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YILDIZ TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNSAN VE TOPLUM BİLİMLERİ ANA BİLİM DALI
İNSAN VE TOPLUM BİLİMLERİ PROGRAMI

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

**ORIENTALIST IMAGERY IN THE FILMS
*IL BAGNO TURCO, ZENNE DANCER, AND
AUF DER ANDEREN SEITE***

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İSTANBUL
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ABSTRACT

ORIENTALIST IMAGERY IN THE FILMS *IL BAGNO TURCO, ZENNE DANCER, AND AUF DER ANDEREN SEITE*

Sanem Peker Dađlı

May, 2019

The power relations between the Orient and the West co-exist with a literary and scientific language on the Orient along with all the connotations and annotations which conjure up the idea of the Orient in popular imagination. *Latent Orientalism* refers to the unconscious and taken-for-granted conceptions on the Orient. It is this latency which naturalizes and legitimizes the given binarisms of Orientalism and renders it a hegemonic characteristic. Orientalism and its authority reside in the discourse it has become to spell the truth about the Orient. The works produced on the Orient can be analyzed in terms of the ways they replicate the same figures, images, styles or scenarios as reflections of the hegemony of Orientalism. The purpose of this study is to embark on a quest for Orientalist imagery in Turkey's cinema on the trajectory of the films *Il Bagno Turco* aka *Hamam* by Ferzan Özpetek, *Zenne Dancer* aka *Zenne* by Caner Alper and Mehmet Binay, and *Auf Der Anderen Seite* aka *Yaşamın Kıyısında* by Fatih Akın. In this study, the systematic thoughts and ideas on the Orient and the concept of latent orientalism provide a basis in the analysis of the selected films from Turkey's cinema. Depending on the premise that the dichotomies of colonial discourse and gender issues contribute to each other and cultivate together, the analyses in this study are also based on a search for Orientalist gaze in these films from a sexual difference perspective. The incentive in the film analyses is to search for various outbreaks of Orientalist discourse latent in the filmic texts to contribute to the discussions in the field.

Key Words: Orientalism, latent Orientalism, colonial discourse, sexual difference, film analysis

ÖZ

IL BAGNO TURCO, ZENNE DANCER VE AUF DER ANDEREN SEITE FİMLERİNDE ORYANTALİST İMGELEM

Sanem Peker Dağlı

Mayıs, 2019

Doğu ile Batı arasındaki iktidar ilişkileri, genel muhayyilede Doğu fikrini oluşturan tüm çağrışım ve yorumların yanısıra, Doğu'ya dair yazınsal ve bilimsel bir dil ile birlikte var olur. *Örtük Oryantalizm*, Doğu'ya ilişkin bilinçaltı ve doğru kabul edilen düşüncelere karşılık gelir. Oryantalizmin benimsenmiş ikiliklerini doğal ve meşru hale getiren ve ona hegemonik bir karakter kazandıran işte tam da bu örtüklüktür. Oryantalizm ve sahip olduğu otorite, Doğu'ya ilişkin hakikati ortaya koymak üzere dönüştüğü söylemde saklıdır. Doğu'yu konu alan eserler, Oryantalizmin hegemonyasının yansımaları olarak aynı figürleri, imgeleri, stilleri ya da senaryoları tekrar tekrar kullanmaları bakımından ele alınıp incelenebilir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Ferzan Özpetek'in *Hamam (Il Bagno Turco)*, Caner Alper ve Mehmet Binay'ın *Zenne (Zenne Dancer)*, ve Fatih Akın'ın *Yaşamın Kıyısında (Auf Der Anderen Seite)* filmleri yörüngesinde Türkiye Sineması'nda Oryantalist imgelemin izini sürmektir. Bu çalışmada incelenmek üzere seçilmiş olan filmlerin analizinde, Doğu üzerine üretilmiş olan sistematik düşünce ve fikirler ile örtük Oryantalizm kavramı baz alınmıştır. Kolonyal söylem ile toplumsal cinsiyet meselelerine ilişkin dikotomilerin birbirlerine katkıda buldukları ve birlikte geliştikleri öncülüne dayanarak, bu çalışmadaki analizler aynı zamanda Oryantalist bakışın izini, cinsel fark perspektifinden de sürmektedir. Film analizlerindeki temel saik, alandaki tartışmalara katkıda bulunmak amacıyla, filmlerde örtük olan Oryantalist söylemin farklı tezahürlerine bakmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Oryantalizm, örtük Oryantalizm, kolonyal söylem, cinsel fark, film analizi

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ÖZ	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	8
2.1. A Short History of Orientalism.....	8
2.2. Said’s Orientalism.....	10
2.3. A Visit to Orientalism from the Perspective of Sexual Difference.....	14
2.4. The Emergence of Orientalist Iconography in Art.....	17
2.5. Reflections of Orientalism on the Cinemas of the West and the Overtones of Orientalist Discourse in Turkey’s Cinema.....	24
3. FILM ANALYSES	36
3.1. Selection of Films, Limitations, Methodology, and Rationale	36
3.2. <i>Il Bagno Turco</i> aka <i>Hamam</i>	40
3.2.1. Plot Summary.....	41
3.2.2. The Quest for Orientalist Gaze in <i>Il Bagno Turco</i>	43
3.2.3. The Orientalist Imagery in <i>Il Bagno Turco</i>	48
3.3. <i>Zenne Dancer</i>	55
3.3.1. Plot Summary.....	56
3.3.2. The Quest for Orientalist Gaze in <i>Zenne Dancer</i>	57
3.3.3. Orientalist Imagery in <i>Zenne Dancer</i>	62
3.4. <i>Auf Der Anderen Seite</i> aka <i>Yaşamın Kıyısında</i>	68

