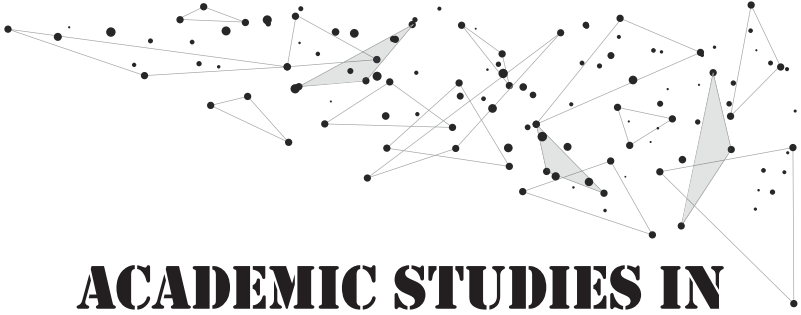




# ACADEMIC STUDIES IN SOCIAL, HUMAN AND ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES



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**CHAPTER  
26****COMPLEMENTING THE TIME-IMAGE BY  
EXISTENTIALISM:  
THE IMPLICIT IDEOLOGY OF NURI BILGE  
CEYLAN'S FILMOGRAPHY****Can DİKER****Introduction**

This study was conducted in order to give a meaning to the thematic approaches of the journey of Nuri Bilge Ceylan, who entered into the filmmaking sector with a short film titled *Koza* (Cocoon, 1995), which stretches to Cannes Film Festival, where he won the prize for the 'Best Film' with his work titled *Kış Uykusu* (Winter Sleep, 2014). Within his 20 years of exploits in filmmaking, it is apparent that there are some changes in the contents of the film of the director.

In the direction of explaining the filmmaking of Nuri Bilge Ceylan, it can be asserted that knowing the directors, whom Nuri Bilge Ceylan was inspired from as the first thing, shall be a starting point. In the list that the Director gave to Sight & Sound Magazine in September 2012, which contains top 10 favorite films of Nuri Bilge Ceylan, the top two places were occupied by the films of Andrei Tarkovsky, *Zerkalo* (Mirror, 1975) and *Andrei Rublev* (1966), as the remaining spots were taken by the films from the directors such as Ozu, Antonioni, Bergman and Bresson (Ceylan, 2012a). The fact that those aforementioned directors often make references to each other and also have affinity for each other's in terms of storytelling is also crucial to understand the cinema of Nuri Bilge Ceylan at the stages, where it was inspired by. For example, the fact that Tarkovsky quoted about Bresson as "*perhaps the only artist in cinema, who achieved the perfect fusion of the finished work with a concept theoretically formulated beforehand*" and regarded Bresson and Bergman amongst the directors that he was inspired by, the fact that the auteur approaches of Ozu and Antonioni had an impact on Tarkovsky (Tarkovsky, 1986) and the fact that the styles of those directors are considered similar to each other by various critics cause one to think that all those aforementioned directors have a common film language. Ceylan's cinematography is also likened to Tarkovsky's style, which as a matter of fact connected with photography, by many critics. However, such a resemblance is not limited only with Tarkovsky as the directors such as Ozu and Bergman also have an impact on Ceylan in terms of storytelling. Therefore, it is safe to say that Bresson, Bergman, Ozu, Antonioni, Tarkovsky and Ceylan all commonly have similarities in storytelling and they feature characteristics that set them apart from the main stream cinema. In one of his interviews, Ceylan (1997) also stated that the said directors influenced him as well.

In order to understand the filmmaking theories of Ceylan as well as the other directors, who inspired him, the approaches that Deleuze set forth in its works "The Movement Image" and "The Time Image", shall be determinative. Deleuze, when explaining his of cinematographic approaches, discourses the scenes from



a certain set of films. Analyzing especially the “Time-Image” and “Crystal Image” would help understanding the basics of Nuri Bilge Ceylan’s *auteur* filming. From this basis, evaluating the films that he shot after the “Rural Trilogy” and determining and giving meaning to the differentiating situations from this point of origin shall be realized not only by conducting in-film analysis but also by taking some particular financial influences of the real world into consideration. According to this, in order to understand the reasons of Ceylan’s act of placing and storytelling within a dramatic structure in addition to adding the element of alienation to the characters in its films, the necessity of taking the external effects in filmmaking processes into account in his post-2000’s films. At this very point, by considering the financial wheels of the filmmaking and film distribution operations, the relationship of Nuri Bilge Ceylan with the cinema industry shall be discussed and a critical review of the journey of Ceylan, from his beginnings to this day shall be commenced with a historical materialist stand point.

### Deleuze and Cinema

The philosophical approaches of Gilles Deleuze, who is one of the most important philosophers in 20<sup>th</sup> Century, are fairly crucial for distinguishing the relationships of action and time in cinema. Deleuze established his approaches towards cinema based on the theses of Bergson. Bergson, by seeing the mind in a materialist window, attempts to indicate the relationship between the object and time. Although Bergson does not completely reject the positive sciences, Bergson refers to a conscience, based on the intuition, formed by humans rather than one, based on the mind. He indicates that in order to make it happen, the concept of “time” is required. The concept of time is expressed through the conscience and is represented via the images. According to Bergson, “the conscience means the memory” (Bergson 1998).

