CINEJ CINEMA JOURNAL
ISSN 2159-2411 (PRINT) ISSN 2158-8724 (ONLINE)

From Home to Destitution: Deprived and Ignored Children in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997)

Zühre Canay Güven, Necmettin Erbakan University, zcguven@gmail.com

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Abstract

Yusuf ile Kenan (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) portray realistic ignored, neglected and deprived childhood in Turkish cinema. This article sets out to analyse the realistic depictions of child image focusing on displacement and destitute. Although displacement is dealt with broader senses of war and its consequences, this article, adapting an alternative discourse sets out to analyse the displacement in terms of family and homely atmosphere. First, I will present the odyssey of child image during the course of Turkish cinema. I aim to position elusive depiction of child image in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997). Following spatial and narrative analysis in two steps, I will discuss the realistic destitute child images in these films in two parts: (a) spatial analysis focusing loss of home and (b) agency of child characters in narrative. I propose that realistic child image in these two films were constructed through delinquency and aphasia.

Keywords: displaced children; ignored children; Turkish cinema; destitution; child in cinema

From Home to Destitution: Deprived and Ignored Children in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997)

Zühre Canay Güven

Introduction

In the cinematic realm of Turkish cinema, *Yusuf ile Kenan* [Yusuf and Kenan] (1979) and *Masumiyet* [Innocence] (1997) stand as poignant narratives that intricately capture the realism of overlooked, neglected, and deprived childhood images. While scholarly discussions on child representation in Turkish cinema have been diverse (Doğan, 2019; Hazal-Turhan, 2022; Akdağ, Yetimova, Yaren-Eser, 2022), a discernible gap persists in scholarly literature regarding authentic portrayals of children within the dynamics of home and familial relationships.

In Turkish cinema from 1950s towards 1970s, depictions of child characters in home and family settings adopted an unrealistic approach. The emphasis was mostly on the innocence and purity attributed to childhood. Social and domestic traumas of a child were blind spots on screen. Instead of capturing the reality of children, these movie depictions mostly focused on portraying childhood as innocent, romanticized, and idealized. On the other hand, child characters deprived of home and family recognition are elusive in Turkish cinema. *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997), which tell the story of traumatic families with displaced children, are two examples of ignored and destitute child images in Turkish cinema. The portrayal of children in

these films is closely related to physical and psychological traumas resulting from the lack of safe home environments.

The aim of this study is to explore the thematic elements of child labour, delinquency, and aphasia and their significance in shaping authentic representations of children in the narratives of *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997). The comprehensive analysis of the films will be conducted through spatial and narrative lenses in two distinct steps. Firstly, the examination will delve into a spatial analysis, emphasizing the loss of home in these films. Secondly, the focus will shift to the agency of child characters in the narrative, aiming to scrutinize and discuss the realistic destitute child images portrayed in these cinematic works.

The analysis of *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) as paradigms of authentic representations of childhood in Turkish cinema derives from two fundamental bases. Firstly, their depiction significantly diverges from the romanticized childhood imagery prevalent during *Yeşilçam*[1], characterized by the *Ayşecik* [Little Ayşe] series and subsequent films featuring popular figures like *Ömercik* [Little Ömer], *Sezercik* [Little Sezer], and *Yumurcak* [Little Devil]. Secondly, *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) occupy distinct periods in Turkish cinema history, the 1970s and the post-1990s, representing shifts in cinematic storytelling and societal influences.

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Child Images in the Odyssey of Turkish Cinema

In *Yeşilçam*, child image was deeply intertwined with home and family theme. Turkish films typically revolved around the melodrama genre and, in some instances, incorporated comedic elements to construct the child image (Dönmez-Colin, 2008a, p. 94). The tide of cinematic representation began to shift with the advent of socio-realist films, challenging the established conventions of romanticized childhood prevalent in Turkish cinema in the 1960s. During these years, Turkish politics faced new dynamics driven by unions, civil society organizations advocating for socioeconomic equality, and socialist parties in parliament. This era saw the emergence of social realist films addressing urban life, migration, and the dramatic concept of vertical class mobility, aligning with the demands expressed by these societal forces (Arslan, 2011, p.100), and child images began to emerge as miniature adults, shouldering responsibilities far beyond their years (Becerikli, 2018).

The cinematic landscape began to undergo a transformation through the 1970s, challenging the conventional portrayal of childhood prevalent in Turkish cinema. The child figures in the 1970s were not merely passive entities but played integral roles, reflecting the broader socio-cultural changes of the time. As the socio-cultural dynamics of the 1970s challenged conventional family notions, the hopes and disappointments of families became intricately woven into narratives, exemplified by the evocative phrase, “I will defeat you Istanbul,” redolent of poverty and social

exclusion. A common opening theme in numerous films in this period involves immigrants arriving at the Istanbul train station, their wonderment evident as they gaze across the water at the city (Gürata, 2013, p. 364). In the chaotic expanse of Istanbul, children found themselves oscillating between modern and traditional life, their struggles depicted within the constructs of family, portraying them as bounded characters in traditional family patterns. This evolution is encapsulated in remarkable films of the era, including Ömer Lütfi Akad's trilogy *Gelin* [Bride] (1973), *Düğün* [The Wedding] (1974), and *Kanlı Para* [Bloody Money]. (1972), Yılmaz Güney and Şerif Gören's *Umut* [Hope] (1970), Orhan Aksoy's *Taşığı Toprağı Altın Şehir* [Istanbul: City of Stone, Soil, and Gold] (1979), and Kartal Tibet's *Sultan* [Sultana]. (1978). These cinematic works stand as testimony to the fundamental role of home and family ties in shaping the child image.

The 1980s were marked with a different childhood image in Turkish cinema. Conventional child characters were displaced with arabesque singer child hero figures, which reflects the adults' endeavour to embrace not only their own unfortunate destinies but also their familial and societal powerlessness (Gürbilek, 2020, p. 41-42). Another significant turn in this period was that the collective nature of film-going as a social and family-oriented experience diminished in these years. This shift was intensified by the closure of almost all theatres in small towns, a situation

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

exacerbated by the surviving ones turning to adult content (Akser, 2018, p. 163). Also, the military coup in the 1980s led to stricter cinema censorship, prompting directors to explore new forms of expression. While *Yeşilçam* continued its traditional genres, a shift occurred since some filmmakers delved into "films about women" addressing realism, sexuality, and gender issues (Arslan, 2011, p. 204). Child images in the family were treated as an obstacle to women's freedom.

