

Transformation of Altruism in Turkish Cinema*

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ABSTRACT

Cinema, as a reflector of relations between people, has the ability to construct certain behaviors and actions. Cinema, which can have positive and negative effects on shaping social relations, is a means of transmission of social culture and morality-based thought system. Elements of the classical narrative structure such as plot, cause-effect relationship and identification are essential in making sense of the film and ensuring conformity. The problematic of what is good and bad in a structure where good is rewarded and bad is punished has made it necessary to look at the concept of goodness in the opening of moral philosophy and cultural codes of society from a different perspective.

In this direction, starting from the fact that altruism occupies a large part of moral philosophy, the details that distinguish selfishness from morality and consider altruism as moral were mentioned in the cinema. In this context, the data obtained through descriptive analysis were analyzed and interpreted within a philosophical and sociological framework. As a result, it has been revealed that altruism has shifted from a glorified action to a denigrated action in the analyzed films.

Keywords: Altruism, Egoism, Classical Narrative, Turkish Cinema

Türk Sinemasında Özgeciliğin Dönüşümü

ÖZ

Sinema, insanlar arası ilişkilerin bir yansıtıcısı olarak, belirli davranış ve eylemleri inşa etme kabiliyetini kendinde taşımaktadır. Sosyal ilişkilerin şekillendirilmesinde olumlu ve olumsuz etkisi olan sinema, toplumsal kültürün ve ahlak temelli düşünce sisteminin bir aktarım aracıdır. Klasik anlatı yapısının olay örgüsü, neden-sonuç ilişkisi ve özdeşleştirme gibi öğeleri filmin anlamlandırılmasında ve uyuşmaların sağlanmasında son derece elzemdir. İyinin ödüllendirildiği, kötünün cezalandırıldığı yapıda iyi ve kötünün ne olduğu sorunsal ahlak felsefesi ve toplumun kültürel kodlarının açılımındaki iyilik kavrayışına farklı perspektiften bakışı gerekli kılmıştır.

Bu doğrultuda çalışmanın birinci bölümünde özgeciliğin teorik, tarihsel, felsefi, psikolojik ve sosyolojik temeldeki anlamı açıklanmıştır. İkinci bölümde sinemanın ideolojik yankısından hareketle, klasik anlatı sinemasının etki gücünden esinlenerek özgeciliğin algılanma ve uygulanma prensipleri tartışılmıştır. Son bölümde ise özgeciliğe dair önemli ipuçları veren filmlerden seçkiler yapılarak zaman içinde, özgeci bireyin toplum nezdindeki konumlandırılışı araştırılmıştır. Özgeciliğin ahlak felsefesinin geniş bir yerini işgal ettiği gerçeğinden yola çıkılarak, bencili ahlaktan ayıran ve özgeciyi ahlaki sayan ayrıntılara değinilmiştir. Bu bağlamda nitel veri analiz yönteminden betimsel analiz tekniğinin kullanıldığı çalışmada elde edilen veriler yorumlanmış ve anlamlandırılmıştır. Elde edilen sonuçta özgeciliğin zaman içinde yüceltmekten alıkoymaya bir eyleme hizmet ettiği ortaya çıkarılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Özgecilik, Bencilik, Klasik Anlatı, Türk Sineması

1. Introduction

As a social being since primitive times, human beings have sought to understand how to live together with others. Sometimes this coexistence is achieved through solidarity, and sometimes through self-interest. Thinkers who have attempted to theorize altruism have approached the concept from psychological, biological, sociological, philosophical, economic, and political perspectives. Altruism, first introduced by Auguste Comte and defined as the tendency and willingness to live for the sake of others, has always existed in human life; however, it has been examined by different thinkers from diverse

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viewpoints. Holding different significance across disciplines, altruism has ultimately come to be regarded as a counterpoint to selfishness. In addition to fields that examine negative human behavior toward others, there are also areas of research that focus on positive behavior. Although types of prosocial behavior differ from altruism, they nevertheless provide important insights into the foundations of altruistic action.

The purpose of this study is to examine how altruism is represented in cinema and how the moral, social, and philosophical dimensions of altruistic behavior are conveyed to the audience through narrative and character actions. More specifically, the study aims to analyze the evolution of altruistic attitudes and behaviors in Classical Turkish Cinema between 1960 and 1990. Within this scope, films that exemplify different forms and transformations of altruism during this period have been deliberately selected as the sample.

Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative research design and employs descriptive analysis to examine how altruism is constructed through cinematic narratives, characters, and thematic structures. The analysis focuses on the ways in which films direct viewers toward altruistic values and guide them in interpreting concepts such as goodness, self-sacrifice, and moral responsibility. By juxtaposing altruism with cinema, this research offers an in-depth interpretive framework in which key practices such as solidarity, donation, and empathy are systematically examined. Such a descriptive approach enables the semantic and cultural meanings of altruism to be revealed within the historical and social context of Classical Turkish Cinema.

1.1. Part One: Altruism

Altruism is loving humanity and people regardless of self-interest, devoting oneself to other people's happiness, acting in good faith and benevolently towards others, and living for others; it is the state of responding to the needs of others without one's own interest, which suggests the opposite of selfishness and individualism. In short, it is the willingness to help another person and to think of his/her benefit, even if there is a price to be paid in return. The moral purification of the altruistic person is realized only by overcoming selfish desires (Cevizci, 1999; Aronson et al., 2012).

