



Kültür ve İletişim

culture&communication

Yıl: 23 Sayı: 46 (Year: 23 Issue: 46)

Eylül-2020-Mart 2021 (September 2020-March 2021)

E-ISSN: 2149-9098

2020, 23(2): 342-375

DOI: 10.18691/kulturveiletisim.735562

****Research Article****

Club Med Foça: The Transformation of Leisure Culture in Turkey*

Aras Özgün & Serkan Şavk**

Abstract

In this paper, we trace the transformation of leisure culture and emergence of tourism as a form of life-style consumption in Turkey by analyzing the representation of Club Med Foça, in Turkish media between 1967 and 2005, during the Club's active period in which it served as a catalyst for such cultural transformation. We deploy Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodological framework for this purpose, and examine a variety of historical resources including popular magazines, news pieces, feature films, postcards, official documents and a photo-romance series for analyzing the representational contexts involving Club Med Foça. Our analysis shows that leisure culture and life-style consumption in Turkey has emerged between the tension of national identity and westernization, yet, at a later stage of the country's modernization process, the main axis of tension shifted from an ambivalent relation of Turkish national identity with its western other to an ambivalent relation between the social classes in Turkey.

Keywords: Cultural globalization, critical discourse analysis, leisure culture, life style consumption, identity politics.

* Received: 11/05/2020 • Accepted: 28/08/2020

** Aras Özgün: İzmir University of Economics Faculty of Communication, Cinema and Digital Media Department

Orcid no: 0000-0001-8105-3551, aras.ozgun@ieu.edu.tr

Serkan Şavk: İzmir University of Economics Faculty of Communication, Cinema and Digital Media Department

Orcid no: 0000-0002-3926-8384, savkserkan@hotmail.com

****Araştırma Makalesi****

***Club Med Foça: Türkiye’de Dinlence Kültürünün
Dönüşümü ****

Aras Özgün ve Serkan Şavk**

Öz

Bu makalede, Türkiye’nin Ege kıyısında metruk bir tatil köyü durumunda olan Club Med Foça’nın, 1967-2005 arasındaki hizmet süresi boyunca, dinlence kültürünün Türkiye’deki gelişimini katalize eden kültürel, ekonomik ve politik bir varlık olarak Türk medyasında nasıl temsil edildiğinin izini sürüyoruz. Bu amaca yönelik olarak popüler dergiler, gazete haberleri, sinema filmleri, kartpostallar, resmî belgeler, ve bir foto-roman dizisi de dahil olmak üzere çeşitli tarihsel kaynaklardan yararlanıyoruz. Söz konusu kaynaklarda, Club Med Foça’nın temsil edildiği bağlamları analiz etmek üzere Eleştirel Söylem Analizi’ne başvuruyoruz. Club Med Foça’yı çevreleyen diğer temsil bağlamlarının dönüşümünü inceleyerek, Türkiye’de dinlence kültürü ve yaşam tarzı tüketiminin ulusal kimlik-batılılaşma ve küreselleşme geriliminde nasıl geliştiğini tartışıyoruz. Sonuç olarak, söz konusu temsil rejimlerinin, ülkenin modernleşmesinin bir parçası olmak üzere Türkiye’de dinlence kültürünün benimsenmesiyle paralel işlediğini, gerilimin Türk ulusal kimliğiyle onun batılı ötekisi arasındaki ikircikli bir eksenden, Türkiye’de farklı toplumsal sınıflar arasındaki bir başka ikircikli eksene kaydığını iddia ediyoruz.

Anahtar sözcükler: Kültürel küreselleşme, eleştirel söylem analizi, dinlence kültürü, yaşam tarzı tüketimi, kimlik politikaları.

* Geliş tarihi: 13/05/2020 • Kabul tarihi: 28/08/2020

** Aras Özgün: İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi, Sinema ve Dijital Medya Bölümü

Orcid no: 0000-0001-8105-3551, aras.ozgun@ieu.edu.tr

Serkan Şavk: İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi, Sinema ve Dijital Medya Bölümü

Orcid no: 0000-0002-3926-8384, savkserkan@hotmail.com

Club Med Foça: The Transformation of Leisure Culture in Turkey

Introduction

On the Aegean coast of Anatolia, at 70 km north of Izmir near Foça, lays a site of historical ruins no tourist is interested in visiting. Remains of the residential and administrative buildings and various types of social and communal spaces tell us that a population of approximately 2000 people had inhabited the site. Although the fauna has grown over and among the buildings, they appear to be intact, and give the impression of being suddenly abandoned, rather than being destroyed by a natural disaster or an invasion. These are the ruins of Club Méditerranée Foça¹, a now-abandoned “holiday resort” which had been opened in 1967 as the first of its kind in the eastern Mediterranean Region. Even though there are a few studies on the touristic and architectural significance of Club Med Foça (Doğrusoy, 2008; Kozak & Coşar, 2017; Saf, 2019), the role of this site as a catalyzer in the transformation of leisure culture in Turkey until 2005, remained unnoticed in the literature. In this paper, we revisit the story of Club Med Foça from the perspective of leisure and cultural studies with an emphasis on Turkey’s near history. By using this site as an entry point, and analyzing the representational contexts of the resort in Turkish media and popular culture throughout its life span, we intend to discuss the development of leisure culture and life-style consumption in Turkey within the tension of national identity vs. westernization and globalization. The transformations of these representational contexts work parallel to the transformation of leisure culture in Turkey as a part of the country’s modernization. Our analysis shows that, tourism has been perceived as a signifier of western culture in the beginning, and the transformation of leisure culture in Turkey had been marked by a constitutive tension between Turkish national identity and

¹ The company was known as Club Méditerranée SA, until Chinese investment company Fosun’s takeover in 2015. Since then the official name of the company has been Club Med SA S. In this paper, we prefer to mention the company with its commonly known name as Club Med, and its resort in Foça as Club Med Foça.

its western other. Yet, at a later stage in the country's modernization process, due to the adoption of such life-style consumption patterns by Turkish upper-middle classes, the main axis of tension shifts from an ambivalent relation between Turkish national identity and its western other to an ambivalent relation between social classes.² In this regard, our paper is an original contribution to the literature on the history of cultural globalization, the development of leisure culture within the process of modernization in Turkey, and Turkey's cultural transformation in general since the 1960s.

For this purpose, we will first briefly explain the emergence of Club Med in the post-WWII European cultural context as a tourism model and life-style consumption novelty. After that, we will provide a brief account of Club Med Foça's early history. Then, we will analyze the representation of Club Med Foça in Turkish popular media from its opening to closure. Finally, we will focus on the late history and closure of the resort for discussing how its closure had been related with the restructuring of Club Med against the backdrop of the transformation of global tourism and leisure culture, as well as the transformation of life-style consumption in Turkey.

In this study, we rely on a variety of primary sources that we have reached through archival research, including periodicals, feature films, postcards, news pieces and a photo-romance. Popular magazine *Hayat*, Turkish equivalent of famous Life magazine, featured Club Med Foça on its front cover in two different issues published six years apart (*Hayat*, 1967; Güney, 1973). The textual and visual content of these featured news, and other content surrounding them in the same issues, are among the main sources of our inquiry. Thanks to the issues of *Hayat* magazine, we have a lively panorama of leisure, recreation and tourism cultures of Turkey by then. Another primary source is an introductory section about Foça in the Tourism Supplement of daily newspaper *Milliyet* (*Milliyet*, 1981). Published in fascicles, this supplement presents the village of Foça mostly with images from Club Med.

