GÖÇMENLER VE ŞİDDET: "UMUDUN ÖTEKİ YÜZÜ" FİLMİ ÜZERİNDEN BİR ANALİZ

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Öz

11 Eylül saldırılarından sonra ortaya çıkan ve toplumsal etkileri olan gelişmeler, ulusaşırı göç dalgasını farklı bir boyuta taşımıştır. Batı dünyasına doğru başlayan göç dalgası, artık pek çok ulusu ilgilendiren bir dizi sosyolojik problemi ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu süreçte ulus devletler, göçmen özneye karşı temkinli bir yaklaşım sergilemiş ve bunun için göçmenler çeşitli türden şiddet biçimleri ile karşılaşmıştır. Ulusaşırı göç ve bu sürecin içerdiği şiddet olgusu, artık akademik çalışmaların ötesinde sanat yapımlarına ve filmlere de konu olmaya başlamıştır. Bu bağlamda, ulusaşırı göç ve şiddet arasındaki ilişkiyi "Umudun Öteki Yüzü" adlı film üzerinden inceleyen bu çalışma, göçmenlerin temelde hangi türden siddet bicimleri karşılaştığını ortava cıkarmayı ile amaçlamaktadır. Sonuç olarak bu çalışmada görülmüştür ki belirtilen filmde göçmenler genellikle psikolojik, sembolik ve fiziksel şiddet türlerini deneyimlemektedirler. Çalışmada bu şiddet türlerinin içerisinde, en yaygın olanın sembolik şiddet olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Sembolik şiddet, pek çok konuda gizlenebilen bir şiddet olduğu için Batılı otoritelerin bunu daha fazla uygulayabildiği anlaşılmıştır. Nitekim sembolik şiddet ona maruz kalan kişiler tarafından bile zor anlaşılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ulusaşırı Göç, Şiddet, Göçmen, Umudun Öteki Yüzü

IMMIGRANTS AND VIOLENCE: AN ANALYSIS OF "THE OTHER SIDE OF HOPE"

Abstract

New developments with social ramifications following the attacks of 11 September have given the wave of transnational migration a new dimension. The wave of migration that began towards the Western world has revealed sociological problems that now concern many nations. In this process, nation-states have adopted a cautious approach to the migrant subject, and migrants have been subjected to various forms of violence. Transnational migration and the phenomenon of violence it entails have now begun to be the subject of artistic productions and films that go beyond academic studies. This study, which examines the relationship between transnational migration and violence through the movie "The Other Side of Hope," aims to identify the types of violence the migrants encounter. Furthermore, the study determined that immigrants tend to experience psychological, symbolic, and physical types of violence. The study found that among these types of violence, symbolic violence is the most common. Since symbolic violence is a violence that can be hidden in many issues, it was understood that the Western authorities can use it more. Symbolic violence is hardly understood even by those who are subjected to it.

Keywords: Transnational Migration, Violence, Migrant, The Other Side of Hope

Introduction

The relationship between international migration and violence has recently become the focus of academic studies (Pries, 2019; Vogt, 2013). Rising far-right political trends, political strategies, and populist discourses at the global level affect the attitudes of local societies towards immigrants, and this situation is reflected in academic studies (Ağırdır, 2020). Violence against immigrants has not been limited to academic studies, but it has also been the subject of many artistic events and films. In these productions, violence against immigrants by local communities is widely discussed, and the way Western subjects interact with immigrants is handled in striking perspectives.

Although discriminatory attitudes towards immigrants and foreigners have been a common trend throughout history (Campbell, 2020), there is a belief that these attitudes have spread to a broader base than ever before (Vogt, 2012). In particular, new sociological developments that emerged after the September 11 attacks and the political tendencies that emerged as a result of these attacks seem to have placed anti-immigrant and xenophobia on an institutional basis (Tahincioğlu, 2020). Unlike in the past, the issue of transnational migration and anti-immigration has become the

raison d'être of many political actors. In many cases, sections of the local population that feel threatened by certain aspects of globalisation are prone to political discourses that include reactionary reflexes'. For example, Donald Trump's attitudes towards immigrants, especially during the US presidency, are of critical importance in terms of showing how xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment can be transformed into an election campaign (Ağırdır, 2020).