According to Deleuze, the films are philosophical works, not mere vessels for storytelling. In order to analyze the meanings of the filmic images, the philosophy is a necessity. For Bergson, although the formation of philosophy is related with time, it is also represented by images as well. Cinema gives image movement, and space and time in which the movement may occur within. Due to the cinematographic illusion the filmmaking, which is different from the reality that is accepted and fixed with the consideration for a film maker to establish a reality from his/her own perspective, is realized with action–image and time–image concepts in cinema. In cinema, the space and time can be divided but it is not possible to divide the movement. The reason for this is that the movement itself has a qualitative period. Because of the fact that the movement in the cinema is processed as a whole in terms of the relationship of image and concept and as the result of the fact that the movement presents the idea that is intended to be presented in the image itself or as a style of combination, the action–image is formed. In a state in contrast to this, meaning that it expresses the idea in the cinema by severing it from the indicator ends up in a different result. Therefore, Deleuze, starting from this point as well, established the time–image concept. Deleuze labels the pre-WWII cinema as movement–image and post-WWII cinema as time–image, underlines that this distinction is related to the change in

style, occurred after the war in order to restore the faith in the world and in the individual. The effects of the poverty and the devastation that the war brought, can only be overcome by forming an internal dialog in time-image films when establishing a meaning not by the internal monologues, created by movement-image films. (Deleuze 1986).

According to this, the movement in movement-image films with a sharp idea can be created by the means of action, editing, shooting and framing. The fact that each scene is rationally meaningful and is interrelated with each other due to the created action, the film design focuses the audience on thinking about the whole only. In this way, the singular meaning of the shoots, which are considered as the object of the whole, the framing and the editing are rendered weak, they refer to the whole. For example, according to Eisenstein (1985); "cinema, before anything else, is montage." As the individual cells come together and form the organism, so the dialectic arcs that are resulted due to the conflicts, made possible in the films, occur and ultimately make up the idea towards the whole. According to Deleuze (1986), The movement - images are the dynamic parts of a changing whole, a period and a universal occurrence.

The second book of Deleuze is on the Time-Image. The background of time-image stems from the weakening relationship between the man and the world. The transformation of the modern cinema to internal dialogue from the internal monologue as the result of this weakening, meaning that there can be multiple meanings instead of a single one, and making sense from this by the audiences themselves instead of others become possible. Deleuze explains the transition to internal dialogue as follows;

"The relationship between the men and the world and the cinematographic elements that hold the power to restore the faith of humanity in world either showed us how the men transformed the world or showed us a world, in which the humanity exists. In fact, the bond between the human and the world has already been severed. Therefore, this bond becomes an object of the faith and it is not possible to reform this faith any more. So, the cinema should film our only connection, our faith in the world, not the world itself. What's certain here is that the faith is no longer the faith in a different world or in a world, already been transformed." (Deleuze 1989, 171-172)

The Italian neorealist cinema movement is a basic example on time-image. The effect of the post-WWII political environment in Italy on the individuals was not the representation against an absolute fact such as poverty or class conflicts but was the representation of the reality towards an inner world that the individual formed by his/her subjective perspective. That means that the individuals created their own versions of reality against the absolute reality and it became impossible to look at the world events in a macro perspective. This situation, which is related to the fact that the conflicts between the dominant powers had a crushing effect on the individuals, made an artificial reality to be formed instead



of bringing the absolute reality along. While this signifies an acceptance of defeat regarding the elements of the “outer world” this also becomes a representation of an inner world that was shaped by the realities of the outer world. For example, in the movie *Ladri di Biciclette* (The Bicycle Thieves, Vittorio De Sica, 1948), although the conditions of the world that the individual live in are presented in a realistic manner, the main character does not question the main factors that drove him to poverty and implicitly accepts the reality of the outer world. After his bicycle was stolen, he does not seek any punishment for the thief after he finds the thief. This situation demonstrates that it would be meaningless to attempt to shape the outer world since the post war Italy everybody shares the very same desperation. After this acknowledgement, the decision of the main character to see a fortune teller, whom he initially refuses to see, after losing all his hope, is an action towards his own intrinsicness. The impossibilities become the building blocks of the time – image cinema. However, the object would elude the effects of the outer world in time and would become an independent existence. This actually marks a deepening drift to the inner world.

Deleuze (1989) explains this situation by remarking as “The Movement–Image is connected to the state propaganda and fascism” and indicates that time–image cinema proceeds over the idea of the individualism, resulted from the outcomes brought by the propaganda cinema with the background context of war. Within this aspect, Deleuze discusses that the examples of movement–image cinema can be propaganda oriented Soviet, Nazi and American Hollywood cinemas. Unlike the movement – image cinema, the individual does not have a goal to reach to a whole or does not need to be a hero. The reason for this is that the images that symbolize the heroism no longer have meaning for the individuals. The time–image seeks new pursuits and symbols and proceeds to use such new findings in order to use for the construction of a subjective reality. In this regard, states that the moving images forestalls the conscious thinking and further indicates that the subjects are passive while images are active. He adds that a movement, which is passive in the idea becomes a force in time–image thus instead of thinking of the whole, separating it directs it to the core of the ideas. The time–image, which allows different ways of thinking with its breaking points, instead of a holistic approach, shall not be associated with the propaganda and fascism as an indicator of people’s loss of faith in the world. Within this concept, the cinema indicates the lack of power of the idea, not its power.