² This article is an extended and rewritten version of the authors' unpublished conference proceeding titled "Club Med Phocia: An Archeology of High-Modernity" presented at International Society of Markets and Development 15th Biennial Conference, July 2018, Chisinau, Moldova. We are grateful to Fuat Fırat, İbrahim Gürsu, Özgür Atila, Erkan Serçe, Deniz Atik, Andreas Treske, Gökhan Gökgöz, and Alper Gedik for their contributions during the long research and writing processes of this article.

A very interesting piece among our primary sources is a photo-romance shot at Club Med Foça in 1984. Serialized by *Milliyet* and featuring famous professionals from Turkish film industry such as director Feyzi Tuna, screenwriter Safa Önal and actors Salih Güney and Bahar Öztan, this photo-romance is based on the entangled relations among a group of people who very well fit into the public image of the Club.

A series of postcards depicting the facilities and natural beauties of Club Med Foça were printed by different sources in the 1980s. Marked with the name of Club Med Foça either in French or in Turkish, these postcards give the impression of being sold to the guests of the club. Yet, looking at the New Year or Eid-al-Fitr greetings on the backside of these cards, we can discern that these cards were also in circulation outside of the club, probably in the broader region of Izmir. Reading these cards gives us insight specifically about the myth of exoticism and orientalism that envelopes the public representations of Club Med Foça.

Even though they are not directly related to Club Med, we should mention two feature films among our primary sources. *Smart Alecks [Sivri Akıllılar]* (Alasya, 1977) and *The Uncouth Ones [Görgüsüzler]* (Seden, 1982) are among the products of Turkish film industry's tendency of using hotels and holiday resorts conveniently as filming locations. Based on unexpected encounters among people from different social classes, these accessible, popular comedies perfectly demonstrate the transformation of leisure culture in Turkey.

Apart from these primary sources, we also benefit from several news pieces from *Milliyet*, a prominent mainstream liberal newspaper that has been in circulation throughout the existence of Club Med Foça. Thanks to *Milliyet*'s well-organized digital archive and database of its printed volumes, we could track unexpected aspects of Club Med Foça's media coverage, such as the mentioning of its name in political controversies. Yet we also used a number of other sources including The Official Gazette of the Turkish Republic [T.C. Resmî Gazete], various local and regional newspapers (both print and online) and official documents.

For analyzing the representational contexts involving Club Med Foça within these sources, we resort to Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodological framework in this

research. Critical discourse analysis perceives language as a form of social practice, and aims to decipher how discursive practices constitute the 'reality' of the social world by analyzing the signification processes that we engage in our social experience within various modalities (such as moving images in cinema and television, face-to-face verbal communications, graphic signs, news reports, and various narrative forms in printed media) (Sturken & Cartwright, 2012). In this respect, critical discourse analysis relies on identifying the constitutive elements in a discursive construct (such as the way an event is presented in a news report, or the way a speaker addresses her/his audience) and semiological analysis of these elements in the contexts of social and political relations (Gill, 2000). Such social and political contexts of representations, the repertoire of associations and connotations they offer, present us how signs become ideologically charged signifiers of a secondary order (Barthes, 1972). In other words, critical discourse analysis is not only an inquiry upon how the representation (of an event, or a thing, or social subjects) is constructed, but also what does it do, and how does it affect our perception of the world and the power relations in society (van Dijk, 1993).

Within this methodological framework, our research objectives are to identify within this large body of archival resources: How Club Med Foça is represented as a cultural, economic, and political entity? What are the other representational contexts regarding leisure culture and life-style consumption that surround Club Med Foça? How these representational contexts have been transformed through the life span of Club Med Foça? Finally, what is the connection between these representational contexts and the continuing tension between Turkish national identity and its western/global other?

As we will discuss in detail below, the novelties surrounding the opening and the operation of Club Med Foça (such as, the choosing of the specific location by Club Med, its advertisements for its European clientele after the opening of the Club, the initial perception of the Club among Turkish public and the alteration of such perception in the following decades) reproduces the characteristics (as well as the problematics) of 'orientalism,' which, according to Edward Said, is the main ideological framework that regulates the European subjects' relationship to the rest of the world (Said, 1978). Examining the travel literature, scholarship, and art concerned with the Middle East

produced in Europe, Said argues that these works ultimately produce a regime of representation that renders non-western cultures as 'historyless' and static, indolent, mysterious, sexually decadent and conservative at the same time, and buried in their traditions that prevents them from changing. Said notes that this representational regime not only constructs and solidifies the identity of modern European subject by providing it with a referential 'other', but also justifies the domination of Europeans over its colonies. According to Gosh (2003: 275), Orientalist discourse "... resulted in a dialectic between 'self' and 'other,' between the familiar 'us' and the peculiar 'them.'"

Because the study of the "orient" began with a fascination and desire for it in the first place, it gave rise to the exoticization of this "other." Representations about the Orient, in other words, worked to create clear and fixed demarcations between Europe and "others" and resulted in standards of inclusion and exclusion. They provided the foundational dichotomies of modern-premodern and primitive-civilized, which were crucial to Europe's own self-identity and the maintenance of its hegemony over the colonized" (Gosh, 2003: 275).

As we will analyze below, such self-identity construction indexed to standards of inclusion and exclusion becomes crystallized in its media coverage in the first two decades of the resort. The representational modality we find in this media coverage resonates with Neziha Erdoğan's observations about the construction of national identity in Turkish cinema (1998) in this sense. Most of our primary sources display exemplary cases of what Erdoğan explains with the notions of "affirmation," "ambivalence," "mimicry" and "resistance". Erdoğan claims that since its inception during the late Ottoman era, "cinema seems to have served as the latest desiring machine ... and filmgoing itself had the charm of being a western-style ritual" (1998: 260). Echoing Thomas Elsaesser's point (Elsaesser, 1980: 52), Erdoğan (1998: 263) argues that the national identity can only be constructed through the affirmation of an esteemed other, through such esteemed others endorsing, confirming, and benevolent gaze. However, with a reference to Roy Armes's observation (Armes, 1989: 7), he maintains that in the third world context such affirmation is only provided if the representation of that national identity corroborates with the orientalist ideological construction of the western gaze (Erdoğan, 1998: 263–264). Therefore, he argues that, specifically during the 1960s and the 1970s –the heydays of the film industry-

Turkish popular cinema describes national identity, through an ambivalent process between mimicry and resistance (Erdoğan, 1998: 260). The ambivalence stems from the opposition between resisting and mimicking at the same time the Western/European cultural codes in the filmic narratives. We argue that a similar ambivalence becomes visible in the media coverage of Club Med Foça, throughout the lifespan of the resort.

Interestingly, the axis of ambivalent self-identification shifts in later decades, due to the wide-scale adoption of western leisure culture, tourism and life-style consumption practices by the Turkish elite, which introduces new inclusion and exclusion standards. In this phase, the widening socio-economic gap between the poor/working class and the urban elite manifests itself in conspicuous consumption practices, and exclusive holiday resorts like Club Med Foça become the signifiers of a privileged life-style distinctly attainable by upper classes.