The image of immigrants used by political organizations to mobilize the electorate influences the behavior of locals towards immigrants in daily life, and the tendency of social actors towards violence against immigrants is shaped by these discourses (Vogt, 2013; 2012). In this sense, the attitudes of both political subjects and ordinary people towards immigrants are formed violently. Recently, this situation has become such a widespread reality that the violence that immigrants are exposed to has become the subject of movies (İlbuğra, 2013). One example is "The Other Side of Hope", directed and produced by Aki Kaurismäki. The film tells the story of Khaled, a Syrian forced to flee the civil war in his country, and his process of seeking asylum in Finland.

Khaled experienced various types of violence during his transnational migration journey (Engür & Elmacı, 2023). The process experienced by Khaled, who frequently experiences symbolic, psychological, and physical violence, explicitly reveals the relationship between the Western subject and the migrant (Kalender, 2019). Based on this relationship, this article examines the violence that immigrants are exposed to during international migration processes through Khaled. The study primarily focuses on the fictional personal experiences of an asylum seeker through "The Other Side of Hope." The primary purpose here is to reveal the main types of violence that migrants are exposed to. This article analyzes three forms of violence through dialogues and images representing symbolic, psychological, and physical violence in the movie using the qualitative content analysis method.

Plot of the "The Other Side of Hope"

The film begins with Syrian Khaled arriving in Finland. Khaled has lost his entire family in a missile attack in Syria, the perpetrators of which are unknown. His sister is the only survivor. After the missile attack, he and his sister first pulled their deceased family members out of the rubble and then buried them with their own hands. Then, Khaled, who wants to build a new life for himself and his sister, makes a choice

and, like many actors who have experienced the reality of the Middle East, determines Europe as their destination. To do this, he borrows money from his boss, who is also the father of his fiancée, whom he lost in the war.

While the two siblings are travelling to Europe, there is a panic at the Hungarian border, and Khaled loses his sister in the chaos. This is the beginning of serious tension for him and Khaled's story takes a different turn (Engür & Elmacı, 2023). After losing his sister, Khaled continues his journey alone and reaches Finland, where he applies for asylum. After lengthy interviews with the authorities, Khaled's asylum application is rejected, and it is decided that he will be sent back to Syria via Turkey. However, he escapes the authorities in the hope of finding his lost sister in Europe and starting a new life. While Khaled arrives in Europe full of hope, he encounters another reality. Forced to wander around without an identity card, Khaled begins to live like a lost soul in the backstreets of Finland.

Lying in front of the garbage containers in the back alley of a restaurant, Khaled resists the restaurant owner Wickström's decision to throw him out. He even attacks Wickström. The restaurant owner responds to Khaled and beats him up. However, Wickström's conscience prevails, and he feels

remorse for his violence, so he decides to show mercy to Khaled. Later, Wickström gives Khaled a job at the restaurant, shows him a place to stay, and even helps him get a fake ID so he can move around freely. In addition, Wickström helps Khaled find his sister. Thus, Wickström makes serious efforts to help him get a foothold in Finland, and a mutual relationship of gratitude and friendship develops between them beyond the employer-employee relationship.

Despite receiving help and support from many people in Finland, Khaled cannot escape the harassment of a racist gang that calls itself the Finnish Liberation Army. This group has followed Khaled closely since the first day he arrived in Finland. This group, which sometimes corners Khaled in isolated places, misses him due to the interventions of other minorities, blacks, and people who look like lunatics living on the streets. However, one day, Khaled is stabbed on a desolate street by a member of the Finnish Liberation Army, who mistakes him as a Jew (Engür & Elmacı, 2023). Thus, Khaled sees the other side of Europe, where he travels with great hope. Khaled understands that even in Finland, where Western standards are high, hope has another side.

Symbolic Violence

Although types of violence and how violence is practiced are studied in the literature, there are fewer studies on the definition of violence. Violence are classified the subject or context, such as violence against women and children (Polat, 2016). There are many forms of violence, such as sexual violence, pedagogical violence, or peer bullying. An examination of the movie "The Other Side of Hope" allows us to say that three types of violence target Khaled. These are symbolic violence, psychological violence, and physical violence. Among these types of violence, the most common form of violence that Khaled is subjected to is symbolic violence.