There are several critical points in the act of altruism. Altruism requires not only good intentions but also action. The action must be purposeful, whether conscious or not. The purpose of the action should be to improve the welfare of another person. Actions that are primarily concerned with one's own welfare do not fall into the altruistic category. Intentions are more important than results. As a matter of fact, even if an action done with a good intention for someone ends badly, the altruism of this action in the first stage does not decrease. An action that improves both one's own welfare and the welfare of others is not altruistic. The aim of altruism is to increase the welfare of a person or group without the expectation of reward (Monroe, 1996). Altruism includes many positive social behaviors such as helping, assuming responsibility, and donating. The difficulty of psychologists in finding a term that covers all types of help by examining the behavior of individuals in the process of helping others led to the term "pro-social behavior", which is the opposite of anti-social behavior. This term encompasses behavior that is done voluntarily for the benefit of a person or group. Cooperation and altruism are two important types of prosocial behavior. What distinguishes altruism from cooperation is that there is no expectation of personal benefit. Therefore, it would be wrong to call every positive social behavior altruistic (Akbaba, 1994; Leblebici, 1991).

Certain theories have been put forward according to the degree of relationship of the altruistic individual with the people he/she helps and the outcome of his/her action. These include evolutionary, cultural, social learning and psychological theories.

i. Kin Selection: Collective life is a compromise between the selfishness of the individual and the sharing between others in an evolutionary framework. Family members are willing to help each other because of the commonality of their immortal genes (Leakey, Lewin, 1998). Kin selection is addressed by biologists who cite evolutionary theory as the root cause of pro-social behavior. If the ultimate goal of human beings is to survive, the question arises as to why they would sacrifice themselves for others. Evolutionary psychologists have a solution in the form of

kin selection, the norm of reciprocity, social norm learning and group selection. According to kin selection, natural selection favors helping a genetic relative. By helping a relative, an individual ensures the survival of his/her own gene (Aronson et al., 2012). Helping a relative means that one individual helps another individual's genes. Evolutionary game theory has brought up the issue of scratching each other's backs. Compared to all these, groups with a high concentration of benevolent, patriotic and moral people who do not avoid sacrifice for the people are one step ahead of the others. These people will be more likely to reproduce (Wilson, 2015).

According to Hamilton (1963), the level of relatedness between siblings is $r=1/2$. The selection of the gene that opens the door to altruistic behavior of a brother and sister depends on the gain being twice as great as the loss. If it is a half-sibling, this ratio should exceed four times. Hamilton gives the example of a bird singing to protect other birds from danger and attributes this to the small risk factor and the small distance of neighbors. In a genotype reproduction, altruistic genes cannot be involved in a strong selection process as a result of uncertain genes that will enter the gene pool due to the effect of reduced inbreeding. So the evolution of altruistic behavior in natural selection only works between relatives. According to Hamilton's theory of inbreeding, the altruist can also contribute to the reproduction of his/her close relatives and succeed in the spread of his/her own gene (Changeux, 2000).

ii. Reciprocal Altruism: This theory has been developed to explain altruistic behavior between people who are not related to each other (Üzümçeker et al. 2019). According to the norm of reciprocity, the likelihood that the person helped will help the giver in the future increases. Reciprocity, which is based on the idea of “*You scratch my back, I scratch yours*”, was explained by Trivers. According to him, reciprocal altruism does not pose a problem in terms of evolutionary theory since everyone simultaneously benefits or suffers harm when scratching each other's backs (2002).

Between parties who do not meet frequently, mutual sacrifice has not developed because there is no payback over a long period of time. In other words, it is beneficial when we know who will cooperate or betray in the long run. With natural selection, our first ancestors took the step of mutual altruism in the act of dividing their food. Throughout life, closeness, egalitarianism and a long-lived group provide the necessary conditions for this altruism. Thanks to natural selection, emotions such as gratitude and understanding that make mutual altruism work develop, while cheaters who do not reciprocate are identified and removed from the group (Leakey, Lewin, 1998; Shermer, 2007). Situations where reciprocity will not only work directly are explained by the concept of ‘indirect reciprocity’. In indirect reciprocity, which is achieved by making sacrifices for non-relatives, it is not known in advance whether the other party will reciprocate. There are three types of indirect reciprocity. In the first, the person making the sacrifice does so for social respect. The higher the prestige, the higher the potential return. The second type of indirectness is rewarding the person who helps. All societies look for ways to reward social good. Third, even if there is no return for the help, it creates a safe social environment for the person and his or her family. Even if the person dies as a result of the sacrifice, it may mean the continuation of some copies of their genes and the survival of their relatives. There are some situations that challenge the logic of mutual sacrifice. Helping someone who has fallen while crossing the street is one example. The reproductive orientation of Darwinian thought may not be sufficient to explain this kind of help. Therefore, the importance of innate morality is emphasized to explain the human tendency to cooperate with those who help others, or to cooperate in such a way that they help you. Therefore, a single process is insufficient to explain human sociality (Teehan, 2010).

iii. Group Selection: Another process in the evolution of cooperation is group selection. It makes its point of view not on the basis of genes but on the basis of groups. Although the cooperator is more disadvantaged than the non-cooperator, the groups of these people develop compared to others. Migration between groups (gene flow) reduces the effect of group selection. In cultural group selection, it is not genetics but cultural evolution, where group members respond to each other through social learning. Thus, the adaptation problem of immigrants is solved (Tomasello, 2020). In group selection, where culture is explained on the

basis of biology, the diversity in the moral values and behaviors of people raised in different cultural groups is underlined. These patterns of behavior within societies are the starting point of social memory. Given the power of culture to spread and influence the environment, examining it from the gene side leads to a shallow perspective. Thus, complex societies should not be explained only by a deterministic approach that presupposes gene selfishness. In short, while the role of genes in the emergence of moral behaviors is undeniable, the role of culture and morality in the establishment and reproduction of these behaviors cannot be underestimated (Torun, 2013).

