğeler olarak kaybolmakta olan gayrimüslimler ve yine silinmekte olan eski İstanbul silüeti gibi).

Yavuz Turgul Türk modernleşme çizgisinin dışında bir sanat insanı değildir. Türk modernleştiricilerinin yapıp eyledikleri ve bunların sonuçlarına ilişkin itirazlar geliştirmiş olsa da temelde modernleştirici bir tutum sinemasının diline içkindir. Bunu yukarıda özetlemeye çalıştığımız modern tavırdan anlamaktayız. Tüm eleştirilerine rağmen, Yavuz Turgul toplumun modernleştirilmesine karşı değildir, ancak modernleştirme politikalarının yönü hakkında farklı düşünmektedir. Bütün filmlerinde bununla ilgili ideolojik altyapıyı okuyabiliriz. Postmodern dönemin Türkiye'deki yansımaları Yavuz Turgul sinemasının diline de sirayet etmiştir ve yönetmenin modernist söylemin çöküşünden rahatsızlık duygusu açık bir şekilde sinemasında kendine yer bulur. Türk modernleşmesinin postmodern durumla birlikte iyice açığa çıkan başarısızlığı, Yavuz Turgul sinemasında kimi yerde bir ağıt, kimi yerde acımasız bir eleştiri olarak kendine yer bulur. Büyük ülkülerin peşinden koşup büyük yenilgilerle karşılaşılması ağıt yakılacak bir durum iken, değişen dünyaya ayak uyduramayan hantal, duyarsız ve beceriksizce uygulanan pratikler ise eleştiri konusu olmuştur.

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