According to Bourdieu and Passeron (2015), symbolic violence is the imposition of particular specific meanings on the human subject, where power relations are contained. In other words, the effort of a power to dominate the subject using any symbol can be seen as an example of symbolic violence. Khaled and other characters in the movie who have experienced transnational migration, in general have frequently been exposed to symbolic violence. Symbolic violence makes itself felt in all kinds of actions and behaviors aimed at dominating migrants. Such manifestations of power

in migrants' destination countries are implicit instruments to dominate and transform them.

Foucault (2013, p. 213) defines this form of domination as disciplinary power. Those who exercise this form of power often attempt to establish dominance over minority groups such as migrants and criminals. Essentially, disciplinary power operates for the rehabilitation and control of certain minorities and prevents and rejects these minorities at many points through the power they hold. Therefore, the form of disciplinary power can be evaluated as a mechanism that reflects the pressure and control over minorities, both symbolically and physically.

All of the bureaucratic procedures, negotiations with the migrant, and interactions that make the migrant feel like a stranger in the place he or she is going can be read as victims of violence, because symbolic violence appears to be a highly naturalised form of violence (Demirci, 2018). In other words, perpetrators of symbolic violence are almost always unaware that they are exercising power over other people. Symbolic violence is often so embedded in the normative order that even the targets are unable to distinguish it from the functioning of everyday life. In this sense, it is possible to encounter many elements of symbolic violence that are

commonplace in "The Other Side of Hope" and that even Khaled, the film's main character, does not find strange. Such forms of violence are generally processed by Khaled as attitudes and behaviours aimed at pacification within the system. Each example of symbolic violence that he is exposed to is a significant challenge to his personality and causes him to lose his self-esteem.

At the beginning of the film, Khaled's entry into Finland inside the boiler room of a dry cargo ship is a clear example of symbolic violence. The attempt to enter another country irregularly causes Khaled to encounter bureaucratic obstacles and, as a natural result, bureaucratic violence (Kalender, 2019). Therefore, the efforts of each nation to prevent immigrants and the normal processes that immigrants are subjected to can include symbolic violence in this sense. Here, Khaled's obligation to travel in the boiler room, rather than as a normal passenger, appears as an example of bureaucratic violence. Because Khaled is reminded of the existence of a society and the normative order that he cannot simply join.

At this point, it is helpful to refer to Bauman's concept of the "other." Indeed, the most apparent form of symbolic violence developed against immigrants is othering and exclusion. Bauman has sociologically addressed

conceptualizations that can be discussed within a similar framework, such as othering or social exclusion. According to Bauman (2015), the phenomenon of the other is the discrimination of a person, class, or community in social, cultural, and political contexts. Almost everything that is outside of what is considered "normal" by society is defined as "other" (Özensel, 2020 p. 373). Basically, everything that sets the rules, that has clearly defined limits, that is rational and strict, represents the "normal", while the person who has to follow the rules, whose limits are vague, and who is expected to comply with the sanctions set by the power, is the "other" (Kundakçı, 2013 p. 69). According to Bauman, the instrumental reason of modernity includes self-centeredness aimed at destroying the other. Therefore, the oppression and domination that Khaled is exposed to shows that he is positioned as the other in society.

In the first days when Khaled settled in Finland, he asked the receptionist at the hotel where he was staying if he could go to the police station and apply for asylum.'Where is the nearest police station here?' he asked, to which the receptionist replied, 'Are you sure?' Getting an answer can be presented as another form of othering. The receptionist's approach to Khaled, both condescending and warning, is a form of symbolic violence applied to remind him of the

power of the established order. Here, Khaled is implicitly reminded of the existence of a power whose grandeur should be feared. It is also striking that the receptionist who reminds him of this is black. The receptionist, who happens to be black and an immigrant, seems to have experienced the grandeur of power and felt the need to remind Khaled of this.

Khaled continues to be subjected to symbolic violence when he goes to the police station. Upon telling the police officer "I want asylum in Finland," he receives the officer's response, "'It is okay to ask for it. 'You are not the first to ask." This encounter is important in that it indicates that Khaled is not approached as a subject but is seen as a minor detail. On the other hand, there are other different manifestations of symbolic violence at the police station. The police measure his height and weight. He cooperation to fully cooperate in the face of several requests and instructions, all of which are in a militaristic fashion. Officers always handle him with a superior attitude and tell him what to do using hand gestures only.