3.4.1. Plot Summary.....	69
3.4.2. The Quest for Orientalist Gaze and Orientalist Imagery in <i>Auf Der Anderen Seite</i>	70
4. CONCLUSION.....	76
BIBLIOGRAPHY	85
CURRICULUM VITAE.....	91

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: The list of films analyzed in Dr. Akan Yanık’s study	31
Table 2: Semiotic Analysis of <i>Il Bagno Turco</i> , <i>Zenne Dancer</i> , and <i>Auf Der Anderen Seite</i>	79

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Turkish Bath (1862) by Ingres	18
Figure 2: The Snake Charmer (1880) by Gerôme	20
Figure 3: Huban-ı Tellak (1793) - an illustration in Fazıl Bey's Hubanname	22
Figure 4: The illustration of dancing boys by Münif Fehim Özerman	22
Figures 5 & 6: Illustrations of hamam from French art	23
Figure 7: Resemblance between frames from Harem Square and paintings of Orientalist painters	34
Figure 8: A black soldier giving the French salute (the cover of Paris-Match).....	38
Figure 9: Mehmet in a close-up from the back	46
Figure 10: The voyeuristic gaze of Francesco	46
Figure 11: Mehmet and Francesco peeping the women bathing in a hamam.....	47
Figure 12: The partly nude female body as the passive object of the male voyeuristic gaze	47
Figure 13: Madam Anita's letters in sealed envelopes	50
Figure 14: The resemblance between the imagery of the young man singing in hamam in <i>Il Bagno Turco</i> and the effeminate tellak in <i>Huban-ı Tellak</i>	51
Figure 15: Francesco finding relief in the pleasures of the Orient	53
Figure 16: Afghanistan from Daniel's camera.....	58
Figure 17: Depravities in the Desert (1886) - Paul Avril's illustration for France's <i>Musk, Hashish, and Blood</i> (1886).....	60
Figure 18: <i>Danseur Turc</i> (1714) - Engraving by Gérard Jean Baptiste Scotin.....	60
Figure 19: Daniel watching Can's performance (intra-diegetic voyeuristic gaze) ...	61
Figure 20: Intra-diegetic voyeuristic gaze	61

Figures 21 & 22: The camera positioned on a level with the holder of a subjective Orientalist gaze	62
Figure 23: The camera occupying an objective position from where it displays intra-diegetic voyeuristic gaze.....	62
Figure 24: Can dancing in a cage.....	63
Figure 25: Can's rooster in a cage	63
Figure 26: Birds in cages in Afghanistan.....	64
Figure 27: Oriental self-indulgence, laziness and jouissance	65
Figure 28: Can's mother behind bars on windows	68
Figure 29: The mysterious Oriental as the object of knowledge and desire for the Western	71
Figure 30: Ayten as the Oriental woman to be rescued	72
Figure 31: Ali, signifying the Oriental villain	73
Figure 32: Ayten pictured as rebellious and wild	74
Figure 33: May Day demonstrations from Germany and Turkey.....	75

1. INTRODUCTION

The power relations between the Orient and the West co-exist with a literary and scientific language on the Orient along with all the connotations and annotations which conjure up the idea of the Orient in popular imagination. In 1978, Edward Wadie Said published his monumental and ground-breaking book *Orientalism* with an intention, in the narrowest sense, to outline Western conceptions of the Orient. Following his theorizations, the references of Orientalism radically shifted from a pure academic study of the scholars versed in the Orient to an epistemological and ontological discourse which produces knowledge and power on the Orient.

Orientalism is still among the most influential sources in postcolonial era to understand the constructed binarisms of the Orient and the Occident. Said defines Orientalism as “a Western style for dominating, reconstructing, and having authority over the Orient.”¹ He suggests that “Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient’s difference with its weakness.”² Borrowing chiefly from Foucault and Gramsci, Edward Said elaborates on the domination of the Orient and Oriental knowledge by the West.³ The primary knowledge that Orientalism cultivates is that the Oriental is unable to produce knowledge about itself, which underlines the fact that knowledge and truth are produced, and the subject is constructed⁴ within the historical authority Orientalism assumes.

Said’s categorization of *manifest* and *latent* Orientalisms reveal that there are two dimensions to the phenomenon: (1) the presented and perceived information on the Orient, and (2) the unconscious and taken-for-granted conceptions on the Orient. It is

¹ Edward W. Said, **Orientalism**, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 3.

² *ibid.*, 204.

³ Andrew N. Rubin, “Edward W. Said (1935-2003)”, **Arab Studies Quarterly**, vol. 26, no. 4 (Fall, 2004): 37-52, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41858500> [18.04.2019].

⁴ Mahmut Mutman, “Şarkiyatçılık/Oryantalizm”, **Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce, Modernleşme ve Batıcılık**, vol. 3 (2002): 191-192.

this latency which naturalizes and legitimizes the given binarisms of Orientalism. Latent Orientalism is where “dreams, images, desires, fantasies and fears reside.”⁵ Therefore, in Orientalism the Orient is an object of knowledge as much as it is an object of desire. In this study, the concept of latent orientalism will provide a basis in the analysis of the selected films from Turkey’s cinema.

Said asserts that anyone who is preoccupied with producing knowledge on the Orient (whether it be political, cultural, artistic or academic) is bound to position themselves somewhere opposite the Oriental: as the “author” is the authority with the power to speak about the Orient or make the Orient speak, it occupies the position of the Self whereas the Orient is located as its Other.⁶ However, Edward Said is not preoccupied with proving the existence or non-existence of a correspondence between Orientalist knowledge and the Orient, defending Arabs or Islam or creating an anti-European text. Rather, he tries to show how Orientalism has ended up in a discursive system standing up on an internally consistent economy of textuality. Said suggests that Orientalism has a ‘textual attitude’⁷ as any piece of knowledge on the Orient has actually been produced depending on, borrowing from or replicating what was previously said about it. It is safer and sure to bring success to the author. So, the text gains an authority as the knowledge produced justifies itself again and again in each newly created text, and eventually becomes the truth. In that, Orientalism and its authority reside in the discourse it has become to spell the truth about the Orient.