The time–image does not adopt a linear path of time, does not stipulate the lining of past, present and future by diminishing the lines between them. While preserving the past, the present also allows the future and creates a representation of uncertainty in temporal sense. Here, in a film that will merge the movement–image and the time–image with cinematic illusion, forms, so called the organic regime and the crystal regime emerge. The organic regime is the fiction of the structure of the movement–image that aims to reach to the whole. The crystal regime on the other hand, is the time image’s goal to go beyond the reality or “transition from the substantial to existential” In organic regime, the images is described with the representation of the external reality while the images are indicated with an idea that has no representation in reality in crystal regime. The

presentation of the crystal regime, compared to the organic regime, is not on behalf of something but rather tells what is related to itself. According to this, there are two types of storytelling in the cinema, being the organic storytelling and the crystal storytelling. The sole reference source for the organic story telling is the external world. It depends on the movement-images and images' formation of the whole by the rational crossing of the relations of the images themselves.

The crystal storytelling on the other hand, emerges by displaying the pure visual - auditory images. For Deleuze, Yasujirō Ozu is a director that can be taken as an example in this regard. Shooting becomes the boldest element and as the result of the reinvention of fixed shooting, the creating of subjective reality is made possible. For example, the fixed images of an empty room that Ozu shot can be regarded in this manner. Long shots, not utilizing the time in a clear manner, the state of intertwinement between the past, present and future and the recreation of the reality by parting from the outer world are the main elements that define the crystal regime (in Sütçü 2005, 160-165). According to Deleuze, Ozu provides the biggest criticism of the daily events. He tells the European and Japanese Marxists, who criticize Ozu for being "confused" and "negative" that those directors have not given up the criticism of the politics, but they were simply using a different method (Deleuze 1989). He further underlines that the fixed scenes that contain pure sound and image carry a meaning and emphasis beyond the action.

According to this, it is mandatory to analyze the cinematographic approaches of the Russian director Andrei Tarkovsky, whom Deleuze takes as an example and who has a prominent place within the auteur directors. The critics of the Tarkovsky's films generally make people think that his audiences should possess a certain capacity for perception. Tarkovsky closely studied the Russian philosophy and adopted this in his films. According to Yergebekov, Tarkovsky is placed at the epicenter of the Russian - West philosophy and cultural conflicts and does not belong to any side. The reflection of Heidegger, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche's existentialist questioning is evident in the cinema of Tarkovsky. In a postmodern approach, Tarkovsky thinks that his audience finds a piece of themselves and contribute to the films with the moments that form their own minds. According to Tarkovsky in this way, a film piece is not a process of consumption or criticism for the audience, it is rather contributing to the film by heading to own inner worlds and is thus cleansing. Therefore, Tarkovsky is an auteur director and his films have a poetic telling. The time that his films are confined within is described as "closed" and "limited" Finding the dreams, memories and lost time again within the inner world of the individual is the proof of the fact that the director, rather than the outer world, produces films in line of his own inner world (Yergebekov 2003, 93-102).

Tarkovsky's approach to his films is in harmony with the time - image concept. In his movie *Zerkalo* (Mirror, Andrei Tarkovsky, 1975), the director, without making discrimination between the past, present and future, and without any sequential order, tells his own memories with the element of poetry. Unlike Eisenstein, Deleuze tells that Tarkovsky adopts an approach that keeps the editing in a higher regard and further states that the important thing is the shooting. In the





same manner, the Tarkovsky's wish materializes in Deleuze's time - image concept. "The temporal indicators of the director are now perceivable by the senses." (Deleuze 1989, 42-43). The storytelling of the film *Zerkalo* that adopted the crystal regime is interpreted differently. In case there are two aspects of the crystal structure, it shall be seen that it has two adult characters. (Mother and spouse) If it is speculated that the crystal structure has four aspects, it will be possible to read the film two visible couples (mother, own childhood, spouse and own child). The reality that the crystal regime attempts to give meaning is, according to Deleuze, is the answer of "What is Russia?" (1989). Therefore, conducting a deep analysis via the crystal regime and to be able to answer other questions is possible, according to Deleuze.

### **The Philosophy of Alienation: Existentialism**

Starting from the time-image theory of Deleuze, it is appropriate to say that giving meanings to Nuri Bilge Ceylan and the other directors is possible. However, it is also necessary to assess how much the aforementioned political stance may pose a political representation without getting into action in line of the dynamics of the outer world. With a Marxist perspective, it is possible to suggest a criticism regarding the time-image.

The alienation, according to Marx, leads to the reification and fetishism mechanisms in the modern capitalist society. Such mechanisms result in the process of the "commodity fetishism" which appear after the labor produces commodities and commodity proceeds to the commoditization of the labor, which brings the entirety of the life under the control of commodity. The individual, in this sense, gets alienated from its own activity thus becomes somebody out of his/her mind. In other words, the individual gets lost within the rational rules of the modernity. (Marx 2007). In this sense, the alienation is the first phase of losing the sense of humanity. Due to alienation, the society is stripped from its humane characteristics, becomes an object and drifts away from humane values. It is necessary to say that this situation does not only produce economic crisis, but also leads to individual and social depressions.

According to Marx, the alienation occurs in four stages. The first one of those stages is in the form of the alienation of the worker from the object that it produces as the result of his/her labor, the second one is the alienation of the labor from his/her work, the third one is the alienation of the worker from himself/herself and finally, the alienation of the worker from other workers (Marx 2007). In this way, the individual is alienated to himself/herself, to the product he/she makes, to his/her own labor, to the world and to the life. The alienated labor alienates a person's own, the nature and the function of the self-activity. A person, who is so alienated to his/her vital activities is also alienated to the other people, he/she considers the other people as "*the other*" A group of negative feeling that stem under the influence of the capitalist system, which isolates the individual, alienating him/her to self and to the nature, also drags the ways that the individuals of a society think. Therefore, in order for an individual to make sense of himself/herself and his/her nature, the philosophical movement called the existentialism was developed. Although there is no universally accepted definition of

the existentialism; with its general outline, it is a philosophical movement that considers the existence of the individual as the point of origin. The existentialism seems to be the ethics philosophy as well an axiology that attempts to understand the positions of the individuals in this world, the positions and the value of the individuals in relation to the others and the society and which understands and feels the underlying responsibility of the actions. (Sartre 2012).