In the 1990s, Turkish cinema witnessed a distinctive shift in the portrayal of child figures, characterized by the emergence of silent and observer-like characters. This shift resonates with the broader characteristics of New Turkish Cinema, marked with a departure from conventional storytelling and a focus on contemplative, reflective narratives in 1990s onwards. Such a trademark can be understood through the lens of Gilles Deleuze's time-image (1989), particularly in the context of New Turkish Cinema. In other words, child images depicted without motor skills in the adult world, thus emphasizing their visual and auditory capabilities, as conceptualized by Deleuze (1989, p. 3) in neo-realist films, are also evident in Turkish cinema examples in post-1990s. These portrayals of children serve a purpose in films as silent figures, with their quiet yet meaningful responses to the helplessness of the adults in their surroundings playing a significant role in defining their reflective attributes.

Yusuf ile Kenan (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) offer a realistic child image within the concepts of "home" and "family". The loss of home and dysfunctional families open a path for both spatial analysis and thematic exploration. The cinematic movements in particular periods provide distinctive perspectives on fundamental elements

Seeking Realistic Childhood in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997)

Yusuf ile Kenan (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) are notable for their distinct spatial settings and the child agencies in their narratives. Both films exhibit aesthetic and narrative elements that question the concepts of home and family through a discourse underpinned by socio-realistic elements. The child figures are locomotives to pounder upon destitution, vulnerability and displacement.

Yusuf ile Kenan (1979) sets itself apart from the socio-realist films of the 1970s by placing child heroes at the centre of the narrative. Even though blood feud displacing Yusuf and Kenan from rural areas seems to resonate with serious themes of Turkish cinema in 1970s, loss of home both physically and figuratively was a peculiar element in placing child characters as protagonists. Such a distinctive choice invites to contemplate on the child agency in the narration. Therefore, the characters Yusuf and Kenan serve as the driving force of the film. The innovative aspect lies

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

in depicting the experience of living in the streets, away from the family's protection. In the cinematic landscape of *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979), a departure from the conventional portrayal of family as the bedrock of traditions is evident. Unlike many socio-realist films of the era, this narrative does not hinge on the family as the primary institution defining societal norms. Instead, it ventures into uncharted territory by placing lost child figures, Yusuf and Kenan, at the forefront of the story. The film's potential is underscored by the deliberate absence of familial roots, challenging the established conventions of traditional family structures that often serve as the anchor in socio-realist narratives.

Masumiyet (1997), a noteworthy film from the 1990s, introduces one of the earliest facets of the silent child figure in Turkish cinema. The film encapsulates the subtleties of innocence and vulnerability, providing a glimpse into the complexities of the child's world against the backdrop of the societal changes occurring during the 1990s. The mute child character, Çilem, finds herself predominantly immersed in a pessimistic environment, entangled in domestic traumas. Stripped of a nurturing household ambiance, she occupies her days in a dark, shady hotel atmosphere with an emotionally detached mother. While Çilem may appear as a passive figure, her subdued reactions offer a powerful catalyst, prompting silent contemplation on the plight of a vulnerable child within the film's narrative.

In conclusion, the pivotal roles played by *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) in shaping the portrayal of the realistic child image in Turkish cinema indicate a significant departure from established norms. Traditionally, the depiction of children in Turkish films was largely embedded in melodrama and occasionally intertwined with comedic elements, as noted by Dönmez-Colin (2008a, p. 94). However, the transformative nature of *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) marks a departure from this cinematic tradition, introducing a more authentic representation of the child image. Situated 1970s socio-realist films and the New Turkish Cinema movement post-1990s, these films not only stand as exemplary instances of their respective cinematic eras but also offer unique perspectives on the fundamental concepts of "home" and "family". In doing so, they contribute significantly to the nuanced exploration of childhood themes within the evolving landscape of Turkish cinema. To elaborate it in following parts, grounding my analysis in spatial exploration, I will investigate the atmospheric dimensions surrounding the child characters. Subsequently, I will turn to a narrative analysis to discuss the agency of children figures, exploring the consequences of the deprivation of home for overlooked child characters in both films. This multi-faceted approach aims to unravel the intricate layers of the realistic child image in Turkish cinema, shedding light on the ignored children in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997).

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Unravelling Loss of Home and Life in Streets: Two Lost Brothers in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979)

Ömer Kavur, a key figure in Turkish indie filmmaking, showcased his distinctive cinema style in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979). Drawing inspiration from French cinema and auteurs like Visconti, Antonioni, and Bergman, Kavur revolutionized the Turkish film scene. Kavur distanced himself from the conventional norms inherent in commercial *Yeşilçam* films, opting instead to produce films that offered an alternative narrative. Trained in a French film school, he established his production company, secured international funding, and defied commercial norms with an uncompromising aesthetic, influencing others to follow suit (Akser, 2015, p. 132). Embarking on his cinematic journey during the socially realistic and prolific 1970s, Kavur was deeply influenced by this cinematic movement. A noteworthy instance of Kavur's cinematic approach is evident in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979). Two parentless child protagonists render this film a distinctive exemplar in socio-realist cinema, thereby highlighting Kavur's authentic approach.

In *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979), two shepherd boys escape to Istanbul upon witnessing their father's death in a blood feud. Immersed in the street life, they become entangled with a group of street boys. In their struggle, Kenan strives to gain practical skills, while Yusuf, confronted with different pressures, veers towards a life of crime. Despite the initial impression of a seemingly "lovely" picture where Kenan is adopted by a family, a closer examination uncovers the

troublesome reality of child labor. Meanwhile, Yusuf's path takes a darker turn, leading him into delinquency. Both cases emphasize the challenges these children face in the grip of destitution.

The film diverges significantly from conventional and normative childhood images in Turkish cinema. Children were integral to the family structure and served as vehicles for delivering a hopeful message for the future. The ideal family structure, forming the foundation of hegemonic ideologies (Abisel, 2005, p. 206.), deliberately avoided inviting viewers to engage in political or social consciousness. *Ayşecik* [Little Ayşe] and *Yumurcak* [Little Devil] were iconic depictions of children who often faced challenges and dilemmas in films typically resolving with positive, uplifting messages in the family structure.

However, in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979), there is a departure from the idealized family structures and normative childhood portrayals, challenging norms through a pessimistic view. Kavur's cinematic style goes beyond traditional representations, offering realistic child images and avoiding a singular role as bearers of hope in the family structure. This departure underscores Kavur's commitment to portraying authentic childhood experiences, inviting viewers to contemplate the significance of child images within the realm of political discourse. To probe into the child images in the film, first I will present a spatial analysis, regarding loss of "home". Second,

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

I will discuss the active and passive modes of the child figures in relation with the trauma surrounding them.