Early history of Club Med

Club Med was established in the 1950's as not only a novel business model, but also as an iconic representation of post-war cultural, social and economic transformations. Gérard Blitz, whose family operated a vacation club for a war-stricken generation, and who had been operating a rehabilitation center for concentration camp survivors for Belgian Government himself, founded Club Med as in the summer of 1950. The novelty of Blitz's Club Med had been an emphasis on hedonism and complete escape from the banality of modern social life, rather than health and fitness, or moral and physical self-improvement oriented notions of 'vacation' that dominated the leisure industry until then (Furlough, 1993). The form and content of Club Med had already been apparent in a makeshift summer camp Blitz organized in 1950 at Majorca. The camp was attended by around two hundred fifty middle class urban young professionals from various western European countries, who spent two weeks in tents, ate dinners together, dressed in Polynesian outfits (which were provided by Blitz's wife who spent some time in Tahiti), entertained by flamenco dancers and a small orchestra, swam and indulged in sports activities. Blitz was able to create a community feeling among the attendees by introducing reunions and off-

season activities of the Club after the camp, and a news bulletin —the *Trident*— that informed the members about each other (such as marriages and births among them) and these activities. Members of the Club were titled as *gentils membres* (congenial members, GM's), and the employees were addressed as *gentils organisateurs* (congenial organizer, GO's) (Kotabe & Helsen, 2010: 675). A mythologized culture of Polynesia thematically informed the rhetoric and social practices of the Club in the following years, and helped establishing its counter-modern image, which was then labelled as *esprit du Club* (“*the spirit of the Club*”).

By late 60's, the Club became a massive tourism enterprise that had over four hundred thousand members, operated more than 30 villages in Europe with around two thousand employees at the height of the summer, doing about 20 million dollars of business every year (Furlough, 1993: 74). What made Club Med a cultural icon, beyond a successful business model, was how the cultural and discursive practices it introduced and cultivated overlapped with the emergence of a new social class in post-war Europe. It embodied the cultural norms and practices, ethos and ideological dispositions of what Pierre Bourdieu and others studied as the new European Middle Class (Boltanski, 1987: 109–116; Bourdieu, 1984) that emerged in the post-war economic growth; “a group seen as a ‘new petit bourgeoisie’ of service people and technicians and the ‘new bourgeoisie’ of cadres and ‘dynamic executives’” (Furlough, 1993: 75). Club Med offered to this new social class a commodified temporal and sensory experience that addressed the ideological and cultural novelties of their life-style. This commodified exotic temporality would increasingly demarcate ‘tourism’ as a leisure activity in the following decades, and become a part of the consumption patterns that signify western, modern, urban, young professional lifestyle.

Such lifestyle consumption would be adopted globally within the process of the modernization of peripheral countries like Turkey, as their gradual integration to globalizing economy resulted in the emergence of this new social class in these countries as well. At the same time, as we will trace through the mediated representations we analyze below, while tourism came to be a part of the consumption patterns that defined the much aspired ‘modern life’, unlike western/European socio-economic context, such

modern life and its consumption patterns appeared to be a 'distinction' (Bourdieu, 1984) only achievable for upper classes, due to certain cultural and economic conflicts inherent to fast-track modernization process. In other words, in these peripheral countries, such commodified experience of 'escaping from modern life' ironically became one of the exclusive signifiers of the much desirable modern lifestyle of the urban social elite. The transformation regarding consumption patterns and social classes accelerated in Turkey particularly between the 1970s and the 1980s. Nurdan Gürbilek (2019: 66) asserts that a significant aspect of politics in Turkey during the 1970s had been the project of establishing a political zone that included people from different social backgrounds, that brought together and was shared by the rich and the poor, the cultured and the uncultured, or the Istanbulite and the migrant alike.³ However, such project has been abandoned, and left its place to social and economic polarization under the disguise of cultural pluralism in the 1980s. (Gürbilek, 2019: 11, 71, 109).

Brief History of Club Med Foça Resort

Club Med Foça had been among the first holiday resorts the company opened up in the Eastern Mediterranean Region during this period of expansion. The introduction of foreign hospitality groups to Turkey started with the founding of Hilton İstanbul in 1955 and continued with Club Med in 1966 (Kozak & Coşar, 2017: 41). Considering the fact that Hilton İstanbul was a city hotel, Club Med Foça should be regarded as the first of its kind as a summer holiday resort in Turkey. An advertisement published on daily newspaper *Milliyet* on May 26, 1966 announces that miscellaneous items regarding the construction of two holiday resorts in Foça and Kuşadası (another town on the Aegean coast of Turkey) would be awarded by way of competitive bidding (Milliyet, 1966). By then, Foça was a small fishing town with a population of 2953 people and its press coverage was limited to

³ Necmi Erdoğan (2008) claims that during the 1970s the common point between different left-wing fractions such as the Republican People's Party (under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit) or the DEV-YOL (*Revolutionary Path*) movement was incorporating populist imagination to their political discourses. We content that the political communality between people with diverse social backgrounds as articulated by Nurdan Gürbilek was related to the incorporation of populism by left-wing discourses in Turkey.

rare news about prison escapees.⁴ The construction of a holiday resort in Foça was part of a wider program executed by The Retirement Fund of Turkish Republic, an institution responsible for social security services for state officers. Starting from the mid-1950s, the Retirement Fund constructed various hotels and holiday resorts in different locations of Turkey with the purpose of fundraising. Iconic architectural works such as Istanbul Hilton Hotel, Izmir Efes Oteli and Büyük Ankara Oteli are the products of this program.

The agreement between Club Med and The Retirement Fund for establishing a touristic holiday village in Foça was signed (Milliyet, 1965) The financial model behind the founding of Club Med Foça was an example of local investment-foreign management collaboration (Kozak & Coşar, 2017: 40). The privilege was initially issued for 15 years (T.C. Resmî Gazete, 1920: 1–2), and had subsequently been renewed in 1982, thus allowing the resort to operate until 2005.⁵ Yet, the initial lease agreement itself set certain conditions which would contribute to the development of controversial perception of the resort among the Turkish public in the following decades. According to the lease agreement, at least 75% of the overnight capacity of the village should be reserved for those holding a foreign passport and Club Med was supposed to make the lease payments in foreign currency. Such clause shaped the resort's customer profile, and through that, established its public image as a facility for primarily European tourists. Spending their holiday at Club Med Foça remained an elite affair enjoyed by only a small privileged group of Turkish citizens in the following decades, until the 1990's. Every January or February the company issued very small and formally worded ads on Turkish newspapers, announcing the opening of membership registration for the upcoming summer season (Milliyet, 1977). Designed to fulfill a legal responsibility, yet curbing the local demand strategically, these advertisements were far from being inviting compared to the Club's other promotional materials.

⁴ Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (1965). In the census data, the total number of male residents was more than twice of females. This significant difference was due to the inclusion of the students and personnel at the military school which was founded in 1963. In other words, the total population of Foça should have been less without the military school. We are grateful to Erkan Serçe for his clarification in this issue.

⁵ Kozak and Coşar (2017: 46) claim that Club Med executives were convinced for building the resort in Foça thanks to the efforts of the local authorities such as Selçuk Dirim, the mayor of Foça by then.