According to group selection, people with distinctive qualities who succeed in the struggle for survival are more likely to reproduce and pass on these qualities to future generations (Aronson, et al. 2012). That is, in group selection, altruism favors the good of the group, not the individual. Altruistic groups may be one step ahead in competition compared to selfish groups (Rottschaefer, 2008).

According to Shermer (2007), by individual selection, humans are competitive and selfish creatures. However, the individual living in a group is more altruistic and cooperative. Moral behavior is rewarded by the group, while immoral behavior is punished, thus establishing a balance. Communities of good people are more cooperative and altruistic than other communities. Although it is mentioned here that the group should consist of good people, there is also a view that talks about bad actions to be done for the group and that a person will compromise himself/herself to become a bad person, even if he/she is essentially good. Eric Hoffer counts the sense of belonging among the factors that increase altruism. The individual assimilates through the collective identity and replaces his/her own identity, name and many personal characteristics with those of the group to which he/she feels he/she belongs. In contrast to this person, the person who lives without a sense of belonging is the one who clings to life while walking the endless road of nothingness. The individual who feels belonging to the group is considered to have disappeared only if the group disappears or is expelled from the group (2010). The group selection approach has been criticized on the grounds of competition between individuals within the group, which is not possible in practice. Although altruistic action is beneficial for the group, it means resource consumption for the person performing the behavior. Individuals who are not altruistic become more successful in gene transfer than those who are. As a result, an intragroup competition will emerge that prevents intergroup competition (Üzümçeker, 2019). When altruism is considered on a biological basis, it provides a reproduction-oriented benefit. However, unrequited sacrifices can be explained by psychological and moral altruism. In addition, biological altruism does not necessarily involve cognitive mechanisms as in psychological and moral altruism (Rottschaefer,2008).

1.2. The Moral Basis of Altruism

People living collectively form opinions about what they consider valuable or not, using words such as “good”, “bad”, “right”, “wrong”, based on concern and concern for others. These evaluations are based on certain emotionally based orientations, beliefs, habits and traditions that can be found in almost all societies. All these traditions, beliefs and habits are “prescriptive” concepts that people are allowed and required to do. These “prescriptive” things, which are present in all human societies, are under the umbrella of “good” and “bad” actions. Morality is a person’s way of life within the brackets of these rules and values. One who lives like this can also be called “homo moralis” (Özlem, 2019). Elements such as the purpose of the morally important action, the contrast between good and evil, the possibility of a generally valid moral law, and conscience constitute the content of moral philosophy. Thus, the stage of freedom in human action, the problematic of the existence of the universal moral law, the purpose of action, the state of human nature between altruism and egoism are questioned (Günör, 2014). In altruism, the well-being of others is the main purpose for moral action. If the result of an action is good not only for one person but for all, that action is considered morally right. The good of others is then the main purpose of any moral action (Boone, 2019).

Ancient thinkers pioneered the moral grounding of altruism and the search for the highest good. In the Middle Ages, altruism developed under the influence of belief in God. In addition to the call of the Abrahamic religions for people to be benevolent, it was also revealed that the church used the faith of the

people for its own benefit. When we come to the New Age, we come across a mindset that tries to explain altruism together with its opposite, selfishness. Hobbes is the most resonant name of the century with his explanation of selfishness in terms of the state of nature. According to him, people are each other's wolves in the state of nature, so they need to move to a civilized society. The eighteenth century corresponds to the period that brought order to people's collective life, was more pro-social than individualistic and approached altruism more than the seventeenth century. The concept, which each of the Enlightenment scholars clarified from their own framework, manifests itself mostly in the doctrine of moral sense in this period. The most important thing to emphasize here is that self-love and altruism are not positioned separately. In other words, an individual who loves himself can also love others. There is the logic that an action committed for the good of another can benefit oneself. However, to what extent altruism is possible in this logic is open to debate. In the eighteenth century, it was Kant who clarified altruism through reason as opposed to the emotivist theory. His importance stems from the fact that he linked the morality of his actions to the duty-orientedness of his intentions. The altruism perspective of the philosopher, who recommends taking actions that will be made universal law, is limited as there may be problems in case of conflict of duties. Rousseau, another important thinker of the period, has a contrasting idea of the state of nature with Hobbes. According to him, selfishness is the factor in civilized society. In the nineteenth century altruism research, one can find Comte who introduced the concept. In altruism, which he interpreted as the total dedication of human beings to other people, Comte emphasized the importance of education in moral disposition. Another important figure from the same period, Schopenhauer, defines altruism with the concept of compassion. He defends the value of a life free from desires by glorifying compassion, which he sets against selfishness. Nietzsche is the name of the nineteenth century that draws attention with his attitude far from altruism. According to him, the noble person is the one who manages to stay away from what harms himself. He disapproves of the association of morality with selflessness. In the century of cinema, Adorno's idea that culture has infected people with similarity and that the masses have become passive due to this similarity and the influence of mass media should be mentioned. According to Adorno, cultural products have become a part of the capitalist system and have infected everything with similarity. One can talk about a cultural production that is no different from the industries that produce commodities (2011, p.19). The ideological discourse of cinema, a branch of the culture industry, coincides with the fact that it leaves people similar. The world in which individuals who become passive in front of the screen are caught up and the traces left by this world should be examined separately.

2.Part Two: Cinema and Altruism

Cinema has a dialectical connection with society. Cinema obtains certain tools and equipment it needs to emerge from society. In fact, since it is culturally inseparable from the society in which it emerges, the society in which it takes place must also be researched (Elitaş, 2021). Social changes affect the structural changes in cinema, even down to the themes of films. It is possible for the audience, who is affected by the social structure affecting the basis of thought, to be influenced by the subjects in the movie and determine their opinions in that direction. The development of society is open to being affected by changes in people's thoughts (Esen, 2019). In order to have knowledge about the art, morality, religion and law of a society, it is first necessary to master the economic structure and production process of that society.