A more obvious example of symbolic violence is related to the act of smiling. While talking to an Iraqi friend he met in Finland, his friend tells Khaled that he always looks unhappy. Khaled is surprised and tells his friends how he "always looks

happy and content," implying that looking happy is difficult because of the stressful situation they encounter as irregular migrants. His friend responds "I am faking it. They send back the ones who look sad first; all the sad ones are sent away." This dialogue reveals an important dimension of the perception of acceptable immigrants in European societies. Moreover, such an expectation makes itself felt as symbolic violence for the subjects of transnational migration. The dominant power's demand for smiling immigrants is a highly oppressive expectation for actors with traumatic experiences like Khaled. Indeed, Khaled presents himself to the audience with a very troubled and melancholic image throughout the movie.

It is possible to see a sign of symbolic violence even under the polite dialogue of the woman on duty at Khaled's temporary accommodation: "You have your first meeting with the immigration center today at 1 o'clock. This is very important! Are you ready, Khaled?" Because here, with the polite question of "Are you ready?", Khaled is given implicit information about the power of the system he is dealing with. Accordingly, a meeting with any government representative requires willingness, and here not being willing can be seen as a simple form of disrespect. Although Khaled may not be aware of the violence that the system is

applying to him, his obligation to adopt a passive position can always be read as an element of violence. As an immigrant, he is expected to be more passive than everyone else while he is deprived of various rights, even in ordinary matters where citizens have a say. Indeed, while citizens have the right to appeal court decisions, he does not. Each of these emerges as a separate example of symbolic violence.

Psychological Violence

Although there are various definitions of psychological violence in the literature, in the most general sense, any psychological aggression is presented as an example of psychological violence (Winstok & Sowan-Basheer, 2015). While some of these attacks are malicious, some may occur independently of the intentions of the person committing the violence. Therefore, although one of the parties does not intend to wear the other person down psychologically, their actions may have such a consequence (Orbay, 2022). In this sense, there are many signs in "The Other Side of Hope" that Khaled is directly or indirectly subjected to psychological violence. Indeed, throughout the movie, Khaled is seen to be melancholic and smiles only in one scene. This psychological reality he is in can be read not only as a product of the trauma

he has experienced but also as a product of the psychological violence he is constantly exposed to.

The first example of psychological violence that Khaled experiences in the movie is seen after he gets off the ship. 'Due to traveling in the ship's boiler room, Khaled ends up on the streets in a state resembling a mineworker. In the meantime, at midnight, he accidentally experiences tension with Wickström, who later becomes his boss. Wickström, driving in his car on the road, narrowly avoids hitting Khaled, who suddenly appears in front of him at a corner. Wickström, who brakes suddenly, looks at Khaled, whose face is black and looks like a madman, with the utmost contempt. This happens due to Khaled's poor appearance. Thus, Khaled experiences a psychologically humiliating experience.

After the accident, Khaled meets Wickström again, fights with him, and starts working at his restaurant, where he experiences both symbolic and psychological violence. One day, while Khaled was working at the restaurant, officers from the Regional Control Center visited the restaurant for an inspection. Khaled is locked in the restroom by the other restaurant staff on Wickström's orders. Khaled, who is made to feel that he is exceptionally highly worthless compared to other restaurant employees, also experiences this situation

as an example of symbolic violence. On the other hand, although Khaled leaves the restaurant after the officers finish their inspection, he is forgotten in the restroom. After Khaled leaves the room, the staff recommends to the boss that Khaled should be sent out of the restaurant. Because for Khaled's safety, the restaurant had to be closed. In the face of all this, Khaled, who waits silently and passively for the decision to be made for him, is sometimes put under, severe psychological pressure during the process.

Physical Violence

The most obvious form of violence is physical violence. The term is used to express actions ranging from limited use of force to murder another person. This type of violence involves much more than beating and can lead to dramatic results (Polat, 2016). Khaled has also been subjected to physical violence as well as other forms of violence. Both the police and far-right skinheads have occasionally used or attempted to use physical violence on him. Although official authorities in Europe are relatively more cautious against violence, extremist groups can be more daring in terms of violence. Indeed, as far as is represented in the film, the physical violence Khaled is subjected to is carried out by civilians rather than official authorities. In this sense, while

Khaled experiences symbolic and psychological violence through official authorities, he experiences physical violence through ordinary people.