The first clients of the village arrived at Foça on June 25, 1967 (Milliyet, 1967a) and the official opening ceremony took place on July 17, 1967 in the presence of ministries, the director-general of the Retirement Fund and Baron Edmond de Rothschild, one of the shareholders of Club Med (Milliyet, 1967b). Since the village was put into service quite rapidly, both the clients and the employees faced miscellaneous problems in this very first tourism season. Nevertheless, Club Med Foça gradually became an established and well-functioning resort in the next years. Gilbert Trigano, the CEO of Club Med by then, stated in 1972 that Foça resort had been the highest ranked branch of the Club by its members (Milliyet, 1972).

Foça village was not the only resort Club Med operated in Turkey. In addition to the Kuşadası village which is almost simultaneously constructed with the one in Foça, the company also had resorts/hotels in Bodrum, Kemer and Capadocia, some of which still continue to operate today. But Foça resort had a distinct stance among the other Club Med facilities in Turkey as a result of the publicity around it, its size, and its location. News and stories from the resort had been highly publicized in Turkish media from its initial conception until its closure. It even appeared as the stage of a few popular fiction narratives, and in a sense, became a reference of western identity, culture and influence in Turkey during a period of cultural transformation oriented towards modernization and westernization.

During the 1960s, a decade that overlaps with the founding and popularization of Club Med Foça, Turkey went through a series of sharp political and economic changes. Korkut Boratav (2008: 118) asserts that planning was the distinctive feature of the post 1962 period in Turkish economic history. Starting from 1963, three consecutive development plans were issued for every five years and these plans substantially influenced the investment policies. The founding years of Club Med Foça is all covered within the framework of the First Five-Year Development Plan (T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 1963). Even though the plan does not directly refer to the establishment of a touristic holiday village in Foça, certain provisions proposed in the plan (such as the allocation of investable resources by Retirement Fund [111], or increasing

Turkey's tourism capacity for balancing import-export deficit [425]) appear to be the economic motivations that prepare the grounds for the founding of Club Med Foça.

Simultaneously, radical left politics gained popularity in Turkey during the 1960s. Although there were certain other differences among radical left political groups, their relatively new political discourses were commonly based on anti-imperialism and incorporated nationalism in that regard (Belge, 2003; Aydın, 2008; Atılğan, 2008; Doğan, 2011). Inclusion of nationalism in socialist discourses as such had not been unique to Turkey, but a recurrent theme in third world politics (Belge, 2003; Doğan, 2011). Nevertheless, such an incorporation ironically created shared position among radical left and Islamist/conservative discourses. Since its inception in Turkey, Islamism had been a salvation ideology that could easily converge with a nationalist framework (Mert, 2005: 414). Most intellectuals and political thinkers who are considered as the founders of Islamist ideology in Turkey such as Said Nursî, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek and Nurettin Topçu gave a significant place to nationalism in their thoughts (Çetinsaya, 2005).

As such, Turkey had been continuing to struggle with balancing the economic, political and cultural aspects of modernization in the 1960's. Albeit still relying on import substitution industrialization, above mentioned economy policies had been introducing novelties of 'western' consumer culture. This hegemonic tendency had been challenged by nationalist political discourses from both left-wing and right-wing groups, which incorporated the criticism of cultural imperialism as a common ideological element as we mentioned above. Club Med's cultural identity, as manifested in its self-inscribed "the spirit of the Club" (*"esprit du Club"*) with references to a set of hedonistic cultural practices including sexual liberation, had created a tension with conservative appropriations of cultural imperialism criticism. Such tension was also supported by the admission policies of the resort; apart from the local workers it employed, the number of Turkish citizens allowed as clients had been limited to the 25% of the resort's capacity —and the club membership was only promoted in Turkish press almost invisibly. Thus, the resort became an apparent target of criticism pointing to western decadence, and economic and

cultural imperialism in mainstream Turkish media and Turkish popular culture in the following decades.

Yet, tourism and westernized consumption patterns associated with leisure activities had been gradually adopted by Turkish upper classes. Going to foreign or exotic places, indulging in leisure activities away from everyday settings required financial ability and social affluence, and these were becoming the signifiers of bourgeois life-style, setting the wealthy, educated, modern urban folk apart from traditional middle classes whose holiday activities consist of visiting hometown and spending time with extended family. Under these circumstances, Club Med Foça became a dubious icon in Turkish popular culture; on the one hand, it represented much-loathed cultural and economic imperialism, yet, on the other hand, it became the icon of a life-style that was aspired by a new urban upper-middle class generation.

Still, as we will discuss below, the club's representation in the media had often been controversial and ideologically charged. The history of public debates around the resort reflects the contentious nature of the social transformation, and the resistance it had met from both nationalist left and right camps in highly politicized Turkish everyday culture during this period.

1967 *Hayat* Magazine: The Affirmation

The August 10, 1967 edition of weekly *Hayat* magazine features the newly opened club on its cover, with the title "From Paris to Foça", and announces the founding of a "new holiday village for European tourists" in Izmir (Hayat, 1967).

Inside, the deck of the article highlights how the resort provides a peaceful getaway for the movie stars "working in the dark studios of London," (Hayat, 1967: 3) as well as humble white-collar middle class of Northern Europe. In line, it mentions European aristocrats and celebrities who chose to spend their vacations in Turkey, and notes the following remark:

Turkey is no longer an unknown place and a closed box that cannot be located on the world map. Westerners who yearn for the sea, sun and beaches appreciate our countries natural beauty, and they are more skillful in cultivating

these than us. These talented eyes and skilled hands discovered Foça of Izmir lately, and pulled it up from the dark corners of the unknown to be one of the main touristic pillars of Turkey (Hayat, 1967: 4).

Club Med is cited in the article as “the world’s biggest and most knowledgeable tourism organization”, a highly influential one that massively contributed to the development of tourism in Spain and Yugoslavia. Although the article highlights the celebrities, it also mentions the middle-class visitors of the club a few times in the following, highly detailed exposure of everyday life at the resort: “the French have a whole month yearly vacation allowance, thus spend three weeks in the resort, while the others usually spend two. But all of them end up leaving here as touched, with sweet memories” (Hayat, 1967: 5).

The image of the resort reflected in the magazine sounds particularly affirmative, and admiring. The lifestyle of western celebrities and royal families are sources of aspiration, and their decision to spend their time in Turkey is something to be proud of. The liberal attitude of Club’s guests is not presented in tension with local culture: “Everybody usually walks around half-naked in the village during the days, even the workers,” reads the caption under the photo showing a villager in his shorts, working as a hairdresser in the club, attending to a blonde European female guest. “Even the resort administrator complies with the dress code of merely swimsuits, to the degree that it is difficult to distinguish between the tourists and the hosts,” (Hayat, 1967: 5) it explains. In fact, the article is highly informative behind its celebratory tone; it even details the prices and the costs of staying at the Club. In the absence of any critical remarks, the acknowledgement that the locals work in the village and adopt the ways of the tourists seem to be taken as a sign of cultural/economic development, rather than a concern.