Narratives based on the opposition of good and evil have an important place in helping people to produce ideas about what is good and evil (Akınerdem, 2017). In "*Poetics*", Aristotle divides artists who imitate into two as good or bad. He also establishes moral qualities within the framework of these two contrasts. He states that bards imitate these good or bad people (2010). Some of the film projects are in favor of the protagonist serving a benevolent and sympathetic cause and the audience identifying with him/her in this way. If the protagonist has an evil ethic, he or she must be transformed for the better. A superhero who is good from the beginning can increase his influence in the eyes of the audience by increasing the obstacles in front of him. In addition, the degree of evil is another factor that affects the audience (Başol, 2010). In traditional narrative cinema, the masses can only be reached by retransmitting

traditional values and contributing to a collective consciousness. When considered in relation to ethics, traditional cinema often does not attempt to question the reality of life and human beings, either contextually or formally. Since the profit-oriented view of the capitalist system, which stems from the balance of profit and loss, does not leave the cinema empty, it should be said that the average audience is also taken into consideration in the films. In modern cinema, a critical view of reality and moral values is more dominant (Serdaroğlu, 2022).

Classical narrative evokes a sense of “realness” by helping people internalize the subject matter through repetition within and between films. The classical narrative, which tends towards universal subjects and bases its repetitions on similar events and enables the viewer to make connections between them, uses objective narration by avoiding extraordinary technical action. Because such actions remind the viewer that they are watching a movie, it is preferred to use the camera as a second eye, almost as an “invisible eye”. With an attitude that accepts no limits in conveying information, it can even present to the viewer a subject that the protagonist has not witnessed. In classical narrative, which creates a sense of familiarity and realizes this through conventions, elements such as the double action line, the use of stars, and the camera imitating the eye are examples of the conventions mentioned. All this process of familiarity ultimately creates audience expectation (Ersümer, 2013). Therefore, what the situations and characters that people can relate to and emulate tell the audience is of great importance. There are certain codes that guide the audience about the situations and people who should be loved, feared, excluded, shunned, sacrificed and/or sacrificed.

2.1. Altruistic Side of Turkish Cinema

In order to understand the close connection of cinema with society and social changes, we need to know the “us” that the movies address and what we experience (Kırel, 2005). Some scholars have tried to clarify the cause-and-effect relationship between cinema as a powerful social art. It has been concluded that since art arises from the needs and expectations of the public, the story, heroes and underlined values create identification in the audience and transform them into people who define themselves in society. Therefore, social, political and economic problems have affected contemporary life. The times when people preferred cinema in order not to lose hope and faith came after such periods (Gürmen, 2007).

Turkish cinema is a projection of Turkey’s social and historical background, reflecting the ideology of the structure from which it emerged. In our country, cinema is a medium that sometimes processes the problems caused by the processes of nationalization, modernization and capitalization in society, and sometimes provides an escape from these problems. Turkish cinema, which contributed to the formation of the Turkish system of thought, continued its journey that began in the pre-Republican period with its rise in the 60s and 70s. After the stagnant times of the eighties, cinema today continues its adventure around the advertising and TV series industry (Yaylagül, 2018).

The sixties corresponded to a time when film production reached the upper limits and the connection with the audience was strong. At the same time, the audience mostly encountered Turkish films in theaters. The post-war Yeşilçam cinema, which was determined by those who consumed rather than those who produced from 1950 until the early 1980s, was undoubtedly affected by the social dynamics of these years (Kırel, 2005).

The representations of people in popular films of the sixties replaced the real people. On the one hand, there are social realist films that present what needs to change through representations, and on the other hand, there are popular films that use representations to convey what needs to be maintained (Kaplan, 2004). Political and economic changes in the sixties and seventies brought about a transformation of cultural values. Of course, many factors such as migration from rural to urban areas and the phenomenon of urbanization are important reasons for this transformation. As a reflective force of the new culture, cinema plays a major role in shaping culture. Cinema is effective in the continuity or criticism of the system (Kaplan, 2004). The sixties slowly begin to transform the social structure from the fifties. Neighborhood life is still depicted, but this time the texture of the neighborhood has changed with the increasing number of apartment buildings. The structure changed by internal migration, the bustling urban life, the increasing use of cars and apartment life certainly affect the fabric of the neighborhood. However,

this alienation is not fully depicted in the films. The attempt may be to create the perception that the ties are strong despite what is going on around. People who are aware of and active in each other's lives, people who are loved, shopkeepers are portrayed as unselfish, sharing and outgoing. In such a period when such a changing order was looking for the old, the audience seemed to find what they were looking for in the cinema (Kirel, 2005). Turkish cinema in the 60s was a period in which popular images defended the continuity of order and recommended moral rules to the audience that would be useful in developing social harmony (Kaplan, 2004). By the seventies, popular domestic films, which were not difficult to watch and perceive, repeated some themes. The essentials of story, character and setting became familiar to the audience and created expectations. These expectations became the main determinant of the films. The audience knew what they were going to watch from the poster, but still went to the theater wondering about the ending (Abisel, 2005). The Turkish audience's codification of certain characters with recurring themes and their ability to guess from whom the good, help and evil will come when watching the same actors in different movies stems from traditional viewing habits (Tunali, 2006). In the seventies, the turmoil on the one hand and the moments of freedom that people came close to on the other left a glimmer of hope for altruism and goodness in people.