Said uses ‘strategic formation’ as one of the methodological devices to analyze authority, “which is a way of analyzing the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large.”⁸ In this context, the works produced on the Orient are analyzed in terms of their textuality as strategic formation: it is investigated how they replicate the same figures, images, styles or scenarios as reflections of the hegemony of Orientalism. Furthermore, in a

⁵ Meyda Yeğenoğlu, **Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 23.

⁶ Said, 1979, 5-7.

⁷ Edward W. Said, **Orientalism**, (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 93.

⁸ Said, 2003, 20.

broader sense, the discourses of Orientalism can be traced back in historical, cultural, artistic and political levels.

The pursuit of producing knowledge on the Orient attaches authority to the speaking and constructing subject. The 'author West' in the process of producing knowledge on the objectified Other, hereby creates or, in Said's words, "Orientalizes" the Orient. In this process also created are a series of Orientalist concepts like an 'Arab mind', an 'oriental psyche', and an 'Islamic Society' or stereotypical images like the rational, developed, humane, superior, authentic, active, creative, and masculine West versus the irrational, aberrant, backward, crude, despotic, inferior, inauthentic, passive, feminine and sexually corrupt Orient.⁹

In his work 'Arabs, Islam and the Dogmas of the West' Said also underlines the persistence of the fundamental dogmas of Orientalism in Western studies of the Arabs and Islam and he accounts on the principal ones as follows:

"One is the absolute and systematic difference between the West (which is rational, developed, humane, superior) and the Orient (which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior). Another dogma is that abstractions about the Orient, particularly those based on texts representing a 'classical Oriental civilization, are always preferable to direct evidence drawn from modern Oriental realities. A third dogma is that the Orient is eternal, uniform, incapable of defining itself; therefore, it is assumed that a highly generalized and systematic vocabulary for describing the Orient from a Western standpoint is inevitable and even scientifically objective. A fourth dogma is that the Orient is at bottom something either to be feared or to be controlled (by pacification, research and development, outright occupation whenever possible)."¹⁰

It is possible to add to these dogmas the one that associates Islam with terror and devastation following 9/11. There is a mutually constructing and reproducing economy between Orientalism as a hegemonic discourse and all these dogmas. Orientalism relies on dogmas the cyclical proliferation of which in turn secures the hegemony of Orientalism and legitimizes the civilizing role of the Western. As Ernesto Laclau asserts, Europe, which takes up 'a civilizing mission' imposes its being/existence as the power that represents universal humane interests for the whole humanity on the rest of the world.¹¹ Proving that, the phantasy of 'rescue' also plays a significant role

⁹ A. L. Macfie, **Orientalism**, (London: Longman, 2002), 10-11.

¹⁰ Edward W. Said, "**Arabs, Islam and the Dogmas of the West**", The New York Times Book Review, (31 October 1976) in A. L. Macfie, **Orientalism: A Reader** (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 104-105.

¹¹ Ernesto Laclau, **Evrensellik, Kimlik ve Özgürleşme**, trans. E. Başer (1996), 79 in Ömer Osmanoğlu, "Türk Sineması'nda Dış Göç Olgusu: Sosyo-Kültürel Karşılaşmalar, Kimlik Çatışması ve Yabancılaşma", **Marmara İletişim Dergisi**, issue: 25 (2016): 77-98, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315480711> [07.03.2019].

in colonial discourse. Generally represented as a rescue of a woman from the dangerous Oriental, the rescue fantasy can be considered as “an allegory of saving the Orient from its libidinal, instinctual destructiveness.”¹² The rescue does not necessarily need to be delineated via gender or even people. The entity to be rescued might be anything that belongs to the Orient (in the movie *Il Bagno Turco*, for example, the Western character tries to rescue and restore a desolate hamam which, otherwise, would be wrecked by the Eastern), or the Occident.

Still another attitude that is adopted by the West vis-à-vis the Orient is a romantic one which is of an ambivalent character as it might occupy discursive positions of opposite ends. The Orient was deployed as an element of thrill in literary works of the Romantic era. Following Said’s theorizations in *Orientalism*, the concept of romantic Orientalism gained a new context with political grounds, which brought along a questioning of imperialist domination.¹³ Orientalism saturated European Romantic imagination; however, it also presented ambivalence regarding the East as a result of fascination complicated by ‘colonial anxiety and imperial guilt’.¹⁴ The concurrent attraction to and a distaste for/fear of the Orient is the reflection of romantic Orientalism. In romantic Orientalist works, the Orient might parade as spiritual as much as pre-modern. In that, the Orient is both a center of repulsion and attraction as its mysterious state promises a hope of self-discovery for the West.

The ambivalent mixture of fascination and disgust with the Orient and the desire of the West to rescue and civilize the Oriental via control and pacification are on the same axis with the dominating and objectifying male discourse, which brings a new dimension to the analysis of Orientalism from a sexual difference perspective. The categorizations and binarisms in colonial discourse and in normative sexuality and gender issues contribute to each other and cultivate together. The phallogentric structure of the political and linguistic domain generates its Others in terms of gender issues, as well. The feminist theory comes with abundant elaborations on otherness as the female (gender) is always thought as either the Other of the masculine, or an

¹² Ella Shohat, “Gender and Culture of Empire: Toward a Feminist Ethnography of the Cinema”, *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, vol: 13, issue:1-3 (1991): 45-84, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10509209109361370> [07.03.2019].

¹³ “The Romantic Period: Romantic Orientalism”, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, https://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/romantic/topic_4/welcome.htm [04.07.2019].