After the death of millions of people as the sad in the wake of World War II, the value of the humans in this world became a subject of discourse. The individual, by putting up a passive resistance to the “rational” institutional structure, in which, he/she is dictated how to live, behave and die, began an inner journey in a personal manner and started looking for the answers in himself/herself. The possibility that the death may find almost anybody, anytime and anywhere (Especially in Europe during the War) and the state, in which the value, given to people, the importance of what they experience, and the importance of human life were the least concern, fueled the existentialism and made it one of the most popular notions of the era (Guignon & Pereboom 2000).

The existentialism questioned the meaning of life and attributed importance to the individual and the subject. The existentialism, in addition to be a philosophical movement that suggests that the key element of understanding the human nature lies with the experiences that the individuals have and the uniqueness of those experiences, also indicates that people with will and consciousness have been thrown into the world of objects without any will or consciousness. Therefore, individual freedom and the individual responsibility are the two main pillars of the existentialist movement. While the subjective attitudes are important in this philosophical point of view, the existentialism rejects the unworldly and linear existence in the idealism and reaches to the conclusion that nothing exists unless the individual in this regard exists. In this way, one of the most pivotal doctrines of the existentialism, the concept of nothingness emerges. In addition, the assumption that the existentialism has been developed all by itself and comes before the self –the essence is also made. The point of origin of the individual in the existential philosophy is known as the existentialist attitude and this attitude means a loss of orientation within a meaningless or an absurd world or confusion as well (Solomon 2004).

Sartre, by linking the existentialism with the Marxist thought, indicates that the Marxist thought has a kind of existential philosophy. He produces his argument by combining the humanist side of Marxism and the subjective approach of the existentialism. For Marxism, he quotes as “the impassable philosophical horizon of the century” and adds that it is the only legitimate exposition of the human history”. Sartre suggests that various human projects would form a communist society and this communist body in return would ensure the freedom of the individual and the other members of the society. While the capitalist structure’s creation of various artificial needs in the society by the means of commodity fetishism leads to hostilities within the society, it also inflicts harm to the humanity of the individuals. The search of the individual, who is directed to his/her inner self via existentialism, for the freedom would lead to the unification in line of a common cause and people, by disrupting the anonym alienation and by not let-



ting the system shape them, will be shaping themselves (Sartre 1981).

It can be anonymously concluded that the own inner journey of the alienated and pacified individual, who is isolated from the “outer world” can be utilized as a way of standing up against the system by the time-image oriented directors and by the existentialist philosophers. Although Sartre attempted to establish a link between such a passive action and the Marxist thought, George Novak addresses the differences between the existentialism and the Marxist thought. For example, for the existentialism, the universe is irrational. The Marxism on the other hand, is comprised of a body of rules. The existentialism deems the world we live in as meaningless and promotes the inner gravitation of an individual but Marxist thought, without labeling this world as meaningless, deals with understanding and telling this world with a dialectic approach. It does not try to keep the notions like absurdity or uncertainty out, but it rather attempts to make sense of them scientifically. For this, the Marxist thought presents the existing or under testing scientific studies. For the light of this information, it is possible to conclude that existentialist thought’s judgment of the world as it is irrational may be interpreted as the existentialism has no faith in the science indeed.

The existentialism does not separate the subjective and objective parts of an individual. It is a thought, indicating that the subject can shape the world to the way it desires. The outer world, (whether individual has a connection with or not) exists. The existentialist thought is based on the absolute consciousness of the conscious individual over all things with objective nature. The Marxist thought on the other hand, gives the priority to the nature before the society and to the society before the individual. Novack underlines that the existentialist individual removes all hindrances against the self-development. However, the dislike of the individual regarding the organized mass movements prevents the individual to find a solution for the situation that may pose a problem for the majority of the humanity. Therefore, the individuals that adopted the existentialist way of thinking are not able to follow the rules of the society, so they do not have the potential to make a revolution in order to change the very system they are dissatisfied with. The existentialist individual generalizes the system, which is the determinant of the peripheral elements, as well as its authorities with the concept of “them” and ultimate become dissatisfied with them. The individual’s acceptance of “them” as an uncontrollable and negative element and returning to his/her inner self become a phenomenon, which the capitalism may have a use of. Novack, who suggests that the work of Samuel Beckett, titled “*Waiting for Godot*” has an existentialist philosophy, underlines that after the wait, nothing ever happens and the characters’ experience disappointment and alienation. Therefore, the vision of the existentialist philosophy is as follows for the humanity; the individual, who is besieged by the limitations of the time, history and death, would have no hope left on him/her regarding the life. The Marxist thought on the other hand, aims to give a sense to the nature, society and finally the individual in an interconnected manner and aims to end the alienation. (Novack 1965).

The existentialist philosophy does not make any sense of the problems that the individual may experience all the while focusing on those problems because it does not question the dynamics of the outer world that influence the life of

the individual. With a subjective approach, existentialist philosophy emphasizes that if there is a fault out there, the individual should solve it in his/her own right. Such a thought structure is in contrast with the Marxism because any philosophy that does have no intention to overthrow a hegemonic order allows the system to regenerate itself through the outer world due to the fact that such a system does not question the historicity. As the result of this discourse, Novack adopts the idea that today, the concepts of liberalism and individualism merge and give birth to the existentialist philosophy as the final product. By adding that the existentialist philosophy is a thought that is favorable to the reigning ideology, he comments that such a philosophy can have no connection with the Marxism whatsoever. (Novack 1965).