Home transcends its physical confines, evolving into an intimate space with implications that extend beyond its tangible existence. This warm and secure haven, presumed to nurture and care for a child, plays a central role in shaping normative childhood images, thereby reinforcing romanticized depictions of children in cinema. Constructed within the myth of innocence, children are frequently portrayed as inhabiting a world that is untainted, magical, and entirely shielded from the harsh realities of adult life. This portrayal simplifies the complexities of childhood and overlooks the diverse range of experiences that characterize it. The myth of innocence renders children invisible, reducing them to projections of adult fantasies (Giroux, 1998, p. 265).

Home related to childhood images is a deliberate mean in expressing broader cultural and societal preoccupations. Since its early days, common film tropes have depicted children as innocent and immature entities, aligning with adult preconceptions of what childhood should be and contributing to the romanticized child images on the screen (Bushati, 2018, p.35). The representation of children's vulnerability and the need for protection parallel societal norms that invest cultural power in childhood innocence. These romantic echoes of childhood on screen sharply contrast with the realistic depiction of "childhood." Consequently, this not only influences our understanding of the child's social agency and cultural contexts but also shapes perceptions of

adult politics, culture, and society, often centering around the symbolic loss of the innocent child in the face of ideological preoccupations (Jenkins, 1998, p.2). In this vein, the loss of home conveys ideological preoccupations.

Loss of home in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) indicates the harsh realities of life. Witnessing their father's death, Yusuf and Kenan are forced to flee in a traumatic way. Allison and Goethals (2017, p. 381) deals with departures in three phases as: (a) a transformation of setting, (b) a transformation of self, and (c) a transformation of society. The first two phases resonate with Yusuf and Kenan's journey. I will discuss their departures in the spatial analysis regarding these two phases. Yusuf and Kenan's departure from rural to urban is a drift towards a new and terrifying path. Yusuf and Kenan leave the psychical place behind and lose the sense of home. This separation is meaningful metaphorically. Leaving home behind and embarking on terrifying experiences can be related to cinema-specific kinaesthetic experience of space. Gaudin (2018, p.6) characterizes cinematic space as a component uniquely crafted by each film, inviting analysis through the theoretical framework of a space-image. However, he cautions against the overly ambitious assertion that all films collectively contribute to the formation of an authentic "space-image cinema". If such a cinematic category were to exist, it should denote a condition wherein the viewer's bodily perception of spatial experience corresponds to the film's treatment of space

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

as a profound sensory-philosophical concern. In the context of *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979), this translates to the exploration of leaving home behind and the profound quest for a sense of home in the narrative. The film delves into the intricate interplay between physical spaces and the philosophical implications of the characters' journey, creating a sensory-rich experience that mirrors the profound search for belonging and familiarity.

On the other hand, Hynam and Mosley (2016, p.2) treats such movements as spatial dissolves of two contradicting environments. Such a movement is operated with several transportation scenes in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979), where the two brothers first hitchhike and hop on a bus, then they take the train and finally get on the ferry.



In spatial analysis, train journey seems more meaningful than the other two because when Yusuf and Kenan get on a train, their unnerving story to outward starts. The train is the vehicle that enables the brothers to land in the city where their life will turn upside down. With the arrival of the train in Haydarpaşa train station, the symbol of both new beginnings and desperation in Turkish cinema, the new phase starts in the brothers' life. Çiçekoğlu (2007, p.79) argues that Haydarpaşa train station serves as a symbolic threshold in Turkish cinema. In these black-and-

white *Yeşilçam* productions, the station's stairs descending to the sea become a cinematic emblem, representing the transition from provincial life to the complexities of urban existence. As characters from the outskirts disembark from trains, their gaze fixates on the grand entrance leading to the pier, mirroring a mix of awe and trepidation toward the sprawling cityscape before them. Çiçekoğlu (2007) contends that arriving at Haydarpaşa captures the essence of societal shifts and uncertainties of the time. The juxtaposition of fear and admiration, and the questioning of temporal harmony between their hometown and the metropolis encapsulate the socio-realist narrative in this cinematic threshold – a defining motif in 1970s Turkish cinema. In *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979), the symbolic significance of Haydarpaşa train station resonates powerfully with the protagonists' journey towards new beginnings, echoing the emblematic role it played in socio-realist films of the era. Yet, as these child heroes embark on their transformative adventure, the absence of their parents renders them unprotected to potential threats.

The driving force behind their journey to Istanbul is to survive. As an experience of separation from homelands and family ties, it is a gateway to new territories. Such a journey recalls Joseph Campbell's (2008) first step of archetypal story pattern in the hero's journey. The hero's journey revolves into three interconnected stages: departure, initiation, and return. Beginning in the ordinary world, the hero receives the call to adventure and initially resists. A mentor then

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

encourages departure, leading to the crossing of the first threshold into the special and unknown world for initiation. Throughout the road of trials, the hero encounters tests, allies, and enemies. (Campbell, 2008, pp. 28-29). Leaving the home behind, Yusuf and Kenan step into darkness though it is a gateway to be a grownup, which recalls Campell's departure phase. However, Yusuf and Kenan do not have a guide or mentor as in *Hero's Journey* (2008). Let alone supernatural powers, most importantly they are parentless which make them weak to overcome their fears and cross the threshold. Yusuf and Kenan come across many strangers on the train but they do not recount what they have lived through. The brothers do not head to the Police since they are worried about being sent to their village, which indicates that these children feel unprotected.

In their quest for assistance in Istanbul, Yusuf and Kenan encounter a stark contrast between two facets of the city, emblematic of class conflicts. When they arrive in Istanbul, they seek help from strangers. They come across a man who introduces them to a posh bourgeoise man and woman. This scene juxtaposes two facets of Istanbul, and class conflicts are expressed through a spatial composition. While the view of Istanbul stands out behind the woman and man, who seem to belong to the socio-economically upper class, their gaze zooms into the socks of Yusuf and Kenan. The cynical discourse they hold makes the brothers feel inferior, and the scene implicates that they are not treated the way a child from upper socio-cultural background would be treated.

This spatial composition accentuates the power dynamics, and the condescending discourse of the affluent man and woman leaves the brothers feeling inferior.