¹⁴ *ibid.*

absolute lack. Laura Mulvey argues that in the male-dominant normative plane, the female stands as the signifier for the male other, “bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his phantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning.”¹⁵ Accordingly, the Western subject “constitutes the universal norm by occupying that empty, abstract place reached by a ‘natural’ and ‘normal’ evolution.”¹⁶ Such an approach is instrumental in an analysis of the products of Orientalist discourse, particularly in the Orientalist works of art, which is an elemental aspect of the subject matter of this study and will be elaborated on under the title “A Visit to Orientalism from the Perspective of Sexual Difference” (Section 2.3).

Criticisms regarding Said's theorization of Orientalism were diverse. Among those who opposed the views of Said were Bernard Lewis, C.F. Beckingham, David Kopf, M. Richardson, and John MacKenzie.¹⁷ These critics mainly focused on Said's lack of respect for historical fact.¹⁸ Another criticism that Aijaz Ahmad, an Indian scholar, and John MacKenzie, a Scottish historian, shared was that Said, while trying to defy an essentialization of the Orient, was in fact entrapped by an essentialization of Europe or the West in his analyses.¹⁹ Said's response to these criticisms was displayed in his article 'Orientalism Reconsidered' and the Afterword of the 1995 edition of *Orientalism* explaining that what he was opt to was neither to reveal or prove the incongruence of Orientalist discourse with the real Orient (if there is such a thing), nor to designate the Orient or the Occident with fixed and unchanging identities. Rather, “his concern was merely to identify the nature of the 'orientalist' discourse as a 'created body of theory and practice', designed, consciously or unconsciously, to serve the interests of the European imperial powers.”²⁰ Said's response is instrumental in directing any examination of a cultural product in terms of Orientalist discourse. Accordingly, the analyses in this study are based on this incentive; the focus is on

¹⁵ Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975): 17, **Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings**, eds. Leo Braudy, Marshall Cohen, 7th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 712.

¹⁶ Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial*, 6.

¹⁷ Macfie, *Orientalism*, 10-11.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, 10-11.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, 100.

²⁰ *ibid.*, 12.

searching for different types or levels of Orientalist discourse latent in the filmic texts but not on displaying the incongruences between representation and reality.

To understand and analyze a film with a motivation to pursue the latent meanings and messages requires understanding the signs and deciphering the operational system of signification. In this respect, semiotics is regarded as one of the most distinguished approaches adopted in media studies and in film analysis. In the broadest sense of the concept, semiotics is the study of signs and the system in which they produce meanings. The implementation of semiotics to film analysis is based on a model to lay bare the unity of the signs in a film and the way they communicate to each other. The interdisciplinary employment of the semiotics with its ability to integrate a collection of data from many different disciplines in humanities and social sciences is another rationale for the place semiotic analysis occupies in this study.

As the title suggests, the purpose of this study is to embark on a quest for Orientalist imagery in Turkey's cinema on the trajectory of the films *Il Bagno Turco* aka *Hamam* by Ferzan Özpetek, *Zenne Dancer* aka *Zenne* by Caner Alper and Mehmet Binay, and *Auf Der Anderen Seite* aka *Yaşamın Kıyısında* by Fatih Akın. The Theoretical Framework (Section 2) provides brief remarks on the history of Orientalism and an elaboration on the ideas and conceptualizations in Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Besides, Orientalism is visited from the perspective of sexual difference to provide a ground for the film analyses. To understand how Orientalism has manifested in art, the emergence of Orientalist iconography is outlined focusing on the 18th and 19th century European and Ottoman paintings. The following part is dedicated to demonstrating the reflections of Orientalism and Orientalist iconography in the cinemas of the West together with the overtones of Orientalism in Turkey's cinema. The Film Analyses (Section 3) part first provides thorough information on the rationale behind both the selection of the films and the methodology adopted in this study. Secondly, each selected film is analyzed in terms of (1) the existence (or the non-existence) of Orientalist gaze by looking at where the camera is positioned and how intra-diegetic gaze is organized, (2) the overall Orientalist imagery by visiting the characters and settings in detail and exploring the course of the story, and (3) a search not only for the outlets where latent Orientalism surfaces but also where the stereotypical Orientalist imagery is complicated by out-of-the-box representations. Finally, in the Conclusion (Section 4) part, an overall and interdisciplinary (sociological, cultural,

and psychological) critique of the films is presented utilizing the techniques in semiotic film analysis, focusing on the signification models that help uncover the non-perceptible meanings and messages in the films.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. A Short History of Orientalism

The term ‘Orientalism’ with the meaning ‘the characteristics, styles of thought and expression, and customs of the Eastern nations’ was first used in 1769.²¹ In 1830s’ France, the term was used ‘to describe knowledge about the Orient, or a genre of romantic-fantasy literature or painting.’²² Overall, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the term “Orientalism” referred to the study or the depiction of the side of the world known as the Orient, encompassing the Eastern or Middle Eastern countries, by the academics, writers, travelers, and artists of the West. In the shade of colonialism, the works of Orientalists mostly asserted an absolute opposition between the two geographical sites and everything that belongs to them, introducing a conceptualization of the West as ‘the self’ and of the Orient as ‘the other.’ The narratives and depictions of the Westerners, both those who had actually been to the Orient and those who had not, were so alike that they led to the emanation of a stereotypical image of the Orient and the Oriental. There were names, including women like British writers Lucy Garnett, Anne Jane Harvey, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu who travelled to the East and some of whom had a chance to get into the Ottoman harem. They came up with narratives different from or criticizing the stereotypical male accounts; however, the colonialist and Orientalist perceptions of the time were so internalized that female narratives, too, were shaped by a similar discourse of “circulation and repetition of Western knowledges about the Orient.”²³

The meaning of the term ‘Orientalism’ as the study of the Orient remained more or less the same until the end of the decolonization period following which a style of thought emerged pointing out to the possibility of disputing Eurocentrism in literary,

²¹ Taner Timur, “Oryantalizmler Tartışması”, **Toplumsal Tarih**, Issue: 119 (2003): 64.