In the wake of the alienation to the capitalist system, the reflection of the desires of the nation states for dominance to each other by waging more wars, to the individual, especially occurred in the form of the sense of the great depression after the WWII. The individuals, who got completely alienated to the modern global order, began questioning their own existence and tried to make sense of the world through their own subjectivity. This aroused the attention of the artists and thus further strengthened the existentialist movement. The existentialist approach in the art world chooses to ignore the other world and its impact on the inner world and in the end does not establish an integrative perspective.

### **Changes in Nuri Bilge Ceylan Films**

It can be ascertained that particularly including his career switch from being a photographer to be a director, his three films, known as the 'Rural Trilogy': *Koza* (Cocoon, 1995), *The Town* (Kasaba, 1997) and *Clouds of May* (Mayıs Sıkıntısı, 1999)) feature the reflection of Tarkovsky's poetic style. The director, with the Rural Trilogy, in which he was more independent in financial sense, took a direction to his inner world.

The facts that the director used an amateur cast, comprised of his own family, he shot the films at natural locations and the continuous nature of this situation can be interpreted as an example of Italian Neo Realism Movement, which is one of the forerunners of the time - image cinema. The utilization of natural locations unlike filming in the studio just like in neo realism and using a non-professional cast reinforce a realistic narration. In a historic perspective, disengagement from the Neo Realism Movement, which has a capacity to reflect the truths by analyzing the individuals and the society with a nature of a document, occurred due to the facts that the indicated films are towards socialist thinkers with political stance and that such films are rejected by the people (Ruberto & Wilson, 2007). As one of the important directors of the Movement, Visconti aimed to create a social awareness, but the social analysis has not come to realization as a historical and materialist manner and such films failed to resist economically against the American films and thus ceased to exist (Bertellini 1997, 11-19). Within this concept, the state of one's desperation against the nature as well as the presentation of the poverty, can be considered as a realist approach. In this sense, a realist social approach is presented in Ceylan's Rural Trilogy in a simplistic way. However, the determinations are made for a specific moment and thus are not



analyzed in a broad perspective in a historical manner. It is safe to say that this kind of storytelling is a narration that is under possible threat if it fails to resist against European and American Cinema financially.

The film *Uzak* (Distant, 2002) marks the transition from the Rural Trilogy to the new era of Nuri Bilge Ceylan Films. The main point of the movie is that the film highlights the impact of the urbanization on the individual. Those impacts are given as numbness, loneliness and alienation. In this film, which can be interpreted as a spiritual successor of *Mayıs Sıkıntısı*, although all the cast members are the same, their names are different and the emphasis on the individualist is much more apparent. The dreams of Yusuf, who comes to the city from the countryside to his cousin, to look for a job regarding Istanbul and his cousin Mahmut's state of alienation establish the conflict in the film. Mahmut, in order to maintain his life in Istanbul, works as a photographer and lives alone. Unlike his life in the countryside, Mahmut puts the individualism to the forefront and has a protective attitude towards his belongings. His relative Yusuf, staying to seek a job, made him uncomfortable. Yusuf fails to grasp this in the beginning because Yusuf's individualism, alienation and his tendency to commodify the objects resulting from the urbanism are a part of a way of life that is different than the life in countryside. Yusuf's inability to find a job in Istanbul, his gradual alienation and being unwelcomed in the house bring desperation along. The loneliness and alienation that both characters suffer takes a form, in which the characters question their own existence throughout the film. This type of questioning becomes deepest when Yusuf gets a negative reaction even from his own relative and when there is no one left around Mahmut. People, who drift away from the nature, interiorize the alienation in city settings and do not involve with the outer world. According to an Interview that Ceylan gave to The Guardian; the scene, where the main character in Ceylan's film *Uzak* (2002) Mahmut comes home and watches a video about Tarkovsky after a discussion, made with his friends regarding the death of photography, is a misunderstood situation in Turkey and is related with main characters' attempt to form a new relationship between his own lost ideals (Ceylan, 2014). The similarity between the scene, where Tarkovsky is watched and the Time-Image becomes meaningful with Deleuze's emphasizing of "The cinema should represent our fate to this world, not this world itself." The film *Distant* is a part of the crystal regime that is aimed at the thought and is related with the inner search of the individuals. However, in addition to this inner search; the alienation to the other world is clearly apparent as an additional narration.

In his movie *İklimler* (The Climates, 2006), he charts with the changing relationship of a young couple within a modern society along with the changing seasons. The narration of the acts in *İklimler* via seasons, the fact that the dreams which Bahar visualize are the representation of the feelings that she experiences, utilization of long sequences and occasional blurring of the line between the dream and reality are the apparent examples of Time - Image. Depicting the situation, in which the characters live through, by time - image; implies the questioning of the life. It is seen that the couple, who maintains their relationship under compulsion within the fast pace of the work environment of the urban setting, can no longer stand to each other and break up at a holiday resort, in which the

time flows much slower. The alienation in the city also harbors the individualism in Isa's character. That fact that Isa acts without any love for the sole purpose of his own interests repels the people in his life. While the existentialist search for Bahar is more in emotional sense, for Isa, it is for establishing the male dominance. Bahar and Isa continue with their lives within an uncertainty and also continue their own searches as well. With *İklimler*, the director identifies some psychological tensions, which exist between people but never told, and reflects them without a dialogue in a cinematographic way. However, apart from the identification of the situation, there is not even a hint regarding how the characters got into that situation or how they will resolve the situation. It is safe to say that the only problem that the characters suffer is their struggle to make sense of their own existences within the timelessness.