In our cinema until the eighties, the good were generally rewarded, and the bad were punished by justice if they did not realize that what they were doing was bad and did not take the side of the good. As goodness is the ultimate act to be achieved, there is an audience that identifies with the doer of goodness. The audience is encouraged to behave in a benevolent and honest manner. So much so that it is known that actors who play bad characters are subjected to negative reactions even in their real lives. This does not mean that there are no movie endings where the good guys lose. However, it is seen that these films do not approve of evil, on the contrary, they allow the viewer to reproach the villain for winning (Velioglu, 2017). It can be said that in Turkish cinema, striving for the happiness of one's friends without expecting anything in return is a type of altruistic behavior mostly seen in the 1960s and 1970s (Velioglu, 2016).

3. Part Three: Analysis of Films

In this study, the data obtained through descriptive analysis were analyzed and interpreted within the framework of altruism. All of the films were analyzed by dividing them into units in terms of their proximity and distance to altruism. With the contribution of the aesthetic and technical features of cinema, a wide-framed study has been created in which discourses and visuals that serve the subject are included in the research, and many disciplines, especially moral philosophy, are utilized in terms of their approaches to altruism. In descriptive analysis, which is a qualitative research design, the topics obtained from the research questions are presented within a certain logical framework in line with the opinions of the observed individuals, including quotations from them. The purpose of the analysis is to convey the organized and interpreted findings to the reader. In the analysis method, which has four stages, firstly, a framework is developed to determine which theme the data is suitable for. In the second stage, a logical sequence is made in accordance with the determined framework. In the third stage, the data are defined and supported with quotations. In the last stage, the findings are explained and interpreted (Yıldırım, Şimşek, 2000). Qualitative research has a strong theoretical basis that is connected to other disciplines. Many disciplines such as sociology, philosophy, psychology and anthropology bring a different perspective to qualitative research in an effort to comprehend human behavior with the environment in which it takes place (Yıldırım, Şimşek, 2000). The fact that the study consists of a subject such as altruism, which permeates every area that touches the society, made it necessary to utilize philosophical perspective and sociological concepts as a complementary element.

The films examined in this study were selected through purposeful sampling in order to construct a comparative analytical framework based on contrasting representations of altruism within narrative structures. The first film in the sample, "*Hepimiz Kardeşiz*," is identified as a text in which altruism is explicitly idealized, moral goodness is rewarded, and self-sacrifice functions as the central ethical principle of the narrative. In contrast, the second film, "*Namuslu*," presents a narrative in which altruistic

dispositions are systematically exploited, the benevolent subject is marginalized, and altruism is rendered vulnerable in the face of structural inequalities.

These two films were therefore deliberately selected as oppositional case studies to demonstrate how altruism is discursively constructed within different narrative regimes. Accordingly, the study employs descriptive analysis to examine the cinematic representation of altruism along the analytical axes of “rewarded goodness” and “suppressed/punished goodness,” enabling a comparative interpretation of moral valuation, character positioning, and narrative outcomes.

3.1. The Search for Altruism in “Hepimiz Kardeşiz”

Film Credits

Director: Ülkü Erakalın

Screenplay: Hamdi Değirmencioglu, Bülent Oran

Cast: Cüneyt Arkın, Hülya Koçyiğit, Tamer Yiğit, Aliye Rona

Year: 1964

At the beginning of the movie, the song “*Nem alacak felek benim*” is heard. The lyrics of the song describe the feelings of those who have nothing left to lose and are left alone by the loss of the people around them. The lyrics express the lack of solidarity, the fact that the only thing one has is one's life and it is entrusted to one's care, and the inevitability of experiencing death. Indeed, this whole introduction foreshadows the suffering and loss in the movie. The movie begins with a man shot by his enemies as he runs and falls to the ground. Elif then falls into the water while playing chase with her brother and encounters the teacher who comes to the village. The teacher, Ahmet, even on his first visit to the village, asks Elif to help him in an act of altruism. Their first meeting is shown through Ahmet extending a helping hand to Elif with the sub-angle technique. In terms of paying attention to the presentation of altruism through technical and aesthetic elements in cinema, the service of cinema to altruistic materials can be revealed. Here, the low angle is used to emphasize the glorified behavior of the altruist. In the introductory sequence where the characters are introduced, the woman whose husband was murdered by the Karayusufogulları is shown becoming a compassionate mother by adopting a child whose mother and father died.

Nazlı, who says, “*I don't understand what you have against each other when you can live as brothers and sisters in the same village,*” forgives even the Karayusufogulları who killed her husband, which is a reflection of an understanding of doing good to those who do evil. Loving one's enemies, doing good to those who do evil, and responding to evil with good are glorified actions in Islam. In this film, the importance of overcoming evil with good is frequently emphasized. The woman, who builds her life on goodness by saying “*What is the use of evil and holding a grudge*”, takes her son's word that she will not retaliate without a bad act from the other party. After a while, a teacher is appointed to the village and the teacher buys the house shared by two hostile families and wants to build a school here. It becomes difficult to see the pure altruism of the teacher, who acts not for his own benefit but for the benefit of the village, because deep down he is happy to practice his own profession. Realizing one's own ideal is ultimately an act of self-interest. However, when looked at on the basis of intention and when he puts his intention into action in this regard, it can be said that the teacher who strives for children to read and for their future to be saved is engaged in an altruistic behavior. Because her goal is to transfer the success of her mother, who educated herself, to the women of the village. In addition, even if she considers her own interest on the basis of her ideal while aiming for the welfare of the community, her willingness to die at the end of the movie, thus giving up her own interest (because she cannot see what will be done), in short, contributing only to the people of the village makes her altruistic. In fact, the tendency that he enters into by risking harm to himself is even close to the concept of isar. Based on the fact that isar abstracts from the materiality of this world and touches the spiritual regions (soul, conscience), Ahmet gave up himself for the sake of unity of love. It should be noted that if it is assumed that the teacher acted selfishly and for his own benefit at first, and Karayusufogulları acted selfishly, the difference between the two sides becomes the purpose of the journey. In other words, the teacher acted with a good motive and Yusuf acted with a bad motive. The determination of good and bad comes from the contribution to the community. Another

important aspect of altruism is that good intentions are put into action. Therefore, it can be said that the majority of the villagers, especially Ahmet, Nazlı, Elif, Ali, Garip and later Murat, acted altruistically. Those who were reciprocated were more likely to cooperate, but most of these people did good deeds without expecting anything in return.