The scene implies a thought-provoking on the unequal treatment experienced by these children, highlighting the disparity faced by Yusuf and Kenan. This portrayal resonates with the notion that the body, despite being a battleground for autonomy, is inexorably subject to public dimensions and societal judgments. The bodies for which we ardently advocate our rights are, in essence, both personal and communal entities, rendered vulnerable to the scrutiny and influence of external forces (Butler, 2004, p. 26). This subtle juxtaposition of the well-to-do duo against the focus on traditionally modest socks serves as a powerful visual metaphor of societal inequalities highlighting the societal inequalities that underlie the embarrassing moment experienced by the brothers.

The consequence of home loss in the film winds up with leading an unprotected life. They end up with living in the streets and temporary places. They desperately seek to meet the basic necessities of life, which forces them to struggle for survival. Living in the streets exposes Yusuf

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

and Kenan to additional risks or victimization. Physical displacement worsens children's health as they are deprived of proper sleep and food. When they run out of money, they starve for a long time. Trauma, oppression and anguish oblige them to eat from the garbage and sleep in a derelict house. Poor shelter conditions, unsafe environment and malnutrition harm the psychical state of Yusuf and Kenan.

In conclusion, the harrowing circumstances, coupled with the enduring effects of trauma and oppression, force Yusuf and Kenan into a relentless struggle for survival. The stark realities of poverty drive them to scavenge for sustenance amidst the refuse and seek refuge in İstanbul. The deplorable living conditions, exposure to an unsafe environment, and persistent malnutrition exact a heavy toll on their physical and psychological well-being. Ultimately, the metaphorical and physical loss of home becomes a catalyst for the divergent paths adopted by these child characters in the narrative, as they navigate the complex interplay between adversity, resilience, and the quest for a semblance of stability in their shattered lives.

Binary Positions of Brothers: Delinquency and Child Labor

The loss of home defines binary positions of brothers in the film. Fear, helplessness, and horror overwhelm Yusuf and Kenan's ability to cope with negative impulses and feelings. Though lack of safe environment makes them feel perplexed and vulnerable to exploitations, Yusuf and Kenan adopt different and contradicting approaches to the difficulties they have to cope with.

Defeated by disruptive socio-economic conditions, Yusuf and Kenan choose different ways to survive in the dark suburbs of Istanbul. First, they seek the help of adults that they meet in Istanbul. Ignored, scorned, mocked and abused by these adult figures, they end up with different paths. Butler (2004) argues some lives are swiftly deemed "grievable" commanding rapid and forceful support, while others fail to qualify for such recognition. This allocation of grievability operates as a mechanism prompting reflection on a "liveable life" and a "grievable death". Some lives, like those of Yusuf and Kenan, are easily overlooked—attributed not only to their lack of parental support but also their disadvantaged socio-economic status. They face challenges in being considered as "recognizable subjects" within societal norms that often prioritize certain lives over others. This underlines the complex interplay of parental support and socio-economic status in determining who is deemed worthy of acknowledgment and empathy in the face of adversity. In this context, Yusuf and Kenan adopt two different paths and film constitutes two different child images in terms of passive/active agents.

Deleuze (1989, p.3) posits a conceptualization of children in neo-realist films as passive and weak observers. According to Deleuze, these cinematic children lack certain motor skills that would enhance their ability to perceive more in terms of seeing and hearing. In essence, Deleuze's proposition characterizes the children as weak figures who are dislocated from active engagement

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

and comprehension. This portrayal suggests that these cinematic children are rendered helpless, unable to react effectively to their surroundings. While Deleuze views them as passive and weak observers, Smith's (2022, p. 78-79) interpretation contests Deleuze's concept of passivity, asserting that boys depicted in European cinema after the Second World War frequently emerge as active participants. Termed as urban adventurers, British boys, in particular, exhibit an enthusiastic engagement with post-war environments. This perspective posits the child as flexible and mobile, suggesting their capacity to navigate the challenges of the modern city and the requisites of post-war existence. He suggests that child figures as urban adventures are adaptable and mobile agents. Rather than being adventure seekers, I propose that Yusuf and Kenan adopt different strategies as child figures in coping with the struggles and threats of metropole life[2]. In this sense, while Yusuf functions as an active agent, Kenan is a passive child figure in the narration. Yusuf befriends with outlaw boy nicknamed Çarpık, which means distorted, and becomes involved in petty crimes. This duo, Yusuf and Çarpık, are part of top-down organized criminal groups that engage in illegal activities. Manipulated by Çarpık, Yusuf becomes a juvenile delinquent. On the other hand, Kenan, who defends virtue and honesty, establishes a warm friendship with the boy nicknamed Böcek meaning bug. He introduces him to a child laborer and thus Kenan's path in life is defined because he is convinced of working illegally. Although Kenan does not deviate from social norms, in a broader sense, he is an exploited child as well.

Both child figures, whether viewed as active or passive agents, are subject to exploitation, a resonance with Marx's seminal work *Capital*. The imposition of unfreedom extends to children, as articulated by Marx, who emphasizes child labor as a form of unfree labor. In Capital, vol. 1, Marx emphasizes the lack of voluntariness in the sale of children's labor, stating that "even the formality of a voluntary sale disappears" (Marx 1867/1990, 409). Marx specifically characterizes child labor as the work of those who are both physically and legally minors, serving as a potent illustration of labor exploitation. Legally, child labor is not considered free, as their labor-power is often sold by someone else, such as their parents, and child workers do not engage with capitalists in the labor market as autonomous commodity owners. Marx (1867/1990) further contends that the capitalist system transforms parents, out of economic necessity, into individuals who sell the labor power of their own children. Recognizing the lack of political and economic freedom for children, Marx asserts society's responsibility to act on their behalf, emphasizing the need to vindicate the rights of children and juvenile persons who are unable to advocate for themselves (Marx 1867/1990). However, capitalists are disinclined to challenge parental authority in the sale of child labor, as they benefit from the ability of parents to sell their children's labor power at a minimal cost. Marx clarifies that the capitalistic exploitation of children's labor did not

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

arise from the misuse of parental authority; instead, it was the capitalistic mode of exploitation that led to the degeneration of parental authority into a harmful misuse of power (1867/1990, p. 320).

While these children's labor is not sold by their parents in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979), it is society itself that exploits them by failing to offer adequate protection. This perspective aligns with Butler's (2004) reflection on responsibility in the face of violence. Butler astutely observes the glaring inequalities in societal responses to violence, shedding light on the selective mobilization of protection based on certain lives. In her reflections on responsibility, Butler contends that society exhibits a profound dichotomy in its reactions to violence. Lives deemed worthy of protection elicit swift and robust responses, mobilizing resources and attention to safeguard their sanctity. However, for those whose lives are marginalized or overlooked, a palpable lack of comparable support prevails. In the case of Yusuf and Kenan, their vulnerability stems not from a lack of familial care but rather from a societal failure to extend the protective umbrella that should encompass all children.