Ceylan's chronologically next film, *Üç Maymun* (Three Monkeys, 2009) probably narrates the existentialist crisis in the most distinct manner. The plot of the film is comprised of the falling apart of the Family. A man named Eyüp, who takes the blame for a crime, in which his boss Servet, kills a man in a car accident, in exchange of a financial compensation, while serving his prison sentence. Hacer, Eyüp's wife slept with Servet in the meantime and their son Ismail discovered the affair as well. Ismail is then taken into custody after murdering Servet in order to restore the family honor without informing his father. And Eyüp who was released from the prison, makes the very same offer that he was made by Servet in the beginning of the film, to Bayram, a homeless child in the neighborhood and asks him to take the rap for the murder. Therefore, Servet's malignancy stains Eyüp like some dirt and Eyüp spread it to Bayram at the end of the film. In this sense, in societies without a collective memory that do not take lessons from their past, the individuals gain experience by their own. However, since there is no transmission of this experience from generation to generation, there is a failure for improvement or advancement; in other words, there is a cycle in this regard. In the film, the utilization of Time-Image is given within a dramatic storytelling just like in *Uzak* and *İklimler*. The concept of timelessness and long sequences, which are two of the characteristics of crystal regime, are also present in *Three Monkeys* as well and it is implied that what an individual, who is lost within the urbanization lives through may happen to anybody in the current age. The conditions provide the basis for the cinematographic narration of the existentialist philosophy.

*Bir Zamanlar Anadolu'da* (Once Upon a Time in Anatolia, 2012) is another Nuri Bilge Ceylan film that steps out of the urban setting and the heads towards the countryside. In contrast to the other films of the director, orientalist symbols are featured in this film. The director, who stepped into the city by *Uzak*, now returns to the countryside after three films. Due to the title of the film, associating an "orientalist approach", it is safe to say that the film has an epic structure. The title of the film indicates that the entirety of the film is a tale and there is no distinction between the present and the future. Another proof in this regard can be seen in the statement of the character nicknamed Arab "you would tell these years later as once upon a time in Anatolia". The depiction of the countryside in an orientalist viewpoint is made as a surrounding, which lacks the basic infra-



structure such as the electricity and the morgue, which features barren moorlands, and which makes someone desire to flee due to the primitive nature of the details.

In a tale of Anatolia, everything decays over time. As the doctor indicates, although a century passes, only the people will change, and the events and the locations will remain the same. The non-developing texture of the orient is presented to the audience in the film as a proof with its hypocritical, insidious and fatalist people and with its barren, desolate, poor and dirty nature. The film contains a similarly tense atmosphere with Antonioni's film *Blow Up* (1966) and in addition to featuring the elements of Time-Image and crystal regime, it also contains characters, who think that living in Anatolia is their own destiny and who has no intention to change or know the world that they live in. At this point, it is possible to say that the journey of Nuri Bilge Ceylan filmography, which began with the Time-Image, is gradually fed by the existentialist philosophy as it is also safe to say that in his last films, he obtains his determinations with an orientalist point of view. The film deals with to the subjective searches of those who live in Anatolia, and thus passes over why and how the orientalist perspective in the outer world is established. At this point it would provide a much broader perspective to seek the purpose and significance of a making a narration at a location, where the constable of the countryside told the newcomer doctor to "get the hell out of here" outside the film instead of seeking it within the film.

Before understanding the external factors, which enthralls the filmmaking of Ceylan, it is necessary to analyze his film *Kış Uykusu* (Winter Sleep, 2014) with a similar, wide perspective approach. The loneliness that Aydın feels upon estranging Nihal after Necla, makes him question his own power. Aydın's act of freeing the horse he catches can be interpreted as a metaphor that he has some power over the notion of freedom as well. The scene, where Aydın gives a dead hare to Nihal after killing one, is an attempt to reestablish his bruised dominance. Nihal's situation is the realization of the idea of "not to oppose the evil" that ultimately Necla focused on. The aforementioned evil is implied in the film as the moral and conscientious acts of evil although such as are interpreted by Aydın as murder, rape etc. in a reductive manner. The unresponsiveness of Nihal, who couldn't do anything against Aydın's intervention to her support campaign, indicates that those who wish to act with class consciousness in order to change the order will fail within the current economic order. She enviously admires domestic or foreign tourists, who stay at the hotel and she wants to embark on adventures just like them but fails to take a step out of the town due to the conformist manner of the environment she is in and due to her fears about losing her prestige. She forces her existing prestige in order to make people within her limited environment respect her. According to the director, this state, in which the Turkish intellectuals are in, is a dilemma. An intellect from the orient, keeping himself from people, his distaste about people, his lack of attachment to orient as well as his insincerity can be seen with ease but are not put into words. When telling the story of a Turkish town, Ceylan shaped his film onto the fundamentals such as alienation and existentialism and by making a realistic assessment of the orient with an orientalist point of view, presented this assessment to the film festivals

and to his audience. However, he does not produce any factor in historical aspect that may explain the underlying causes of the state that the orient is in. This is justified due to the timelessness of Deleuze's time-image. The orientalist society has no past or future, there is only the present.