Speaking to the people of the village, the teacher says “*We must do something for our village and our homeland as well as our homes*” and calls on people to know themselves, as if following in the footsteps of Socrates (Rahmi, 1995). Because Ahmet suggests questioning and changing the current situation and the source of ignorance. He insists on thinking about the salvation of the community, questioning what is happening and taking action with this goal. Ahmet wants at least one teacher to come out of every village and begins to struggle for this ideal. He expresses that he embraces the village and the children as his own children and as his own village, and asks for help from the villagers to establish the school. Ahmet and the people of the village feel a sense of belonging, and the collective sense of identity that comes with belonging to a group has shaped the teacher as a member of that village.

In Nazlı’s persuasion to give the house, there is a cooperation as both parties will benefit and make sacrifices. After all, Ahmet will establish a school for his profession by making a laborious effort, and Nazlı will both help Ahmet and ensure that his child gets a good education. What convinces Murat is the possibility of marrying Elif. In other words, Murat hopes to be rewarded for his good deed. The teacher, on the other hand, is dissatisfied with Elif’s persuasion of Murat with the promise of marriage, but gives up her love, which is another example of sacrifice.

Ahmet goes to talk to Kara Yusuf and asks him for the deed of the house in order to build a school “*for the benefit of the villagers*”. Kara Yusuf, who says, “*That house will stay in me like a grudge until I die*”, is the ill-intentioned person who owns the most property in the village as a representation of ignorance. Ahmet’s persuasion of Kara Yusuf is realized when he mentions that his good thoughts about him are unwarranted. Here, Ahmet uses his ability to persuade with the technique of reverse psychology. It can be understood through a micro-social analysis that Kara Yusuf is not a bad person in essence, but only because of his ignorance and the pressure of his environment. His sons and his environment think that his power stems from this far from goodness. Indeed, according to social learning theory, a person in Kara Yusuf’s situation will realize his altruistic tendency, which is not innate but formed later. However, from another perspective, according to socio-biologists, there is an individual who is innately altruistic. This individual is shaped for good and evil by the influence of the social environment. When Kara Yusuf is interpreted as Socrates interpreted (Birand, 1958), it can be said that evil is not reached from infancy, but as a result of misguidance and later acquired misconceptions. Of course, although gene transmission is important, it is possible to attribute the good nature of one and the bad nature of the other of two individuals born in the same culture and with the same bloodline to the influence of environment. Throughout the film, the different behavior models of two related families are observed.

The solidarity of the villagers, who act in a cooperative manner in the construction of the school, is a reflection of the morality in the internal affairs of the community. Because human beings are the only beings capable of grasping the difference between good and evil and bringing morality to light. This state of the peasants acting together, as Comte claimed (1852), stems from the fact that human beings are prone to unity. As an empathizing being, human beings ultimately choose moral values through empathy. As Hoffer argues (2010), sometimes actions that may be good can serve evil on the contrary. In the film, in the case of Karayusufoğulları, self-sacrifice is used for the group and serves hatred. The sense of belonging to the group makes it necessary to fight for the good of that group. Here, the real indication that the action is not altruistic should be evaluated on the basis of intention. The Karayusufoğulları family, which does not care about the well-being of the people of the village, strives only for its own benefit, and thinks of nothing but its own material gain, is bound to hatred and anger without even questioning the reason for its hatred. They are a family that has isolated itself from the village and is doomed to disappear, just as unaltruistic groups have disappeared from the stage of history. After bringing all the students to school, teacher Ahmet asked his students to love him and each other. He wants them to be bound to each other like brothers and sisters by Turkish nationalism. Again a sense of belonging emerges, but this time it manifests itself in national values.

At the same time, what he endeavors to do is to reach the universal truth in Kant's ethics of duty with a sense of duty. The ethics of duty, which is inspired by the fact that a well-intentioned person treats those around him as he would like to be treated (Özüpek, 2020), lies in Ahmet's asking everyone to behave well. As a result, Ahmet does not instrumentalize human beings on the path of universal truth, and instead of excluding those who disagree with him, he opens up goodness to them.

When Ahmet is shot dead by Kara Yusuf, he says to Murat: "I won the struggle I fought for you. I won you, that's the most valuable thing. I won another person who understands me, who loves me". With this statement, he realizes that even though he has no expectation of reward - considering that any reward after death will not bring any profit to the person - the fact that he can express himself and most importantly trust people who will do what he wants to do is a reward. The state of the village before the teacher is an example of Hobbes' (2021) state of nature where deaths occur. The teacher, who comes to the village for the sake of establishing order as a representation of the state, is the last person to fall victim to evil for that village. The lives taken by two hostile families are ended by the order, understanding and spirit of solidarity established by the teacher. It is time to talk about the future, not death. Of course, a Hobbesian perspective can be seen in the tendency of people, especially the mother, to cooperate in the first place for fear of further losses. Her death is the main factor in the unification and consciousness-raising of the people of the village, and most importantly, in bringing the villain Kara Yusuf to conscience. Murat's choice of altruistic action leads to an ending in which the villain is punished and Kara Yusuf is killed. This murder is also an expression of the glorification of moral stance. It is seen in the film that there is a progression towards kindness, compassion, self-sacrifice and altruistic behavior. Nazlı, Elif, Ali, Ahmet, Murat, the names in which altruistic actions are observed, contribute to altruism by utilizing sub-branches such as helping, donating and empathizing in volunteer work.