In this narrative, the child characters find themselves ensnared in a web of neglect, where their basic needs for sustenance, shelter, and security are systematically denied. This societal oversight becomes a compelling commentary on the differential valuation of lives, reflecting a failure to recognize the inherent worth and entitlement to protection of every individual, irrespective of their social or economic background. The narrative subtly emphasizes how societal

structures contribute to the perpetuation of injustice. The lack of adequate protection becomes a silent accomplice in the exploitation faced by Yusuf and Kenan, emphasizing the pressing need for a more inclusive and equitable approach to the distribution of resources and care in society. This poignant exploration not only critiques the immediate circumstances of the characters but also prompts a broader reflection on societal responsibilities and the imperative to rectify systemic injustices.

Masumiyet (1997): Echoes of Homelessness through Mute Girl in Hotel Rooms

Zeki Demirkubuz is recognized as one of the pioneers in Turkish cinema during the late 1990. Drawing inspiration from his firsthand experience in *Yeşilçam*. Demirkubuz narrates personal and political stories and his introspective filmmaking is rich with regional tones, incorporating profound convictions in fate (Collin, 2008a, p.107). Zeki Demirkubuz's second feature film *Masumiyet* (1997) tells the story of depressed, dark and lost trio Yusuf, Bekir and Uğur. Agitated, anguished, trapped and surrounded under harsh social conditions, these three characters engage in violence, suffering and self-hate. The film starts with Yusuf's release from prison after serving a ten-year sentence due to honor killing. Yusuf, who does not know where to go after his release from prison, heads to an address given to him by another prisoner. He finds himself in a dramatic dilemma with Bekir and Uğur, whom he meets in a cheap hotel. *Masumiyet*

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

(1997) poses a radical critique of family and cultural dimensions in the fate of children. To discuss how the destitute child figure is constructed, first I will present a spatial analysis and in the second phase, I will discuss how Çilem[3] functions in the dynamics of the narration.

The child character, Uğur's mute daughter Çilem, is portrayed in a gloomy and deeply pessimistic social-cultural environment. Çilem is mostly portrayed as an aphetic girl sleeping in a hotel room. She is far away from cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being. As an innocent victim of dysfunctional family life, Çilem, is looked after by the residents of the hotel. She is mentally harmed, and deprived of opportunities such as schooling and sound care. Çilem is mostly surrounded with pessimistic atmosphere, and drifted to domestic traumas. She spends her days in a cheap hotel room with a deviant and emotionally distant mother. Her silence is a reaction to the suffocating environment.

In this scene, it is clearly evident from the body language of the mother that she is mentally and psychologically distant from Çilem. The cigarette she smokes without considering the health of her child, crossing her legs, and sitting with her back turned to her reveal the dimensions of their

relationship. As her mother, Uğur, is mostly away to work in a *pavyon*[4], Çilem is deprived of emotionally and physically supportive parent. She is sometimes framed as a sole child indoors surrounded with shady and unpredictable male characters who seem to be ready to cause a scene in a dull atmosphere. Alternatively, Çilem is portrayed amidst unfamiliar male figures assuming a caregiver role. A commonality in both scenarios lies in the individuals involved; they are entirely unfamiliar to her, being complete strangers, even when assuming caregiving responsibilities.

The subsequent two scenes further illustrate Çilem's dependence on the care of unfamiliar individuals, one of whom is the proprietor, while the other is a resident in the hotel. In this context, the evocation of Freud's concept of the uncanny becomes salient. Freud's essay (1919/1953) is bifurcated into two segments. The initial section delves into the etymology of the terms "Heimlich" and "Unheimlich" (translating to "homely" and "unhomely" in English, respectively). Fuchs (2019, p. 103) proposes the uncanny manifests when a once familiar setting or familiar object takes on an unfamiliar, enigmatic, or mysterious quality. Rooted in German etymology, "das Heimliche"

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

(the private, secret), connoting "Heimisch" (homely, familiar, belonging to one's home), undergoes a transformative process, assuming an alien and ghostly nature. This transformation induces an atmosphere charged with menace and ominous premonitions, yet it steadfastly resists crystallizing into a defined, objective peril. The situation lingers in an ambivalent realm between normality and estrangement, and it is precisely this ambiguity that imparts an eerie, uncanny essence to the scenario. Therefore, the uncanny, according to Fuchs (2019), resides in a specific and fluctuating relationship between foreground and background. The impending threat doesn't manifest overtly but is rather intuited or inferred through ambiguity, particularly within the ambiguity of the foreground. Consequently, this phenomenon tends to emerge in perceptual fields characterized by undefined, hazy structures, such as twilight, fog, or darkness, where subtlety and ambiguity find a fertile ground.

Çilem undergoes a profound estrangement from her mother, dwelling in a dim, ominous hotel room alongside unfamiliar individuals. The once familiar association with her mother, symbolizing a sense of home, undergoes a disconcerting transformation into an unfamiliar and unsettling realm. Within this altered reality, unfamiliar personalities emerge, ironically assuming a semblance of familiarity. The juxtaposition of these contrasting elements highlights the disintegration of the once-known into an unfamiliar and disquieting environment, encapsulating

Çilem's poignant experience. Therefore, Çilem spends most of her time watching TV with strangers in the lobby of the hotel.

The only scene where Çilem is framed in nature gives the picture of the place where a child is supposed to belong to. Though not obvious, the scene gives the sense of a child happy with being among bushes. This scene contradicts with suffocating and claustrophobic hotel environment. In the contrasting scenes featuring Çilem, a distinct dichotomy emerges between her carefree demeanor in the natural setting and her listless, apathetic state in the confines of the hotel.

As Çilem joyfully runs amid nature, her movements reflect an uninhibited and lively spirit. In stark contrast, the scenes set in the hotel depict a despondent and motionless Çilem, portraying

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

an environment marked by gloominess and darkness. The juxtaposition of these two settings accentuates the stark disparity between the expansive, sunlit outdoors and the suffocating, claustrophobic ambiance of the hotel. The scene, which depicts the warmth and freedom in natural spaces, serves as a powerful contradiction to the oppressive atmosphere in the confining, dimly lit hotel. This contradiction also offers a broader narrative to contemplate on displacement, estrangement, and the yearning for a sense of belonging.