The gradual change in Ceylan cinema causes director's idealistic characteristics to wane but leads some new characteristics to emerge. Unlike his other films, it is seen that in the storytelling of *Three Monkeys*, *Once Upon a Time in Anatolia* and *Winter Sleep*; Turkey is highlighted with its social structure and the desolation of its regions. The answer to the fact that the financial support of the film festivals and funds can be obtained on the same cultural works with the desolation of Turkish countryside, the emphasis that people do not take lessons from their mistakes, timelessness, alienation and individual's inclination to inner self, although such is not a coincidence, can be explained through Edward Said's concept of orientalism.

According to Edward Said, the orientalism is the process of creating western style dominance in order to rule the orient. Due to the orientalism, the constant Western superiority on the orient is generated in various aspects. The orientalism is a statement that is shaped by the political, intellectual, cultural and moral powers. It is the willpower of shaping what is not western. The main requirements of the orientalism are externalization and apparentness for the West. The West gives a meaning to the orientalism because it is the West itself that created this artificial notion and that had it perceived the way the west wants. Said thinks that in the societies, subjected to orientalism, an oriental consciousness emerges, and such societies position themselves against the dominating culture. At this point, the historicity is absent. Gramsci as he discoursed in *Quaderni del Carcere* (Prison Notebooks), underlined the importance of the historical materialist method; "The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory. The first thing to do is to make such an inventory" (Gramsci 1999, 628). Said on the other hand, says, for some reason, this text has never been added to even one English translation. Said indicates that the orientalism is a grand project by stating "The orientalism is not a European dream regarding the orient. It is a created continuum of theories and implementations, in which significant financial investments have been made for generations." (Said 2003). The reason that the orientalist elements has begun appearing within the narration of Nuri Bilge Ceylan films may be that Ceylan has lost his independence in terms of economic, political and aesthetical aspects and has gradually began to be dependent to the funds, film festivals and cinema community of the west. Tarkovsky's following remark regarding the originality of a true artist and the success of his/her artwork in his book *The Sealed Time* is important in this regard;

"It is incredibly useless and futile to dream of the probable success of the film before it is made and trying to guess the number of audiences that it will gather. The art, one way or another, shall resume its course of development independent of the will of





others. The aesthetic values that are advocated today shall be violated tomorrow by the artists themselves. When I look at the situation from this perspective, the success of the film is no concern of mine.” (Tarkovsky 1986, 152)

The connection between the funds, he received from Eurimages and his films, point out that the grants per film has increased over the years.<sup>1</sup> The director, who received his first Eurimages grant for his film *Mayıs Sıkıntısı*<sup>2</sup> also received financial grants after receiving prizes from festivals with his film *Uzak*. Ceylan, receiving his first production support from Eurimages for his film *İklimler*,<sup>3</sup> subsequently received further support for *Üç Maymun*,<sup>4</sup> *Bir Zamanlar Anadolu’da*<sup>5</sup> and *Kış Uykusu* as well. The grants, provided to *Winter Sleep*, which received the prize for the best picture in 2014 Cannes Film Festival, set a record for the highest sum that has been provided to a Turkish film by Eurimages.<sup>6</sup> Apart from Eurimages, *Winter Sleep* also received a significant amount of production grants from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Board of Cinema Support.<sup>7</sup>

The process, in which Ceylan began as an independent film director continues as he becomes a director that is dependent to filming funds, festivals and prizes. The main case for this situation is that he is gradually strengthening his films, which can be considered as postmodern pieces that can be explained with notions such as time-image and crystal regime, with existentialism, a thought movement that acknowledges the alienation in a philosophical aspect. This is unveiled with Ceylan films, becoming a production of mass culture. According to Turner, “the postmodernity is the introduction of the commercial procedures into our daily life and its effect of rendering the distinction between the subculture and the upper culture blurry with the increased influence of the mass consumption culture on the cultural systems.” (Turner 2002).

It can be summarized that the “discovery” of the unique and authentic nature of Ceylan films by the film festivals and making them into one of the important cornerstones of Turkish “Art Film” within the mass culture is related with the changes in the expressions and statements of Ceylan films are related. According to this, the subjective narration style of the director turned out to be a style that may criticize the statements of the dominant ideology within the economic structure of the Cinema Industry but something that does not harm the system and on the contrary something that encourage the individuals to take a direction at their

1 Ceylan’s received co-production supports as follows: *Climates* – 200.000€, *Three Monkeys* – 235.000€, *Once Upon a Time in Anatolia* – 330.000€, *Winter Sleep* – 450.000€. For more information, see Eurimages Official Website: <https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eurimages/History/Coproduction/>

2 [https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eurimages/press/pressreleases/2003/\(2003\)86\\_PressRelease\\_en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eurimages/press/pressreleases/2003/(2003)86_PressRelease_en.pdf)

3 [https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eurimages/press/pressreleases/2004/\(2004\)91\\_PressRelease\\_en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eurimages/press/pressreleases/2004/(2004)91_PressRelease_en.pdf)

4 <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1198949>

5 <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1565325>

6 [https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eurimages/History/Coproduction/2013coproductions\\_EN.asp](https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eurimages/History/Coproduction/2013coproductions_EN.asp)

7 <http://www.ekmekisrafetme.com/UploadResim/Sunular/SinemaDesteklemeKurulu.pdf>

own inner world to look for their mistakes. Ceylan voices this position as follows;