3.2. Altruistic Search in the "Namuslu" Movie

Film Credits

Director: Ertem Eğilmez

Screenplay: Başar Sabuncu

Cast: Şener Şen, Adile Naşit, Ayşen Gruda, Erdal Özyağcılar, Ergün Uçucu, Zihni Küçümen

Year: 1984

The film tells the story of an honest paymaster named Ali Rıza (Şener Şen) who has a large sum of money stolen by thieves while working and is glorified by those around him. *Namuslu* is a combination of Ertem Eğilmez's approach, which conforms to the continuity conditions of popular cinema, and Başar Sabuncu's social realist approach. *Namuslu* presents the social structure of the period and the flawed aspects of the dominant liberal economic practices that cause corruption on the ordinary individual with humor (Kırel, 2010).

For the protagonist, every person and every corner is like a sandbox. Another employee in the office takes a bribe from a citizen to do his job. Ali Rıza suffers from sneezing at important moments and out of the blue. It would not be a wrong interpretation to say that he is allergic to this order. Because the man will somehow get rid of this characteristic in the future. There is not a single person around him who thinks the same as Ali Rıza. When he goes to deliver the broom they borrowed from his neighbor, the man comes to the door with food in his hand, again encouraging theft. Moreover, the fact that the man's wife opens the door with a well-groomed and smiling face while Ali Rıza's wife opens the door with a sullen face clearly shows the reward of theft. As if suddenly appearing in a different world, Ali Rıza falls into a succession of dishonest and selfish people. In the movie, the tendency to help, which predisposes to altruism, is based solely on self-interest. Only his friend's offering him tea was done without any self-interest. Moreover, when a theft occurs after that help, the same friend will take the side against Ali Rıza and look out for his own interests. All the people, even the man's son, would not approach his father without his own interest, would not even take the bucket from his hand. His wife refuses sexual intercourse, shopkeepers refuse to sell him goods, and his coworkers ostracize him for staying away from bribery. Even Adile Naşit's role as a loving, devoted mother, familiar from many other films, is transformed in keeping up with the upside-down order, and a greedy woman who sees nothing but money

emerges. Ali Rıza is the man who is blockaded in a circle of selfish and pragmatist people and who, despite them, does not compromise his stance for a long time. When evaluated on the basis of altruism, it would be wrong to say that Ali Rıza does good without expecting anything in return. He shows such a behavior towards his wife and son, but it is not possible to state that he is also selfless. As a matter of fact, altruism is an issue that is analyzed on theoretical grounds such as kin selection and group selection. It should be clarified that Ali Rıza has some qualities that do not exactly fit altruism but are very close to it. Taking responsibility (at work and in the family), empathy (with the citizen and with his son for his son's future), honesty, cooperation (carrying his neighbor's belongings, doing someone else's duty), fairness (not discriminating between classes, staying away from bribery), and selflessness are the qualities that bring him closest to altruism. In addition, the opportunity to perform such actions did not come his way because of the excesses of people. Money has been a part of human life in every disguise. Ali Rıza withdraws the money belonging to someone else from the bank and puts the ones that do not fit in the bag in his jacket pocket. When his bag is stolen by two thieves on his way out, he takes out a gun from his pocket and fires, but the thieves are already gone. Distaught, the man calls his friend before going to work. From the first moment, the people around him do not believe him and try to create a truth as if there is a lie in order to get a share of the money for themselves. What is right and what is wrong has become so relative that the line between them has blurred and the truth has been replaced by a lie and the lie by the truth. This state of the protagonist is reminiscent of what Baudrillard (2018) means by simulation. Especially when he fails to convince people that he is not a thief, he pretends to be a thief and eventually becomes a thief. As can be seen at the end of the movie, the lie that everyone deems worthy has become Ali Rıza's truth. When he arrives at his workplace, all the manipulative people who want to get a share for the credibility of the event invent a story. All acts of charity are motivated by selfish material interests, especially violence. Ali Rıza struggles to survive alone in an unfamiliar universe, in an environment where utilitarianism is presented as a rank to be promoted. Ali Rıza did not see the contribution of kin selection theory or group selection theory in his own eyes. He could not even find an example of sacrifice from his own genetic offspring. Apart from all these, there is also indirect reciprocity, which is attributed to a reason in acts of altruism by non-relatives. The first of these is increased respect, the second is reward and the third is a safe environment (Teehan, 2010). The people around Ali Rıza help the innocent man with the expectation of being rewarded with a share of the money. In the social fragmentation and lack of solidarity, the individual has evolved towards Ali Rıza's "if I am alone, then goodbye" at the end of the movie. Since the capitalist order imprints in people's minds *that if you have money, you are worth something*, Ali Rıza chooses to take a step towards selfishness in order to find his own value.