Towards the end of the film, Uğur disappears and Çilem loses connection with her mother. Yusuf undertakes the responsibility of caring the little girl. Although he seems to have good intentions to provide a healthy atmosphere for her, he is forced to drift Çilem to streets. Streets

The scenes featuring Çilem and Yusuf encompass a moment marking a possible turning point in their journey. The frames capture a metaphorical threshold, symbolizing the crossing from one state of existence to another. It's a visual tableau, conveying a mix of weariness, resilience, and an underlying sense of vulnerability. This frame becomes a snapshot of Çilem's persistent hardships as she is still away from a stable home environment. The composition of the scenes,

intricately crafted through the interplay of symbolic imagery serves to imply the grim reality of displacement. The gravity of this moment is etched into the visual narrative, compelling the audience to bear witness to the harsh changes befalling Çilem and Yusuf.

Demirkubuz utilizes a high-angle shot, portraying the characters as diminutive figures in these scenes. The bars crossing and filling the frame, the narrow streets with parked cars, the vertical alignment of staircases, and the divided frames collectively generate a sense of claustrophobia, encapsulating the characters in an oppressive and confined environment. Mise-en-scène contributes to a feeling of entrapment, reflecting the characters' psychological confinement and their struggle to break free from the suffocating circumstances.

Aphasic Girl as a Reflective Child

The ill-fated mother-child relationship determines Çilem's position in the film. Çilem has an ignorant and deviant mother working in unconventional male-dominated environments. Her mother, Uğur, who struggles in the social and political atmosphere of Turkey, doesn't fulfil an "ideal mother" role for various reasons. Far from a proper caregiver, Uğur do not meet the psychological, social and emotional needs of Çilem. Uğur was heavily beaten by Çilem's father when she was pregnant with Çilem, and this recount implies why Çilem is a retarded child. Working in a *pavyon* and being a mother of an illegitimate child resonate with the harsh

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

consequences of being an unconventional woman in Turkey. Çilem, deprived of healthy and safe guidance, reacts to all these cultural and social struggles with her silence., and functions as an observant child inviting audience to contemplate on the narrative (Güven and Can, 2021).

Çilem stands out as a quintessential representation of childhood in Turkish cinema during the 1990s. *Masumiyet* (1997) skillfully captures the portrayal of Çilem, who navigates an adult world without active motor skills, highlighting her heightened visual and auditory capacities. In the dark hotel rooms with shouts, gunfire, and an unending melee, Çilem's silence transcends mere words, offering a capacity to convey something profound. Çilem is mainly portrayed while watching TV, which accentuates her passive reaction to her abusive atmosphere.

According to Deleuze (1989, p.3) children deficient in specific motor skills could augment their capacity to perceive more in the realms of sight and sound. Disquiet for the future depicted through silent child figures were reflective monitors upon aesthetic and political preoccupations. Çilem, as a mute girl is a vivid example of such a figure. The silence, introversion, and self-imposed isolation evoke the most potent sense of closure and claustrophobia in the narrative. Her only connection with television serves as the sole constant point and continuity in her drifting life. The child gazes at television immersing herself in it completely without diverting her eyes, as nothing from the outside world manages to permeate her detached existence (Suner, 2015, p. 203).

In these scenes, television is out of the frame, in other words it lays out on the off-screen space. Even though Çilem doesn't look at the viewers' eyes, in a sense her position breaks the fourth wall through the TV out of the frame. In this sense, the vicious circle trapping her corresponds with her silence along with the gloomy and serious themes of the film. It is a silent reaction against all the misery, distress and suffering around her.

Fisher (2007, p. 3) positions child figures as a challenging force against male subjects suggesting that child image undermines the male protagonists' position. He objects the idea that the child figures are completely weak and agentless in the narrative. He states:

> At times the child is inscrutable and passively observant… At other times, however, the child acts in a manner markedly more effective than that of the male protagonist, such that its activity elucidates male lack and even threatens the central male figure (2007, p. 3).

Following Fisher's (2007) point, we can argue that Çilem is a subtle and silent force in child–parent relations. Surrounded by violence, crime, drug-abuse and poverty, Çilem is a displaced and ignored child both in terms of domestic atmosphere and psychological and emotional needs, which presumably makes her a passive observer. However, Çilem could also be treated as a subtle force reversing the characters' positions. The narrative unfolds with the introduction of

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

unfamiliar individuals, who take the place of the emotionally and physically distant mother. Strangers residing at hotel takes care of Çilem, who, much like the audience, silently observes what is happening around her. This pattern of silent communication between the viewer and Çilem is exemplified by Yusuf, a character who, in a sense, embodies the role of someone attuned to her silence. Yusuf becomes a conduit for the audience, interpreting and responding to Çilem's unspoken language. Çilem's silence functions as a narrative bridge, skillfully rearranging the characters' position. Therefore, with her silent-observer position, Çilem initiates a reversal of roles among the characters. As unfamiliar individuals step into the emotionally and physically distant mother figure, a shift occurs. This inversion challenges traditional notions of caregiving, introducing an element of surprise and complexity to the narrative. In this sense, Çilem operates as a bridge between the narrative and the audience, creating a silent but profound connection. Much like the audience, she observes the unfolding events with a discerning gaze. In this dynamic, Çilem becomes a relatable figure, a conduit through which the audience vicariously experiences the story. Her silent presence invites the audience to engage emotionally and intellectually, forging a connection that transcends traditional storytelling boundaries. This pattern of silent communication further deepens the connection between the characters and the audience, making Çilem not only a focal point for empathy but also a lens through which the dynamics of care and understanding are redefined.

Conclusion

In the myth of innocence, children are often portrayed in a utopian world shielded from adult harshness, reducing them to mere projections of adult fantasies (Giroux, 1998). Despite these oversimplified representations, on-screen depictions of children generate ideological concerns (Wilson, 2003). Stereotypes persist in portraying children either as suffering in melodramas or as mischievous in comedies prevalent depiction of child images in Turkish cinema, characterized by a lack of realism and the portrayal of children as either mischievous characters or unrealistically responsible figures for their parents.

In *Yeşilçam*, the melodramatic potential of child actors led to the widespread popularity of films featuring children. For example, *Ayşecik* [Little Ayşe] emerged as a prominent character taking on the roles of the breadwinner or act as a surrogate mother to her siblings (Dönmez-Dönmez-Dönmez-Colin, 2008a, p.94). Similar formulas, imbuing both melodramatic and comedic motifs in the portrayal of child images, were apparent in characters like *Ömercik* [Little Ömer], *Yumurcak* [Little Devil], *Afacan* [Little Mischief-Maker], or *Sezercik* [Little Sezer].