In the relatively less developed regions of Europe, official authorities do not hesitate to use physical violence against Khaled. At the same time, there are no signs of physical violence in developed countries like Finland. This is very important not to judge Western societies in a monological way. In fact, the first violence Khaled was exposed to during the trial was when he lost his sister at the Hungarian border. Khaled loses his sister in the chaos that ensues, and then he loses his sister in the chaos that ensues. Afterwards he realises that she has remained on the other side of the border. In the meantime, when he tried to return, two policemen put him on the ground, handcuffed him and took him to prison. Khaled was beaten for four days in prison and then released. During this time he was subjected to constant violence by those who wanted to take his sister away from him. On the other hand, he is also subjected to less severe violence by police officers when he goes to the police station to apply for asylum, where he is treated like a criminal.

Although Khaled was subjected to psychological violence by official authorities, especially on the borders that could be

seen as the outback of Europe, he was subjected to actual violence by extremist groups. During this process, the first physical violence of a civilian nature he experienced was in Poland. Skinhead Nazis attacked him in front of the port in a Polish city. His arrival in Finland came after this violence. Khaled, who hides on a cargo ship to escape the neo-Nazis, infiltrates the ship and comes to Finland. Later, the physical violence experiences that would leave a much deeper mark on his life also took place in Finland. Although he did not experience any significant violence from official authorities in Finland, he experienced the most lethal physical violence during his transnational migration process here.

After Khaled arrived in Finland, while he was waiting at the bus stop one day, a racist group calling themselves the Finnish Liberation Army approached him and teased him by saying "Give us a cigarette". Although Khaled tried to defuse the situation by saying "I don't understand", he was pushed and stood up. In the midst of the chaos, a public transport bus with a black driver arrives and he rushes on board. The racists threw a beer bottle at the window of the bus and shouted at the driver: 'See you later, camel driver'.

Another time, members of the same group cornered Khaled in the street at midnight and tried to burn him with petrol.

This time, however, some homeless men in tattered clothes came to Khaled's rescue and saved him from the racist group. Unable to escape the harassment of this group, at the end of the film Khaled is stabbed by a member of the same group and then told "I warned you, Jewish boy". It can be said that Khaled was subjected to various levels of physical violence by official authorities, the police, racists and even Wickström, with whom he would later develop a close friendship and who would become his boss. It is understood that Khaled did not react to any of the violence during all these processes and only used violence against his boss, Wickström, during his dialogue with him. Khaled, who was lying on the street when he hit Wickström, had no expectations from the official authorities or the local people during this process. Khaled did not retaliate even when he was subjected to violence during the days when he was seeking asylum or trying to start a new life. However, when he completely lost hope and realised that he could not be included in the system, he did not refrain from responding to those who used violence against him. This situation is critical because it illustrates when physical violence can be seen as a way out by migrants.

Conclusion

It is possible to talk about immigrants being a part of various types of violence in the process of transnational migration. Transnational migration, which immigrants see as a journey of hope, causes them to experience various forms of violence. During this process, locals believe that one way to get rid of immigrants is to disturb them and, if necessary, to intimidate them by using violence. Frankly, it is possible to make sense of such a primitive motivation for the person on the street. However, the fact that policymakers and official authorities act with a similar motivation creates an image contradictory to Western civilization's narratives. Indeed, in the movie "The Other Face of Hope," it is seen that official authorities also apply various forms of violence against immigrants.

The most common type of violence applied by official authorities is symbolic and psychological violence. The fact that physical violence directly contradicts the principles of civilization causes authorities to avoid it. However, since symbolic violence and psychological violence are less noticeable types of violence, immigrants are generally subjected to these types of violence. Thus, it becomes more possible for Western countries to claim that no type of

violence is applied. In the final analysis, symbolic or psychological violence may not be perceived even by the victims of violence. Individuals are controlled with symbolic elements of violence and attempts are made to render subjects passive with the biopolitical norms of the government.

As a result, immigrants appear to be the subjects of many types of violence even when they do not seem to have experienced any violence in the transnational migration process. Thus, Western authorities show their so-called loyalty to their narratives by resorting to physical violence rarely. However, it is seen that violence has changed form in the transnational migration process and that immigrants are now being intimidated by a new form of violence. The violence applied here is of a type that can cause immigrants to lose their self-esteem and completely obey the dominant rules and ideas. A decision-making process begins for the immigrant subject because of the violence they are exposed to. Here, the subject must either take a stance to think, live and believe in the way the government wants them to or pretend to be a compliant subject for a while. The subject who pretends creates the necessary sociological conditions for other types of problems to arise.

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