²² John James Clarke, **Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought** (London: Routledge, 1997), 7.

²³ Nancy Micklewright, Reina Lewis, **Introduction to Gender, Modernity, and Liberty**, eds. Nancy Micklewright, Reina Lewis (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2006), 3.

artistic and academic works on the Orient. Lyon Macfie suggests that following the decolonization period, the term ‘Orientalism’ rendered a new meaning as:

“a corporate institution, designed for dealing with the Orient, a partial view of Islam, an instrument of Western imperialism, a style of thought, based on an ontological and epistemological distinction between Orient and Occident, and even an ideology, justifying and accounting for the subjugation of blacks, Palestinian Arabs, women and many other supposedly deprived groups and peoples.”²⁴

MacKenzie states that this transformation was achieved chiefly by four intellectuals who were studying or working in the West and in some way attached to the Orient: Anouar Abdel-Malek, a sociologist from Egypt, A.L. Tibawi, a Syrian student majoring in Arabic history, Edward Said, a Palestinian student majoring in English and Comparative Literature, and Bryan S. Turner, an English sociologist.²⁵ The criticisms these four intellectuals levelled at ‘Orientalism’ was centered on several points. To illustrate, in ‘Orientalism in Crisis’ (1963), Abdel-Malek asserted that orientalism was a tool at the hands of the Western nations to keep imposing their rule on the Orient.²⁶ Later, in 1978, Turner alleged that orientalism was deployed as a rationale behind the stand taken by the West as opposed to the Orient, which historically shaped how the Orient understands and governs itself.²⁷ The last and the most important name, Edward Said, who, with his paradigm-shifting and much criticized theorizations on Orientalism suggested that Orientalism was aligned with hegemony.²⁸ Said’s equating the works of Orientalists with a hegemonic system is based on his critique on the universalism of Eurocentric views. He believed that a distorted image of the Orient was produced by the scholars of the West, especially of European countries, and it was broadly acclaimed in the Occident and internalized in the Orient.

²⁴ A.L. Macfie, **Orientalism: A Reader**, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 4.

²⁵ John MacKenzie, “Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts”, (1995) in A.L. Macfie, **Orientalism: A Reader**, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 4.

²⁶ Anouar AbdelMalek, “Orientalism in Crisis”, **Diogenes**, (1963) in A.L. Macfie, **Orientalism: A Reader**, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 6.

²⁷ Bryan S. Turner, “Marxism and the End of Orientalism”, (1978) in A.L. Macfie, **Orientalism: A Reader**, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 6.

²⁸ Edward W. Said, “Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient”, (1978) in A.L. Macfie, **Orientalism: A Reader**, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 6.

Among all the other scholars and intellectuals who charged against the universalization of high-handed and pejorative depictions of the Orient, whether in the name of academic study or literature or art, it was Edward Said whose theorizations, since they were put forth, have resounded the most in the intellectual sphere. Broadly speaking, Said conceptualized Orientalism as a discursive structure standing on a foundation of an internally consistent cluster of cumulative knowledge on the Orient, which, by definition, presents it with its ideological and hegemonic character. Together with others criticizing Eurocentric universalism, his game-changing book *Orientalism* brought along both appraisals, affirmative elaborations and harsh criticisms, which all together provided grounds for a grand debate in post-colonial theory.

The research statement of this study requires an understanding on Said's Orientalism, which can also be referred to as classic or ideological Orientalism, and on criticisms made peculiarly from the perspective of sexual difference. Therefore, the following section is devoted to elaborating on Said's conceptualization of Orientalism, categorization of different Orientalisms, major critiques of his theorization, and eventually Said's response to criticisms.

2.2. Said's Orientalism

Edward Said, in his cutting-edge work *Orientalism*, suggests several interdependent meanings for Orientalism. The first one is the academic one; academics who are preoccupied with the Orient are Orientalists, and what they do is called Orientalism. Secondly, for Said, Orientalism is a style of thought based upon a distinction between the Orient and the Occident. This style of thought that is the end-product of the envisions of Orientalist writers, painters and so forth can be traced in literary or artistic works of many. The continuous interplay between the academic and the rather imagination-based Orientalism has brought along a broader understanding of Orientalism. Regarding the Orient as "a system of representations"²⁹ constructed and surrounded by political power and all the (power-related) mechanisms it hosts, Said came up with a third meaning of Orientalism as an institutional entity producing and

²⁹ Said, 1979, 203.

propagating knowledge on the Orient and, in the final analysis, “a Western style for dominating, reconstructing, and having authority over the Orient.”³⁰

As can be clearly detected, Said’s definition of different but interdependent types of Orientalism is characterized as follows; (1) a tangible, say, scientific one, the object of which is the Orient(al), (2) a rather imaginary and tempting one, and (3) an overtly constructive, dominative, and possessive one. Elaborating on the third type of Orientalism which he cultivated out of the first two, Said argues that any depiction or image of the Orient cannot be free from the cultural distortions of the colonial era when the ruling West was the only speaking subject and the Orient was the object of it, positioned as the subaltern. Labelled as frail, irrational, and feminine, as an outcome of the works of the Orientalists, the Orient is the absolute Other of the West and the ‘site of a projected identity that the West is unwilling to recognize as its own.’³¹ This reductionist and essentialist designation is a justification for the Western description of the Self (namely of itself) as strong, rational, and masculine, which accordingly legitimized its ‘civilizing’ role.