However, *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) redefine the narrative landscape. These films introduce distinctive layers to the constructs of home and family, marking a departure from conventional representations of childhood. *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997)

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

distinguish themselves in the realm of Turkish cinema through their realistic exploration of the complexities surrounding neglected and destitute children. While home and family typically serve as anchors in Turkish cinema, particularly in the portrayal of child images, the resonance of these twin pillars takes on distinctive nuances in both films, providing a noteworthy departure from the prevalent representation of child images in Turkish cinema.

In this vein, as representative artifacts from their respective cinematic periods, *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) encapsulate this evolution in the portrayal of realistic childhood on the Turkish cinematic screen. Through their narratives and attention to the intricacies of displacement and destitution, *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) contribute substantially to a broader discourse on how neglected childhood is depicted in Turkish cinema, marking a departure from the conventions.

Regarding *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) as a sheer example of 1970s socio-realist Turkish cinema, and *Masumiyet* (1997) as a trademark of New Turkish cinema movement, this article delved into exploration of spatial and narrative elements. The focus was on understanding how these elements unfold in the portrayal of realistic childhood images, with a particular emphasis on examining the dynamics of home and family. Exploring the distinctive periods of the 1970s and 1990s, which play pivotal roles in shaping our understanding of realistic child images in Turkish cinema, this article began by positioning the child figures within these cinematic landscapes.

Yusuf ile Kenan (1979), despite its encounters with socio-realist films in 1970s, introduced a novel perspective. The elusive portrayal of child heroes without a conventional family structure distinguishes it from the other examples of the period. The film portrays the loss of home and the destitution of child characters as central forces propelling the narrative, thus deviating from the established conventions. In doing so, it adds a dimension to the cinematic landscape of the era, offering a fresh exploration of the interconnectedness between the plight of children, societal upheavals, and the broader implications of modernization.

On the other hand, in the cinematic landscape of Turkish cinema 1990s onwards, silent and reflective child images play a transformative role, strategically placed within recurrent themes such as generational clashes, alienation, and despair. The child characters respond to identity crisis experienced by their parents and relatives. From the perspective of New Turkish cinema, a noteworthy exemplification of this narrative approach can be found in *Masumiyet* (1997), which stands as one of the earliest instances of introducing an observer and silent child image in Turkish cinema. The film not only exemplifies the aesthetic choices of the era but also highlights the thematic significance of integrating such characters as witnesses to the complex adult world. Child figure in *Masumiyet* (1997) functioned as subtle force inviting audience to contemplate on societal

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

disquietude. Although she seems to be a passive observer in the film, her reaction is a subtle striking force enabling the viewer in silence mode to contemplate on desperate child figure.

After pursing realistic child image in Turkish cinema, subsequently the focus shifted towards comprehending how home and family were constructed peculiarly in these films. Through a dual approach encompassing spatial and narrative analyses, the article endeavored to unravel the elusive nature of the child image in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997). The focus extended to two crucial aspects in analyzing the films: the spatial analysis, which explores the loss of home, and the narrative exploration of the agency of child characters. A central proposition of this analysis was the assertion that the realistic portrayal of child images in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) were crafted through the thematic elements of child labor, delinquency and aphasia.

Both in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997), child characters assume central roles, serving as pivotal anchors that shape the narrative. While Deleuze (1989) views child figures of realist films as passive and weak observers, Smith (2022, p. 78-79) contests Deleuze's concept of passivity by asserting that children emerge as active participants. Following these arguments, I have discussed child figure's agency in the narration. In Yusuf *ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997), child figures' significance extends beyond mere character portrayal; they function as vital elements that underpin broader themes, including but not limited to alienation,

and the multifaceted challenges inherent in transition. These young protagonists, through their experiences and perspectives, become powerful conduits through which the complexities of societal issues are explored, adding depth and resonance to the films. As children become rebellious or aphetic due to social and economic structures, I suggest that child figures in *Yusuf ile Kenan* (1979) and *Masumiyet* (1997) were on the threshold oscillating between being active and passive agents.

REFERENCES

Abisel, N. (2005). *Türk Sineması Üzerine Yazılar.* Ankara: Phoenix.

Akdağ, M., Yetimova, S., & Eser, H. (2022). Children's victimization in Turkish cinema between the 1970s and the 1980s. *Galactica Media: Journal of Media Studies, 4(*4), 189-209.

Akser, M. & Bayrakdar, D. (2014). Introduction: Ten propositions on the possibility of a new cinema. In Akser, M. & Bayrakdar, D. (Ed.), *New cinema, new media reinventing Turkish cinema* (pp. xi-xxii). Cambridge Scholars.

Akser, M. (2015). Turkish independent cinema: Between bourgeois auteurism and political radicalism. In D. Baltruschat, & M. P. Erickson (Eds.), *Independent Filmmaking Around the Globe* (pp. 131-148). Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press.

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Akser, M. (2018). Locating Turkish Cinema Between Populist Tendencies and Art Cinema. In: Magnan-Park, A., Marchetti, G., Tan, S. (Eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Asian Cinema* (pp.151-170) Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Allison, S. T., & Goethals, G. R. (2017). The hero's transformation. In S. T. Allison, G. R. Goethals, & R. M. Kramer (Eds.), *Handbook of heroism and heroic leadership* (pp. 379-400). Routledge.

Arslan, S. (2011). *Cinema in Turkey: A New Critical History*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bayrakdar, D. & Akser, M. (2014). Ten Propositions on the Possibility of a New Cinema. In Bayrakdar, D. & Akser, M. (Eds.), *New Cinema, New Media: Reinventing Turkish Cinema,* (pp.xi- xxii). New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Bilgen-Susanlı, Z., İnanç-Tuncer, Ö., Koloğlugil, S. (2016). Child domestic labour and mothers' employment in Turkey, *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja*, *29*(1), 967-979.

Becerikli, R. (2018). Çocuk yıldız filmleri ile canım kardeşim filminin anlatı ve karakter özellikleri bakımından karşılaştırılması. *Selçuk İletişim, 11*(2), 321-346

Bushati, A. (2018). Children and cinema: moving images of childhood. *European Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, *3*(3): 34-39.

Butler, J. (2004). *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso.

Campbell, J. (2008). *The Hero with a Thousand Faces.* Princeton University Press.

Çiçekoğlu, F. (2007). *Vesikalı Şehir*. İstanbul: Metis.

Deleuze, G. (1989). *Cinema 2 The Movement-Image*. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Trans.). University of Minnesota Press.