The Club Med feature appears as one of the general, historical, social events that concern the nation, among other similar news stories in *Hayat*’s August 1967 issue. It appears to be the only one specifically about tourism, summer, traveling, and leisure. All the other news and feature stories in the same issue are about general social occurrences relating to modern urban life and culture. Looking from today, and next to the later media coverage we will analyze below, *Hayat*’s summer issue visibly presents a significant lack; the absence of all the magazine and news stories, advertisement, entertainment and

informational pieces related with tourism, leisure activities and traveling we are now accustomed to see in the summer issues of similar magazines. There is only one other feature in the issue that is particularly ‘seasonal’—the news story about the annual traditional folk festival at Akçay, a small town at the north Aegean coast of Turkey (Sağdıç, 1967). We interpret this lack as an evidential sign of the non-existence of tourism and related notions in Turkish public culture at that time, and the news story about Akçay Festival supporting our interpretation; as we will further elaborate below, in the absence of local tourism industry and the leisure culture it is associated with, the leisure activity for the middle-class Turkish people of that time had been attending to traditional local cultural events and vacationing at their hometowns with family and friends.

1969 *Milliyet*: Negotiation

We find another news article on Club Med Foça in *Milliyet* Daily two year later, in its October 11, 1969 issue. Undertaken by the daily’s Munich correspondent, the article titled “Nobody bothers another at Foça” appears to be presenting a news report on Club Med Foça by the then popular weekly German adult magazine, *Praline* (Aydın, 1969). The article mainly summarizes and rephrases the original article’s exaggerated (if not largely fantasized) emphasis on the liberal sexual attitude in the Club; young and beautiful female GO’s participating to sex parties among the guests of both sexes, young and beautiful female GO’s accompanying the lonely male guests, sex crazed house-wives chasing a new lover everyday of their stay —and, because of the necessity prompted by the unfairness of female-to-male ratio, ‘the principle’ of two women having to sleep with one male (Aydın, 1969). However, the adult magazine’s original hyperbolic coverage, as well as other somehow informative bits on the club life, passes in the article quite positively, in a praiseful manner, together with how everything is thoughtfully set up for the comfort of the guests in the club, how socially diverse are the European members, etc. In the end, the article reminds the Club’s limited availability for Turkish folk in an invitational manner. The publication of the article itself is something to be read symptomatically in our view; *Milliyet* had been a serious and popular daily newspaper at the time, and *Praline*’s adult

nature is not mentioned in the article while its sensational coverage is joyfully rephrased. This points to the fact that, in this article *Milliyet* is actually proudly presenting the German coverage of something that happens in and belongs to Turkey in its pages; no matter how credible the source and how extravagant the narrative is, a European story takes place in Turkey through Club Med, and for *Milliyet*, that is worth reporting to the Turkish public. Simultaneously, by reimagining and/or reenvisioning the likely to be fantasized narrative of Praline, *Milliyet* presents Club Med Foça, as an unreachable object of desire, particularly for the male readers. In *Milliyet*'s presentation, the exotic fantasy presented in the adult magazine becomes negotiated with national self-identity, in an attempt to preserve the integrity of the object of desire embodied in Club Med Foça.

The proud tone of the coverage responds to the affirmative character of the esteemed other's interest in Turkey's unspoiled natural beauty. This ideological framework also explains the forgiving perception of the liberal attitude of the Club's European clientele. Their comfort in walking around half-naked and not caring about dress-codes, the myth around their sexual decadency, etc. establish and distinguish them as the cultural other. The emphasis on this cultural other's liberal sexual practices, the mystification of such practices, locates this cultural other in a privileged position against the Turkish national identity that (still) struggles with conservative traditions (despite the state-sponsored cultural modernization). In other words, the demarcation of their liberal attitude elevates the European tourists to the position of esteemed cultural other who had been able to overcome their conservative traditions, whose appreciation of the natural beauty of Turkey and Turkish local culture, in return, affirms the Turkish national identity.

Club Med's constitutive emphasis on exoticism becomes apparent in the media artifacts of its early years, and this orientalist gaze somehow complicates its perception among the Turkish public who imagine a modernist vision of the country and locate Club Med in this context. *Milliyet* Daily's report mentioned above makes a tongue in cheek reference to the exotic presentation of local culture at Club Med Foça: "Thursday nights are 'Turkish Nights'; everybody dresses in Turkish ways as much as they can, and artists from 'reputable' places nearby show their mastery in the 'art' of belly dancing for the guests" (Aydın, 1969). 'Reputable' here is probably a sarcastic reference to Roman

communities living nearby, who earn their living by performing at cheap entertainment venues and for tourists; “the ‘art’ of belly dancing” is another sarcastic expression that belittles the cultural value of the entertainment (as belly dancing is perceived as a signifier of middle eastern culture, which modern republican Turkish public do not identify with). What becomes apparent in this mention is the mismatch between Club Med and its guests’ highly exoticized perception of Turkish culture, and modern Turkish public self-image.

Such exoticization had always been present in the popular representations of Club Med Foça, regardless of the decade. For instance, in majority of the postcards of Club Med Foça, in split frames, next to the pictures of modern facilities and hip Club life, we see people riding camels, alongside the locals in traditional folk dresses (*Clup Méditerranée Foça-Turquie [Multiple View Postcard C-5142], ?; Clup Méditerranée Foca-Turquie [Multiple View Postcard 35-134.], ?*). In fact, camels had never been a part of the cultural and economic life in the region, and the ones in these pictures were brought in by Club Med and kept in their own barns in the resort. These postcards attest to the degree of Club Med’s self-exoticization and how such self-exoticization had been adopted and reproduced domestically. According to Edward Said, orientalism operates by disregarding the differences among the cultures it represents and shrouding them with a cloak of sameness —camels, which are the signifiers of some other Middle Eastern cultures, becomes attached to the landscape of Turkish Aegean coast, in order to amplify its “easterness”. And in return, such attachment is negotiated by Turkish national identity, which is founded upon its rejection of similarities with other Middle Eastern cultures.

1973 *Hayat* Magazine: The Contestation

Hayat magazine features the Club again in its August 2, 1973 issue. This time with the title, “A paradise in Turkey that is closed for Turks” (Güney, 1973). The celebratory tone of the 1967 feature is immediately replaced by a rather ambiguous discourse in the new feature. While the left part of the deck highlights morally ambiguous issues, “nobody turns their head to look at the lovers making out in the streets in broad daylight, or to people sunbathing nude on the beach,” the right side of the deck highlights the availability of all

kinds of services and entertainment facilities in the resort. “Whether you desire a Turkish Bath or hairdresser, night club or water skiing, Foça holiday village provides all kinds of entertainment facilities for every taste” (Güney, 1973: 20). Yet, the caption underneath the photo reads “our village, their pleasure” in all capitals, and continues by informing the reader that “the holiday village located at a paradise-like bay in Izmir is operated by French Club Mediterreanean company, which has already spread its arms all around the world. But, only its members, who come from other parts of the world can stay here” (Güney, 1973: 20). The photo on top of the opposite page shows visitors sunbathing on the beach from a distance, and the caption underneath once again highlights their decadent attitude; “the paradise and its angels —some of the visitors take their top off on the beach, while some others sunbathe totally naked!” (Güney, 1973: 21).

While the 1967 feature starts its story by highlighting the trips of European aristocrats and celebrities, the 1973 article opens up with a European couple camping at the bay next to the resort. They are described as “total hippies” with detailed descriptions of their physical appearances, highlighting how dirty, scruffy and carefree they look —as well as, the woman’s voluptuous body (Güney, 1973: 21).