Said’s account on the legitimation of European civilizing power via a (re)presentation of an Other is based on Foucault’s theorization on the discursive formation of the subject at the crossroads of knowledge and power.³² Deploying Foucault’s notion of discourse, Said contends that one cannot understand Orientalism in depth without considering it as a discourse:

“My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. Moreover, so authoritative a position did Orientalism have that I believe no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism.”³³

As can be derived from the citation, for Said, there is neither a zero point of analysis which could be free of all the descriptions in the context of Orientalism nor an Oriental subject that could be free of the formations that come up by the exercise of power. Elaborating on the assumption that neither the Orient nor the Occident is an ‘inert fact

³⁰ Said, 1979, 3.

³¹ Shahidha Bari, Robert Eaglestone, “Orientalism”, **The Encyclopedia of Literary and Cultural Theory**, Volume III (UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2011): 756-757.

³² *ibid.*, 756-757.

³³ Said, 1979, 3.

of nature,' Said suggests that the geographical sites "Orient" and "Occident" are nothing more than the products of human-made history and the Orient is 'an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West.'³⁴ Identifying that the formation and designation of the Orient as the Other is in fact a preoccupation of the Occident with its self-formation, Said concludes that these 'two geographical entities support and to an extent reflect each other.'³⁵

Beside the context he borrowed from Foucault, Said refers to the concept of "hegemony" by Gramsci, explaining how the representations of the Orient in the Orientalist medium take on a textual attitude as an accumulation of cultural and political images.³⁶ This theorization is based on three qualifications of Orientalism that Said proposes in *Orientalism*. The first qualification is the acknowledgement of the fact that the Orient is not merely an idea with no reference to reality and that he is preoccupied not with the congruence between Orientalism and the Orient but with the internal consistency in Orientalist thought.³⁷ The Orientalist texts are internally consistent regardless of an existence of conflict between reality and the text, and this consistency is what grants Orientalism a systematic, permanent, rooted and resilient character. Secondly, Said suggests that in order to understand ideas, cultures, and histories, there is a need for examining the power structures inherent to them and such an understanding cannot be attained simply with an explication that the Orient is created or 'Orientalized.' Rather, "the relationship between the Occident and the Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony."³⁸ Orientalist thought hereby expanded to the general culture and settled down as a system of knowledge in Western culture and consciousness. So the third qualification is that Orientalism, operating through Gramscian 'consent' within culture, occupies a hegemonic position in the Western intellect.³⁹

³⁴ *ibid.*, 5,

³⁵ *ibid.*, 5.

³⁶ Fatma Senem Güngör, "Oryantalizm ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin Ortadoğu'ya Bakışının Sinemaya Yansımaları" (PhD Thesis, Hacettepe University, Institute of Social Sciences, 2011), 33.

³⁷ Said, 1979, 5-7.

³⁸ *ibid.*, 5-7.

³⁹ *ibid.*, 5-7.

This analysis on the indistinguishable hegemony of Orientalist thought brings about another categorization what Said calls *latent* orientalism, “an almost unconscious (and certainly an untouchable) positivity” other than *manifest* orientalism, “the various stated views about Oriental society, languages, literatures, history, sociology, and so forth.”⁴⁰ The manifest components of Orientalism are the tangible forms of Orientalism that might come in varying characters depending on time and place, which means the manifest components undergo historical change. On the other hand, the latent elements which constitute the fundamental framework of Orientalism make it time-independent and identify it as a discourse.

No discourse occupies a steady state, and the way the West conceives of and produces knowledge on the Orient has undergone many transformations throughout the course of time. However, these changes predominantly occur in the explicit manifestations of Orientalism, their backbone, which is comprised of latent aspects of it, remaining more or less constant. Meyda Yeğenoğlu asserts that it is this latency that makes Orientalism doctrinal and taken for granted⁴¹ regardless of transformations that time, geography and circumstances bring about. She points out to the shifting articulations of Orientalism which in fact serves to a fixation of its discursive unity:

“If the legacy of Orientalism is with us today, and if it has been able to survive despite the collapse of empires, it is because it has articulated itself differently in each instance. As an unconscious memory it reappears through displacement, association, disruption; it intersects with newly emerging discourses. Each intersection, each interruption and displacement does in fact multiply and complicate as much as it fixes the discursive unity of Orientalism.”⁴²

As it can be interpreted from what Yeğenoğlu states, Orientalism prevails no matter what the conjuncture is as it is not about identifying singular alignments or discrepancies between the representation or depiction of the Orient and reality but about tracing and shedding light on how the latency of Orientalism and its textual attitude help secure its discursive integrity in each instance. What is supposed to be suppressed within the multi-meaningful and multi-layered signification system indeed has outlets in every moment of the text and the image.

Much has been said about Said’s Orientalism, and the analyses, elaborations, and criticisms altogether have led to the cultivation of different types or interpretations of

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 206.

⁴¹ Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial*, 34.

⁴² *ibid.*, 71-72.

Orientalism. Among these, there is one stand which places sexual difference in perspective and examines the way the Orientalist discourse categorizes the Oriental as the Other in line with the way the male-dominant discourse signifies the female as the Other. This perspective is instrumental in the quest for an Orientalist gaze in the films analyzed in this study.

2.3. A Visit to Orientalism from the Perspective of Sexual Difference

In *Colonial Fantasies*, Yeğenoğlu criticizes Said for underestimating the centrality of sexual difference in his analysis as he did not examine the Orientalist discourse in a psychoanalytical context although his definition of manifest and latent types of Orientalism is actually analogous with ‘manifest and latent content’ of dreams in psychoanalysis. She asserts that psychoanalysis cannot be the one and the only method to examine Orientalism; however, it is instrumental in understanding the complex practices that are the building stones of Orientalism considering that the discursive formation of otherness is always sexualized.⁴³ She explains from a feminist viewpoint that modern humanism is a discourse in which ‘woman’ is marked as the ‘other’ and ‘different’ with characteristics like sensitive, fragile, unreasonable, and dependent while the subject position is left empty to be occupied by ‘man’ as a universal norm. In this formulization, the ‘other’ is positioned as the body that lacks the characteristics of the subject.