Doğan, E. (2019). Türk sinemasında 1960-1970 yılları arasında çocukluk: iki farklı Ayşecik filminde çocukluk temsiliyeti. *Turkish Studies, 14*(2): 313-323.

Dönmez-Colin, D. (2008a). *The Routledge Dictionary of Turkish Cinema*. New York: Routledge.

Dönmez-Colin, D. (2008b). *Turkish Cinema: Identity, Distance and Belonging*. London. Reaktion Books.

Erdoğan, N. (2003). Powerless Signs: Hybridity and the Logic of Excess of Turkish Trash. In K. Ross & D. Derman. Creskill (Eds.), *Mapping the Margins: Identity, Politics and the Media*, (pp. 163-167). Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press.

Fisher, J. (2007). On the ruins of masculinity: The figure of the child in Italian Neo-realism and the German rubble film. In Roberto, L. E. & Wilson, K. M (Eds.), *Italian Neo-realism and Global Cinema.* Detroit: Wayne State UP.

Freud, S. (1953). *The Uncanny*. James Strachey (Trans.). In *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* (pp. 217-252). London: The Hogarth Press. (Original work published 1919).

Volume 12.1 (2024) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2024.592 | http://cinej.pitt.edu

Fuchs, T. (2019). The Uncanny as Atmosphere. In G. Francesetti &T. Griffero (Eds.), *Psychopathology and Atmospheres. Neither Inside nor Outside* (pp. 101-118). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.

Giroux, H. (1998). Stealing Innocence: The Politics of Child Beauty Pageants. In Henry Jenkins (Eds.) *The Children's Culture Reader* (pp. 265-282). New York: New York University Press.

Gaudin, A. (2018). The Viewer's Embodiment into Cinematic Space. In Rosario, F. Villarmae, (Eds.), *New Approaches to Cinematic Space* (pp. 193-205). Routledge.

Gürata, A. (2006). Translating Modernity: Remakes in Turkish Cinema. In D. Eleftheriotis & G. Needham (Eds.), *Asian Cinemas: A Reader and Guide* (pp. 242-254). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Gürbilek, N. (2020). *Vitrinde Yaşamak*: *1980'lerin Kültürel İklimi*. İstanbul: Metis.

Güven, Z.C.& Can, A. (2022). Sinemada Normatif Çocuklardan Aykırı Çocuklara Doğru: 1990 Sonrası Türk Sinemasında Monitör/Yansıtıcı ve Sessiz Çocuklar. In Can, A., Aytaş, M. &Aker, H. (Eds.), *Sinema ve Çocuk I: Türk ve Dünya Sinemasında Çocuk İmgesi ve Çocukluk Halleri* (pp. 71-105). Konya: Tablet.

Hynam, M., & Mosley, J. (2016, April). Filmic Space: Parallels between transitions in film and architecture. [Paper presentation]. AMPS Digital Cultural Ecology and the Medium Sized City, Bristol, UK.

Jenkins, H. (1998). Childhood Innocence and Other Modern Myths. In Henry Jenkins (Eds.) *The Children's Culture Reader*, (1-40). New York: New York University Press.

Marx, K. (1990) *Capital, Volume 1*. Ben Fowkes (Trans.). London: Penguin Classics. (Original work published 1867).

Smith, M. (2022). *The Child in British Cinema*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Suner, A. (2015). *Hayalet Ev / Yeni Türk Sinemasında Aidiyet, Kimlik ve Bellek*. İstanbul: Metis.

Turhan, E. H. (2022). Türk sinemasında çocuk yoksulluğu: Zıkkımın Kökü filmi örneği. *Türkiye Film Araştırmaları Dergisi 2*(2). 97-108.

FILMOGRAPHY

Akad, Ö. (Director). 1973. *Gelin* [Bride] [Film]. Erman Film Production.

Akad, Ö. (Director). 1974. *Düğün* [The Wedding]. Erman Film Production.

Aksoy, O. (Director). 1979. *Taşı Toprağı Altın Şehir* [Istanbul: City of Stone, Soil, and Gold] Erler Film Production.

Baytan, N. (Director). 1972. *Kanlı Para* [Bloody Money]. Erler Film Production.

Demirkubuz, Z. (Director). 1997. *Masmumiyet* [Innocence]. Mavi Filmcilik.

Güney, Y. (Director). 1970. *Umut* [Hope]. Güney Film Production.

Kavur, Ö. (Director). 1979. *Yusuf ile Kenan* [Yusuf and Kenan]. Sinar Filmcilik Production.

Tibet, K. (Director). 1978. *Sultan*. [Sultana] Arzu Film Production.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Derived from a street in Istanbul's Beyoğlu district, *Yeşilçam* had noteworthy international and transnational ties. Despite its global connections, the bulk of film production occurred in Turkey, utilizing the Turkish language and targeting a national audience. According to Akser, the christening of *Yeşilçam* is likened to the nomenclature of Hollywood (Akser 2018:155). In this analogy, the revered color "yeşil" (green) represents "holly", while "çam" (pine tree) symbolizes wood. Beyond being the moniker for this local film industry, the term *Yeşilçam* encompasses more than just the name itself. Genre conventions and adaptations define the heyday (roughly the period between 1950-1980) of *Yeşilçam* era. In other words, producers, directors, screenwriters, and theatre managers, showed a preference for tried-and-true, successful formulas (Erdoğan 2003; Gürata 2006).

[2] The influx of people from rural areas to urban centers in search of better economic opportunities was a prominent feature of the 1960s and 1970s in Turkey. Many families, facing economic hardship in rural areas, moved to cities hoping for improved living conditions. However, this migration often resulted in increased competition for jobs, including low-skilled and low-paying positions that children were more likely to fill. Particularly, in the 1970s, Turkey experienced a significant shift in its economic structure as the industrial and services sectors expanded, marking a crucial transformation in the national economy (Bilgen-Susanlı, İnanç-Tuncer Koloğlugil, 2016, p. 56).

[3] The Turkish word Çilem translates to my sorrow, pain, and hardship in English.

[4] The Turkish word "pavyon" typically refers to a type of entertainment venue or nightclub, often characterized by the presence of live music performances, dance shows, and a lively atmosphere. "Pavyon" is commonly associated with entertainment districts and nightlife. In the context of "pavyon", it is noteworthy that these entertainment venues, often male-dominated, may feature female singers who specialize in performing Arabesque songs, a genre of music in Turkey known for its emotional and melancholic melodies, and it has a significant presence in the country's cultural landscape. In some contexts, it may specifically refer to a certain style of nightclub or cabaret, while in others, it might be a more general term for nightlife establishments.