Unlike the 1967 feature, the 1973 coverage offers no reference to the local people working at the resort. Although it strongly highlights the exploitation of natural beauty, it doesn’t question whether the resort exploits the local work force, or contribute to the local economy. The image of the 1973 feature is devoid of aspiration — it highlights the privileges of the westerners’ lifestyle, together with their decadence. Parallel to the populist anti-imperialist discourses of both left-wing and right-wing politics in Turkey, the image of the “west” embodied in the resort —as decadent, carefree invaders, would set the tone of public perception in Turkey in the following decades. Club Med would become an icon often mentioned in the political tensions and controversies within the troubled relations between Europe and Turkey during the 1980s and 1990s (see the Conclusion section of this article).

In contrast with the 1967 issue of the magazine, while the 1973 feature reflects a highly dubious discourse on how the spoiled foreigners enjoy the country (in the way local Turks cannot), and expose the locals to their decadent lifestyle, the rest of the issue

presents summer related leisure activities, summer specific society news, and includes advertisements of leisure and traveling products and summer houses. Even the news stories of the magazine reflect the rising tourism and leisure culture; in an article that features the dresses Turkish movie star Hülya Koçyiğit presented to her Greek counterpart Melina Mercouri as a gift, a well-tanned Koçyiğit is photographed with flashy summer dresses against the backdrop of the touristic city of Kuşadası (Dernek, 1973). Another news feature, titled “Last Tango in Florya” is about the “hippie dance festival” organized by youngsters at the Florya coast of Istanbul, in which “local youth” ‘imitating’ hippies dance in ‘weird moves’ along with visiting foreigners (Emir, 1973). Another news feature is about scuba diving, as “an expensive, dangerous, but pleasurable” hobby (Hayat, 1973a). One of the full-page advertisements invites the readers to buy summer properties at the coast of Antalya, with the headline “the longest summer” (Hayat, 1973b). The short fiction feature of the issue, a romantic escapade story, is titled “The Road to Sin”, and presented with the subheading “a summer novelette” (Su, 1973).

The discursive contrast among different news pieces in the August 2, 1973 issue of *Hayat* Magazine creates a perfect example of the ambiguity that we have mentioned above. While the feature on Club Med Foça represents the resort in a controversial tone, other news in the same issue affirm touristic leisure activities and consumption patterns. In other words, the western life-style/identity which was represented in an affirmative way in 1967 became contestable in 1973, whereas the associated set of consumption patterns which had been posited as an unattainable object of desire at that time became the norm.

1977 *Smart Alecks*: Changing Index of Contestation

The increasing popularity of new leisure and tourism-related consumption patterns is very well reflected in a movie that was shot not at Club Med Foça but another similar holiday village. The slapstick comedy movie *Smart Alecks [Sivri Akıllılar]* (Alasya, 1977) clearly displays the shifting index of contestation we mention above. The story takes place at Nebioğlu Holiday Village (Nebioğlu Tatil Köyü), which had been established in 1969 as the first of its kind in Turkey (Sayar & Altun, 2019: 17). Both as an equivalent and a

competitor of Club Med Foça, Nebioğlu Holiday Village embodied the increasing interest in summer tourism among the Turkish elite. Featuring a cast of some of the most popular Turkish comedy stars of the time, the plot of the film revolves around a working-class couple (Perihan and Recep) who win a vacation at the resort from a lottery organized by a daily newspaper. After they arrive at the resort, they are looked down upon and socially excluded by actual clients of the resort. By taking advantage of the unwelcomed status of Perihan and Recep, the corrupt manager of the resort and his friend impute to them a jewelry theft they commit. Luckily, two buddies (Zeki and Metin) from Perihan and Recep's neighborhood also work at the resort as waiters, who cleverly find out the real thieves and save the family. As apparent from the plotline, Perihan, Recep, Zeki and Metin are depicted as uncultivated but smart, sincere, honest and joyful characters. The only people who treat the waiter buddies in a good manner are the retired police chief who helps them in investigating the theft, and the young woman who falls in love with Zeki by being impressed by his sincerity and humbleness. The rest of the bourgeois clients of the resort, including a pathetic millionaire and an aggressive womanizer, are shown as corrupt, arrogant, and immoral people. The elements of westernized modern/urban culture are codified as the exclusive life-style of these rich clients, and thus disparaged in the narrative, whereas the entire story line is organized around the desirability of such life-style and short-cutting the requirements of achieving and enjoying such exclusivity.

The film opens with a montage scene, which associates the holiday village with eroticism and pleasant summer activities. Alongside many shots that focus on bodies of women in bikinis, the montage scene also showcases the clients while kayaking in the sea, sunbathing on the beach, jumping into the pool or simply enjoying their beverages at the pool side. The cultural clash between Perihan, Recep, Zeki and Metin and the clients of the resort starts as Perihan and Recep arrive to the holiday village with a huge baggage load. The stuff they have brought along are picnic and camping items, such as foldable barbeque and portable LPG tanks. The incommensurability of the basic notions of leisure activity demarcates characters belonging to two different social classes, while the plot develops through this cultural clash. For instance, while Zeki, Metin and other workers of the village take a bath in the shallow sea in their underwears –apparently, they don't know

to swim-, the pathetic millionaire tells his friends that he doesn't like the sea and the salt at all, while enjoying the resort's pool. The moral alignment of the narrative in this conflict does not remain subtle; even though they do not know how to swim, the workers enjoy their time in the shallow waters cheerfully, whereas the millionaire puts himself in awkward situations by splashing water on other clients, and then by accidentally jumping into an empty pool.

1981 *Tourism Supplement*: Normalization of the consumption pattern

We find both Nebioğlu Tatil Köyü and Club Med Foça mentioned once again in an issue of the tourism supplement of *Milliyet* in 1981 (Milliyet, 1981). Published weekly during the summer months, each fascicule of the tourism supplement of the paper introduces a few touristic towns by focusing on its touristic facilities and points of attraction. The first page of the feature shows two larger photographs of topless tourists on the beach at Club Med Foça. Yet, the article itself is far from the sensationalism of the 1973 *Hayat* Magazine. On the contrary, it informs the reader about historical facts, natural surroundings, and tourism facilities at Foça. Although the pictures from Club Med dominates the article, the resort is featured simply as a major facility in the region, with accommodation information and full price list. It seems like, now the hippies are gone, toplessness is acknowledged, and summer tourism is a part of the mundane life —so much that, catering to the ordinary citizens concerns of “where to go?”, the newspaper informs them about their options. Acknowledging the full adaptation of what has once been perceived as “the expectation of westerners,” the article warns the domestic tourists that, despite its importance in ancient history, there are not many historical ruins left around the old town of Foça.