“When the competition in the global cinema increases, impositions and factors that force people to make a film in a particular style increase as well. What I feel at the festival environment, where the artists come together in a more intense fashion, is that the “Cinema Community” as it is known, is merely hue and cry and the film makers are sometimes too eager to forget and bend the principles that they started with in order to gather the attention. I think it is highly apparent that there is a creative crisis in the world cinema. A kind of artistic exhaustion, a lack of purpose, a lack of meaningfulness. A kind of a struggle not to be out of the game.” (Ceylan 2012b)

From the cinema community that he is in, it is also possible that the factors that Ceylan talks about may have changed the thematic approach of his own films and may have driven the director and his films away from his principles and point of origin. Directors’ reliance on the funds and festival prizes in order to make film designs and their inclination to make their films within certain templates to gain financial support lead to a creative crisis as Ceylan states. The films of the Rural Trilogy that Ceylan designed in a creative and authentic manner, independent from the economic structure of the cinema industry, can be considered as more authentic and creative compared to his post-2000 films. Deleuze, with his assessment of American Hollywood Cinema and Soviet Propaganda Cinema as Movement-Image, deals with the directors that put their audiences onto a process of depolarization in a sense with his theory of time-image cinema. Individual’s subjective search of authenticity within himself/herself by focusing the micro events instead of macro events in a state that is independent from the time and place allows him/her to be placed to a position that is in compliance with the statements of the dominant system. The individual, who does not question the world he/she lives in as well as its problems directed at the outer world and instead, who attempts to give a sense to his/her existence by withdrawing to an inner world, is left without a solution thus is alienated then finds himself/herself in a depression. The alienated individual finds his/her own position, value and work odd. As it is seen in Italian Neorealist Films, this leads to the production of open ended films and suffers from the lack of a historical materialist narration. Although Ceylan made films also feature open ended films without clear conclusions, they also have negative determinations about nonwestern societies with an orientalist point of view.

## Conclusion

Nuri Bilge Ceylan received his first distribution funds from Eurimages with his film *Mayıs Sıkıntısı* then with his film *Uzak*. He then proceeded to receive grants for his films *Üç Maymun*, *Bir Zamanlar Anadolu’da* and *Kış Uykusu* respectively. Him, receiving funds with a gradual acceleration after being discovered by the



global film community and his film *Kış Uykusu*, being the film from Turkey that received the most Eurimages funds are related with the ideological approach of Ceylan.

When analyzed chronologically, it can be determined that the Rural trilogy may only be associated with Deleuze's time-image theory as economically independent. However, the director's gradual loss of independence and his ever-increasing reliance to the Cinema Support funds, provided by Eurimages and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for filmmaking, caused the auteur approach of the director not to be limited with time-image cinema only.

According to this, unlike his rural trilogy, in his last five films, which received national and international financial support; the director added the existentialist tough in addition to the time-image practice. The existentialist tough was presented as emotions of the in-film characters such as anxiety, concern, misery and alienation. The notions like timelessness and placelessness, created by the time-image is supplemented with the internal depression related factors of the existentialist tough and underline that the individual is completely lost within the system and there is no way out of this. Through the existentialism, the perception of the inner world is strengthened while the doors to the perception of the outer world are shut tight due to the concepts of timelessness and circularity. The fact that some external dynamics should be present in order to realize the nonwestern cinematic art and the economic factors such as the fact that there is a condition of receiving festival prizes in order to turn the Ministry supplied loans into grants, ultimately shape the storytelling of the director. This situation that the directors are in brings alienation, not only to their own society but even to their own movies.

The director displays the passive positions of the characters as praxis. Not taking a step towards demonstrating the faults in the system and towards changing them and waging a fight to analyze the faulty elements actually create a culture of passive resistance, which is sufficient and required in order to the perpetuity of the system. With the culture of passive resistance, the society is encouraged to search its inner self with an underlined individualism after accepting the outer world via the art of cinema in this regard. The attempts of Deleuze's theories of movement-image and time-image to analyze the critical approaches of the directors aimed at the system by solely conducting in film analyses without assessing external factors such as the production costs and establishing the distribution network falls short. A cinematography that starts in harmony with Deleuze's "time-image" decreases the effect of the criticism when it turns into a viewpoint that does not question the outer world, which directs the individual to his/her inner self, and that conducts micro criticism instead of macro, after being supplemented by the idea of existentialism. The reason that Deleuze separated the movement-image and time-image theories is because the propaganda features that the movement-image provides cannot be realized with the time-image. However, the ideology makes the society forget its past and future and shows the pessimism of the present as the failure of the individuals. Thus, the time image is also placed to an ideological ground as well.

According to Marx, “it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence but their social existence that determines their consciousness” (Marx & Engels 2001, 9). The fact not knowing the historical processes that push one to the alienation due to the facts that the criticisms in his films are limited as inner praxis’s and the solution is avoided, is seen as an important deficiency in Nuri Bilge Ceylan Films. This coincides with the state of faulty consciousness that Marx stated. The crystal story telling that is created by the time images, supported by the existentialist philosophy as the result of the increasing economic dependence; forms a fog in the eyes of Ceylan, an intellectual, by the dominant ideology since that type of storytelling is also suitable for different interpretations. The director is gradually changing its initial style and commences the reproduction of the alienation for a non-Western society.

The stagnation of his films and their open-ended endings suggest that the identifications are made within some certain points. Therefore, using the images with unknown past and future that are edited under the guise of the reality for an implicit propaganda makes the non-ideological approaches of the director charged with an ideology. So, the fact that the rising attention to the director, who actually has an implicit ideological style of narration and who deepens this feat with every single film he makes, given by the western cinema funds and festivals is without a doubt the unseen part of the iceberg.

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