Yeğenoğlu argues that this subject-positioning applies to colonial discourse as well. In colonial discourse, the Oriental is constructed and marked as the negative, and the Other of the Occidental. In this manner, contrary to the dominant and modern West, the East is associated with the submissive and the pre-modern. In this context, the Orient is marked as the female/feminized ‘other,’ and the empty space of the subject is occupied by the masculine West with all its characteristics defined as the opposite of the Oriental. As a congruent point, Helen Carr argues that in colonial discourse non-Europeans and women share the same symbolic space characterized by being

“either ripe for government, passive, child-like, unsophisticated, needing leadership and guidance, described always in terms of lack—no initiative, no intellectual powers, no perseverance; or outside society, dangerous, treacherous, emotional, inconstant, wild,

⁴³ Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial*, 37.

threatening, fickle, sexually aberrant, irrational, near animal, lascivious, disruptive, evil, unpredictable.”⁴⁴

Carr’s analysis is based on a correlation between the masculinized Western modern subject as opposed to the feminized Orient. In this context, the Orient is characterized by all the inferiorities and negativities attributed to the female gender. However, the significations in this analysis cannot be thought of as being simply confined to a male/female dichotomy. Rather, this approach suggests that the power-relations inherent to subject-positioning in terms of sexual difference and representations in its extension should not be ignored in an analysis of Orientalism.

This brings about a further problematization of Orientalism on the trajectory of sexual difference: the positioning of the Western male/female and the Oriental male/female vis-à-vis the power relations between and among them. In his article *The Orientalization of Gender*, Md. Mahmudul Hasan points out to the shifting positions of the male and female subjects in the Orientalist representations of Islam and Muslims as follows:

“Western men (Christians) are adventurous, gallant, energetic, saviors, and rescuers, whereas eastern men (Muslims) are lethargic, slothful, inactive, oppressors of women, and readily concede to Western heroes. Colonialists may appear old, decrepit, and fragile at home, but not in the colonies. We see this pattern in the colonialist account of women as well. Whatever their actual status in the metropolitan society, Western women in the colonies should always have the image of difference and presence: difference from Eastern women and the presence of rights denied to Eastern women.”⁴⁵

So, there is no essential, unified, and fixed position attributed to any subject; all the subject-positioning takes place within a power/knowledge economy on a foundation of difference. What prevails is the objectifying, otherizing, and/or Orientalizing relation. While a Western woman is given the position of the inferior female at home, she might manifest as an embodiment of dominance against men in a different geography which is considered lower rank in terms of civilization. Much the same, an Eastern man might be the statue of masculine power at home; however, he might readily be overthrown by the superior colonialist, which eventually silences and passivizes him.

⁴⁴ Helen Carr, “Woman/Indian, the “American” and his Others” (1985) in F. Barker, P. Hulme, M. Iversen, D. Loxley, **Europe and Its Others**, Volume 2 (Colchester: University of Essex Press): 46–60 in Ania Loomba, **Colonialism Postcolonialism**, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2015), 160.

⁴⁵ Md. Mahmudul Hasan, “The Orientalization of Gender”, **The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences**, vol. 22, no. 4, (Fall, 2005): 35.

Providing a perspective which diversifies typical male-female dichotomy, Ania Loomba, in *Colonialism, Postcolonialism* points out to a different aspect of analyzing Orientalism in the context of sexual difference. Underlining the fact that Europeans were in the beseeching position in front of Asian rulers during the Renaissance, they could not locate themselves as the ‘male deflowerers of a feminised land.’⁴⁶ This situation led to the emergence of alternative discursive strategies through which the Oriental male ‘was portrayed as homosexual, or else depicted as a lusty villain from whom the virile but courteous European could rescue the native (or the European) woman.’⁴⁷ The portrayal of the Oriental male as homosexuals (as an alternative to the ‘potent despot’ label applied) mentioned in Loomba’s argument, was more than a capricious depiction of the weak of the era and has lingered strongly in Orientalist discourse. It is, as the phrase goes, default in colonial discourse to associate the Orient with exoticism, perversity and destruction; on the other side of the story, the Orient also seems to be the site with which suppressed homosexual desires can be associated and satisfied. In *Homoerotics of Orientalism*, Allen Joseph Boone suggests that

“... the phantasmic intensity with which Western imaginations have associated the Muslim world with male homoeroticism is noteworthy; no other geographical domain onto which the Anglo-European gaze has fixed its sometimes imperial, sometimes covetous, sometimes simply curious eye has been so associated with the specter of male-male sexuality over the centuries.”⁴⁸

The homoeroticism of the Oriental overtly serves as a rupture to Western orthodoxy, and in this sense, Oriental exoticism is the subject of seduction and subversion. “Within Western fantasies of the “Orient” lies the potential for unexpected eruptions of sex between men that, however temporarily, disrupt European norms of masculinity and heterosexual priority.”⁴⁹ On homoeroticism of the Oriental, Edward Said suggested that the colonies had more to offer than raw materials to the West: “Just as the various colonial possessions -quite apart from their economic benefit to metropolitan Europe- ... the Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe”.⁵⁰ However, Said reminds the reader that this is out of scope in his analysis

⁴⁶ Ania Loomba, *Colonialism Postcolonialism*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2015), 154.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 154.

⁴⁸ Allen Joseph Boone, *Homoerotics of Orientalism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), preface xx.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, preface xviii.