The tourism supplement itself and the coverage of the resort attests to the fact that, tourism and westernized consumption patterns associated with leisure activities had now been adopted by Turkish upper middle classes. By the end of the 1970s, most of the small villages in Turkish Mediterranean and Aegean coasts had already been turned into touristic towns and were surrounded by summer housing sites and apartment complexes. Simultaneously, many international chains entered the Turkish tourism market (Kozak &

Coşar, 2017: 42). It was not coincidental that these transformations accelerated during the 1980s, a time frame when neoliberal policies were introduced and highly encouraged in Turkey.⁶

Yet, although such life-style consumption seems to be fully established among Turkish urban middle classes by 1980's, we see the index of "exclusion" and "exclusiveness" implied within the consumption pattern shifting towards a different direction. Now Turkish nouvelle rich enjoy similar touristic and leisure activities that had been perceived as belonging to westerners in the past, and in the face of growing income discrepancies and urban poverty, the exclusive lifestyle the resorts signify redraws the lines of reactionary politics and social tensions in Turkey.

Within the development and transformation of the leisure culture in Turkey we mention above, presumably due to the competition Club Med started to receive from many other resorts adopting its business model, Club Med Foça was opened to Turkish tourists in the 1980's, and with that, also became an "exclusive" destination for Turkish elite and nouvelle rich. For example, in the special section titled "Who's where this summer?" of *Milliyet Daily's Tourism and Vacation Guide*, we find Banu Alkan, a famous Turkish B-Movie star of the time, stating that her schedule requires her to 'attend to Cannes' and then shoot a film at Club Med Foça that summer: "It's not my choice, I will spend my vacation at Foça working" (Zıddıoğlu, 1983). It is plausible that, next to her claim to attend to Cannes film festival, Alkan is attempting to incorporate the prestigious brand of the Club to her public image in this interview. Interestingly, the movie she mentions (*The Relationship [İlişki]* Gürsu, 1983) does not appear to be filmed at Club Med Foça but at another exclusive hotel in Marmaris.⁷ More importantly, *The Relationship* was a remake

⁶ The milestone of the introduction of neoliberal politics in Turkey was an economic program implemented on January 24, 1980 during the prime ministry of Süleyman Demirel. The creator of the January 24 Program was Turgut Özal, the undersecretary to the prime minister by then. Following the September 12, 1980 military coup, Özal was assigned as the deputy prime minister in charge of economics affairs, and later on the party he founded came to power in 1983. The acceleration of neoliberal economic politics continued during his power. For an overview of Turkey's introduction to neoliberalism during 1980s, see (Yalman, 2009).

⁷ Based on an examination of footage together with Gökhan Gökgöz, we argue that the film was shot at Martı Resort Hotel in Marmaris.

of another Turkish movie, *Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child* [*Kızını Dövmeyen Dizini Döver*] (Gürsu, 1977), and a significant modification to the original storyline in the remake had been the shifting of the location of the story from Istanbul to such an exclusive hotel in Marmaris.

1982 *The Uncouth Ones*: Banality and Mimicry

Similar to *The Relationship*, the movie *The Uncouth Ones* [*Görgüsüzler*] is also written by Erdoğan Tünaş and shot in Marmaris at around the same period of time (Seden, 1982). Yet, the plot of the film originates from a theme resembling *Smart Alecks*. Pervin and her beautiful daughter (Gül), living in an old neighborhood of Istanbul, are suffering from poverty. One day they win a lottery that covers a luxury ferry trip and a vacation at an exclusive hotel. The shrewd mother and daughter announce their vacation prize to their neighbors as a journey to Egypt for bringing back a large sum of inherited fortune in order to be able to postpone their debts to local businesses a bit further. The main motivation of the young woman is the possible opportunity of meeting a rich prospective husband among the clients of the hotel. However, the “oil king” she falls in love with turns out to be a poor gambler (Murat) hiding from his fiancé (Ayşegül) and her mother (Halime), as well as a mobster he is indebted to. Gradually, the luxury hotel turns into the setting of a burlesque comedy between people hiding from and/or fooling one another. The comic situations stem from either lower-class characters’ exaggerated mimicry of bourgeois attitudes, or from their revealed original attitudes when they lose their disguise. It’s important to note that lower class characters in this narrative are not depicted as morally superior people. On the contrary, they continuously deceive the others and fabricate stories about themselves. In this regard, the class differences emphasized in the narrative are not directly indexed to, and do not indirectly translate into moral status/integrity. However, reminding the same dilemma in *Smart Alecks*, these lower-class characters are associated with the values of sincerity and humbleness. Repeating the same pattern, both in *The Uncouth Ones* and *The Smart Alecks*, the bourgeois characters are depicted as

immoral and arrogant people while their luxury vacation at the exclusive hotel is represented as an object of desire.

Even though it's not shot at Club Med Foça, *The Uncouth Ones* is important for our inquiry not only because of displaying the shifting index of contention but also for the sequences it features regarding the clash and/or co-existence of opposite notions of vacation. After the ferry arrives to Marmaris⁸, the camera revolves around the town and the hotel in a montage scene. In this montage scene, we encounter a variety of people and leisure activities next to each other —such as people at the public beach, luxury yachts, tents, summerhouse complexes and hotels. When Murat's fiancé Ayşegül and her mother Halime arrive to the hotel to find him, they install a tent on the empty land right next to the hotel and immediately start performing all the essentials of a traditional camping vacation. When the hotel staff come out for shooing them away and destroying their tent, the two women beat off the staff with the support of the public. In a similar scene, Gül accidentally hits Halime with a ball when she enjoys her time with Murat by the swimming pool, and a women's fight similar to the ones in their poor traditional neighborhood back in İstanbul ensues in the luxury resorts swimming pool.

1984 Photo-romance: Upward Mobility

During our research, we could not identify any movies that were shot at Club Med Foça. However, this resort does appear in a related medium—a photo-romance published in the *Renk* life-style edition of the popular daily newspaper *Milliyet*, as the stage of the confrontation we have mentioned above (Önal, 1984). Photo-romance had been a popular serialized pulp-fiction format that utilized photo strips for storytelling, and these had been a part of the magazine coverage of daily and weekly tabloids of the time. Titled *Av* (“*The Hunt*”), the photo-romance tells the interwoven stories of a young working-class woman, who chooses to spend her vacation at the resort she can barely afford only because of the hopes of meeting a wealthy prospective husband, and a contract killer, who arrives to

⁸ The route and destination of the lottery trip is not clear in the story. However, based on an examination of the footage together with Alper Gedik, we decided that the boat arrives to Marmaris and the rest of the film was shot in that town and a hotel located in one of the newly growing parts of it.

the resort at the same time with her, for assassinating a crime syndicate leader among the clients of the resort.

The bitterness of the protagonists of the photo-romance has to be evaluated in the depth of the representational regimes of 1980's Turkish popular culture. The plot is entirely constructed around the morally, economically and politically corrupt Turkish elite, and the complicity of urban middle classes in such corruption: The hitman who hunts down the corrupt businessman is actually hired by his similarly corrupt rival. Finding a rich husband is a way to "move to the upper floors" for the woman who works as a secretary, she doesn't really care how the prospective husband makes his fortune. "I am not going to pick the most handsome, I am going to pick the richest. I am not going to listen to my heart, but my wits", she says.

Although Club Med is explicitly the setting of the narrative, all the characters and stories staged on this setting belong to the Turkish elite. Except for a side character, a French female tourist vacationing alone, Isabel, who becomes the object of desire for a Turkish businessman seeking an extramarital affair while visiting the club with his wife. When asked how come she speaks Turkish so well, while she politely refuses the advances of the Turkish businessman, Isabel explains that she was taken care of by a Turkish nurse in France, when she was sick in her childhood, in the absence of her separated mother. Through the affection and care she received from that immigrant worker, Isabel learned Turkish, and developed an affinity with Turkish people. What has been disregarded and excluded from the story slips into the narrative and disrupts the world of decadence and excess. The labor of the immigrant worker, in her absence, points to the possibility of an alternative, dignified form of connection between the cultures and the people.