The man, who is rewarded for being a thief, has sexual intercourse with his wife, is applauded by the shopkeepers, his seniority rises, and even though he says "*I didn't steal, I was robbed, let everyone hear, I don't need such prestige, I'm not a thief, don't worry, I don't have forty coins*", he cannot convince anyone. Ali Rıza declares "*Yes, yes, I am a thief*" after all that has happened and announces the man he has become. The next day, Ali Rıza takes off his black suit, puts on a light-colored suit, and becomes 'that person' right down to the clothes of the character he has become. Instead of the dark-colored suit that he used to wear armbands because he was afraid it would get dirty, he put on a light-colored jacket that he was never afraid of getting dirty. Because now he knows that it is not the clothes that get dirty, but the mentality. He has completely abandoned his hat, which he used to take off to everyone out of respect, and has become a man who slaps everyone around him. On the pretext of starting a business, he borrows money from everyone around him with the lie that he will give it back when he launders the money. Ali Rıza defrauds everyone and the next day he gets on a ship and sets off to leave the selfish people he has become lonely and selfish himself. The people who try to stop him fall into the sea by continuing to be greedy and ambitious without giving up the blessings of life that he could not get his share. Ali Rıza's vacation-appropriate outfit and his relaxed demeanor convey the person he has become and the person he is pleased to be transformed into.

It is possible to consider all individuals in the movie as following psychological egoism. Because all of them push all means to achieve the life they desire. In this regard, if not altruism, in their acts of kindness (e.g. providing support after a purse snatching incident), they always think of their own contribution.

However, these people are egoistic by nature. They have a model of behavior that does not stem from Ali Rıza's nature. Of course, the environmental factor and the pains of the period shaping the person are also addressed, but it is necessary to talk about a selfishness and utilitarianism that recurs in nature. When Ali Rıza takes the side of the villains, there is a flow that makes us think that the other side deserves it. The film conveys the idea of responding to selfish people by being like them instead of explaining oneself or doing good to them through a sympathetic villain by using elements of humor. Identification in cinema refers to the audience putting themselves in the place of one of the film characters. The audience takes the place of the character they empathize with for a while (Ulutaş, 2019). Chion's approach will clarify the situation. According to him (1987), the bad lies of a punk can be softened or the good side of a saint can be diminished. If the character suffers great injustice, he/she can gain the approval of the audience even in the most violent action. Ali Rıza's state, in which he finally satisfies the audience and gains sympathy rather than anger, is based on finding a logical justification and justification for the evil of the villain. Even when Şen's characters do evil, it is justified. He is the one who exposes the infamy of evil through comedy, by destroying it or exaggerating it. He does not defend evil in what he does, he exposes the flaws of humanity through satire (Scognamillo, 2005).

4. Conclusion

In the last part of the study, in the light of the parameters determined according to the preferred qualitative research method, the scope of altruism reflected in the selected films was discussed. The altruistic actions used in the films and the path to them were followed. The contribution of prosocial behaviors to altruism was revealed. The existence of good and evil on the basis of altruism was opened to discussion. A comprehensive evaluation of the identification of selfishness and altruism in films has been made and the pro-altruism stances that are tried to be imposed have been determined. Of course, the evaluation of altruism in the films is presented in a broad framework without considering it in isolation from the society and culture to which it belongs. Although altruism seems to be dominant in the films of the analyzed periods in general, it has been revealed that some behaviors display a stance far from altruism behind the scenes. For this reason, other actions that are not altruistic or that bring us closer to it are also included in the analysis.

The altruism encountered in the first film of the study, "Hepimiz Kardeşiz", can be illuminated through the character's stance and idealistic attitude. After Ahmet teacher comes to the village, it is observed that he eventually erases the enmities in the village by sacrificing himself. Many positive social behaviors such as helping, showing goodwill, solidarity, taking responsibility, and empathy were identified in the film. In the context of altruism, favoritism in evolutionary perspectives such as social norm learning theory and kin selection were observed. At the end of the film, it is revealed that Ahmet devotes his ambition to realize his own ideal for the benefit of others and the sacrifice of a man who risks death for the education of children is emphasized. The dilemma that could have left the audience between thinking of oneself and looking out for the social interest in the early stages of the movie, took the form of a person who took the side of social benefit in the finale. While the other actors act on the axis of good and evil, it is revealed that good is on the side of altruism and evil is on the side of selfish motives. It has been observed that those who hold grudges and are far from the idea of brotherhood and solidarity lose, and even if the deceased is the altruist, he wins by continuing his ambitions through other people. The last stop of the study was the movie "Namuslu". It is observed that altruism is not traced in the movie and no one helps each other in good faith. It is observed that liberated individuals violate each other's rights, and that they are honorable and honest.

There are moments when being a citizen is considered inferior and being selfish and self-interested is considered worthy of a higher rank. A stage has been entered where materialism has turned the hierarchy of values upside down in human life. It has been determined that the act of helping is done for the benefit of those who only think about their own future. The marginalization of the person when he is far from the order and his "heroization" when he keeps up with the order is portrayed. It is revealed that people who dig each other's wells destroy the relationship of neighborliness in the neighborhood, kinship and parenthood in the family, and that money is a friend, mother, father, son and self. Ali Rıza's great

transformation has put him in the place of a cog in the corrupt order, making him balanced with the system. Since it would be impossible for him to survive if he showed that he was different from the others, he preferred to be one of them. The last hope of altruism traveled with him on that ship.

The most important inference to be made from the films subjected to the research in terms of the thesis study is the transition from films (periods) in which the altruist wins even if he consumes resources from himself, to the idea that the selfish wins and perhaps a strong understanding of selfishness will prevail for the future.

Arařtırmacıların Katkı Oran Beyanı / Contribution of Authors

Yazarların alıřmadaki katkı oranları řeyda ÖZELİK AYDOĐAN %50/ Aytekin CAN %50 řeklinde dir.
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alıřmada herhangi bir kurum veya kiři ile ıkar atıřması bulunmamaktadır.
There is no conflict of interest with any institution or person in the study.

İntihal Politikası Beyanı / Plagiarism Policy

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In this study, the rules specified within the scope of the Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive were followed.

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