2005 Closure and Settlement

While the appearance of nouvelle-rich and their visibly exaggerated adoption of western life-style consumption patterns complicated the cultural tension (and shifted its axis from spoiled western/dignified local to spoiled rich/dignified poor), Club Med continued to be

an iconic signifier in Turkey's troubled relation with the west. In 1984, only one year into the establishment of the parliamentary system again after two years of direct military rule, when public debates still had to be limited within the prohibitive terminology imposed by the nationalist ideology, Club Med became highly criticized for including expressions such as "Kurdish villages," "Kurdish castle," "Armenian capital" and "Armenian church" in its promotional brochure for touristic tours in Eastern Anatolia. Daily newspaper *Milliyet* published the incident on its front page with the heading "French arrogance" (Fransız küstahlığı) (Türenç, 1984). According to the newspaper, Minister of Tourism then Mükerrerem Taşçıoğlu said "we can even shut down their clubs in Turkey" and "we will make them apologize" (Türenç, 1984). In 1994, Club Med Foça was closed temporarily. Turkish press claimed that the temporary closure of the facility was due to French first lady Danielle Mitterrand's pressure on Club Med, as a protest against the decision regarding the political arrest of the deputies belonging to Democracy Party (DEP), the representative of Kurdish political movement.⁹ In return, Club Med's CEO in Turkey Behice Gökakın denied the news report by stating that the temporary closure of Foça resort was not because of political issues but due to the decrease in occupancy rates caused by the economic crisis (*Milliyet*, 1994).¹⁰

In fact, the closure of Club Med Foça in 2005 had been very much related with the shifting lines of "exclusiveness" and "life-style consumption" we identify above, rather than its controversial iconic presence in Turkish public debates. By 1990's Club Med started to receive fierce competition from other mass tourism companies that catered to European middle class with all-inclusive vacation packages in exotic places. As a result, the company went through a major restructuring, changed its business strategies towards offering luxurious vacation facilities to a rather economically affluent clientele from all over the world (Kotabe & Helsen, 2010: 678). During 1990s, Club Med Foça's customer profile changed gradually and the resort started hosting more Turkish customers. This new tendency is reflected on the changing nature of its press coverage. Along with other

⁹ In March 1994, immunity of DEP deputies was removed by the Parliament and they were arrested.

¹⁰ Club Med Foça was temporarily closed to service also in the summer of 1999 (Cıvaoglu, 1999).

facilities in Turkey, Foça resort began to appear in tourist agencies' advertisements catalogues (Milliyet, 1992; Milliyet, 1999). Even though the prices were comparable to overseas vacations, this press appearance marked the opening of Club Med Foça to local tourism with no return. Initially, Club Med's attempt for inviting Turkish customers was interpreted as a quick solution in the face of the decrease in demand from European tourists caused by the Gulf War (Katarcı, 1991) but the continuation of the strategy in the following years showed that it was more related with the transformation the company was undertaking. Thus, the tendency to advertise on local newspapers and the resulting increase in the number of Turkish customers increased after the war. By the second half of 90s, advertorials promoting Club Med Foça's natural beauty and facilities started to appear on national newspapers (Milliyet, 1997). In 2000s, Club Med started publishing its own ads apart from tourism agencies and Foça resort was covered on these ads until its closure (Milliyet, 2003). The rental agreement for the land had not been renewed after 2005, and the resort had been abandoned along with the "esprit de club" and the illusion of cultural exchange it once offered.

After being so much discussed, ironically, the closure of the Club went almost entirely unnoticed by the Turkish public, whose middle classes, albeit still displaying reservations towards Europeanness, had already adopted all the definitive life-style consumption patterns and had plenty of options to exercise those. Yet, the closure had a massive impact on locals, who tied their livelihoods as well aspirations to the economic, cultural and social connections the Club provided for two generations. The abandoned resort is left to ruin, since they didn't have the capital investment required to revitalize it. The fate of the site, and the lack it now represents as a lost economic resource, continued to draw attention in public.

Since 2005, the abandoned land of Club Med Foça went through a series of unsuccessful privatization attempts (Doğan, 2010; Karaca, 2016). The last auction for privatization happened in July 30, 2018 but similar to a previous auction in 2006, it was cancelled afterwards by state authorities (Ege'de Son Söz, 2019).

Conclusion

In our analysis above, we tried to expose the transformation of the iconic public image of Club Med Foça, which reflects the rise of leisure culture in Turkey as well as the developing and shifting lines of tension between Turkish national identity and its western other, and among Turkish social classes within the process of modernization and globalization. In our view, as apparent from the regimes of representation we identify here, these tensions signify a contested cultural and economic encounter facilitated by Club Med. The fluidity between the self and the other, and/or mimicry and resistance, transforms these cultural and political tensions into ambivalent processes. Triggered by the entangled association of orientalist and nationalist discourses, these ambivalent processes have been 'productive' in the sense of catalyzing tangible public articulations of underlying socio-economic issues —which cannot be reduced to matters of national or western 'identity.' Thus, it is possible to consider that the encounter itself as fruitful for crystalizing these tensions.

In fact, the shifting axis of tension we find in the discourses we analyze shows that, the national/social identity is not an essential cultural construct, but a product of exclusion and inclusion regimes, and social and economic demarcations that create the 'self' and the 'other'. The opening of Club Med Foça is affirmed and celebrated in the media in 1960's, because in an ambiguous fashion it represented the inclusion of Turkishness to the Europeanness it aspires to. In the following decade, the apparent exclusion of Turkish people (who, by then, starts to adopt the same leisure culture and want to enjoy the same western life-style) introduces an ambivalence to the public perception of the resort, which now demarcates a threshold between the Turkish identity and the European other. In the later decade, the widening economic gap between the social classes in Turkey, and the articulation of class differentials in cultural practices (including tourism) redraws the lines of inclusion and exclusion; the otherness of the European becomes replaced by (or, perhaps redressed into) that of the westernized urban rich, and 'self' becomes identified by the traditionalism, moral integrity, and community bonds of the poor working class. Neither westernness, nor national identity refer to intrinsic and fixed qualities, their fluid

signifiers are determined by changing patterns of social and economic inclusion and exclusion.

Despite being a commercial business based on the exploitation of the orientalist mindset of its clientele, the presence of Club Med Foça had been a productive cultural encounter for exposing social and economic differences and catalyzing broader transformations. It seems plausible to us to consider today's tourism industry, transpiring in a later phase of globalization, as having a sterilizing effect in contrast. Today, the consumption habits once perceived as 'western' have been quite settled (particularly economically privileged social groups) in peripheral countries like Turkey, and geographical mobility of people (for touristic and business purposes) proliferated and has reached to unprecedented volumes globally. Yet, at the same time, the contours of social mobility as well as representational regimes (between east/west and social classes) seem to have rather settled. We believe, the historical transformation we analyzed in the paper provides us with a perspective about such sedimentation of representational regimes in Turkish cultural context.

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