⁵⁰ Janet Afary, Kevin Anderson, *Foucault and the Iranian Revolution: Gender and the Seductions of Islamism*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 289.

of Orientalism. Accordingly, Ronald Hyam argues that the colonies were a location for the “revenge of the repressed,” a place for ejaculations that European males were denied at home.⁵¹ Allen Joseph Boone explores this issue in greater detail and writes, “For many Western men the act of exploring, writing about, and theorizing an eroticized Near East is coterminous with unlocking a Pandora’s box of phantasmic homoerotic desire”.⁵² The image of the beautiful boy as an object of male desire, the fantasies of the *hamam* as a private space for male erotic encounters, and the male dancer are among the principle similes in depictions of Middle Eastern homoeroticism.⁵³ The men’s hamam, in particular, manifests as a site of potential homoeroticism, which is quite a scandalous element for the Western narratives. And the dancing boy, with his posture and look defying all the heteronormativities of the West, both causes disturbance and holds an appeal for the orthodox Western eye.

In conclusion, from the perspective of sexual difference, Orientalism is in line with dominant masculine power in modern societies as the West feminizes and/or homoeroticizes the Oriental. Analogical with the female or feminized body, “the Orient serves as the site of mixed feelings, attraction and repulsion; intimacy and a sense of distance.”⁵⁴ Harem (seraglio) and hamam as hubs of sensuality and perversion, and naked or half-naked Oriental male or female body as the objects of voyeur are leitmotifs of Orientalist narratives and representations as very well-illustrated by the 18th and 19th century literary and artistic works.

2.4. The Emergence of Orientalist Iconography in Art

Orientalism is so extensive a phenomenon that the textual attitude it embodies can be traced not only in written works of academic studies or literature but also in architecture and fine arts. The great interest of the West in Eastern cultures that had always appealed to it became evident in the rapid increase of the number of Western painters who were indulged in painting what belongs to the Orient in the 19th century

⁵¹ *ibid.*, 289.

⁵² Joseph Boone, “Vacation Cruises; Or, Homoerotics of Orientalism”, **Postcolonial, Queer: Theoretical Intersections**, eds. John C. Hawley, Dennis Altman (Albany: State University of New York, 2001): 50.

⁵³ Boone, **Homoerotics**, 51.

⁵⁴ Billie Melman, **Women’s Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718–1918: Sexuality, Religion and Work**, (London: MacMillan, 1992), 5.

when Orientalism was institutionalized in every field.⁵⁵ Ali Asker Bal states that the features cultivated by Orientalist painters can be categorized as (1) ‘the ones with figured compositions like war and hunt, the eroticized harem, bath (hamam), and dance and (2) landscapes like archeological sites and city views under the influence of ancient architecture and Islamic architecture.’⁵⁶ In the 19th century, many painters of the West, especially French and British, including Delacroix, Gerôme, Ingres, Gros, and Holman Hunt painted the Orient. Palace, ceremonies, seraglio (harem), bath (hamam), slave markets, and views of Istanbul were so appealing for the Orientalist painters and many of them painted eroticized, lethargic odalisques and seraglios with all their mysticism.⁵⁷ Some popular examples are *Grande Odalisque* (1814), *Odalisque with Slave* (1839), and *Turkish Bath* (1862) (See Figure 1) by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, *The Massacre at Chios* (1824), *The Death of Sardanapalus* (1827) and *The Women of Algiers* (1834) by Eugene Delacroix, *Le Harem* (1852) by Theodore Chasseriau, *Bataille d'Aboukir* (1799) by Antoine-Jean Gros, and *The Lantern Maker's Courtship* (1860) by William Holman Hunt.



Figure 1: Turkish Bath (1862) by Ingres

<https://www.louvre.fr/en/mediamages/le-bain-turc> © 2007 Musée du Louvre / Angèle Dequier

⁵⁵ Semra Germaner, Zeynep İnankur, **Oryantalizm ve Türkiye**, (İstanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Yayınları, 1989), 52.

⁵⁶ Ali Asker Bal, “Oryantalist Resimde Bedenin Kolonileştirilmesi Bağlamında “Türk Hamamı” İmgesi”, **Çevrimiçi Tematik Türkoloji Dergisi**, 2.2, (2010): 13-23.

⁵⁷ Semra Germaner, Zeynep İnankur, **Oryantalistlerin İstanbul’u**, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2002), 39.

Seraglio, bath and slave market representations mostly did not depend on observation, which was evident in French painters' using French models in their Paris studios upon discovering the fact that Muslim women did not model.⁵⁸ Antoine-Jean Gros, who never travelled to Egypt, created prototypes of Eastern sceneries, costumes and faces which will be of great influence for the entire century he lived in and beyond.⁵⁹ Kömeçoğlu states that when those painters who travelled to the Orient in order to directly observe the Oriental life could not find what their predecessors painted, they turned the models that they had referred to by that time into fanciful constructs.⁶⁰ This trend attracted so much attention and became so widespread that it gained a textual attitude and from then on, most of the visual imagery retaining to the Orient reflected the imagination and the fantasies of the Western artists. 20th century works of art like *Blue Nude (Souvenir of Biskra)* (1907) and *Odalisque with Raised Arms* (1923) by Henri Matisse and *Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907) by Pablo Picasso most of which were created using the previous paintings and the literary texts as reference, had the overtones of stereotyped imagery of the Orient(al).

Serpil Kirel states that in Jean-Leon Gerôme's paintings on the Orient some of which he produced taking the photographs of Topkapı Palace as reference, one can observe the predominance of women and seraglio.^{61*} Among these paintings are *Harem in the Kiosk* (1870), *The Sentinel at the Sultan's Tomb* (1880), *The Terrace of the Seraglio* (1898), and *The Harem Bathing* (1901).⁶² Kirel asserts that the nudity and how it is given in Gerome's paintings, as evident in *The Hookah Lighter* (1898), is important in that they are compositions reinforcing "voyeuristic" pleasure.⁶³ Allen Boone defines another well-known painting by Gerôme, *The Snake Charmer* (1880) (See Figure 2)

⁵⁸ Meryem Köse, Meryem Küçük, "Oryantalizm ve Öteki Algısı", **Sosyal ve Kültürel Araştırmalar Dergisi (The Journal of Social and Cultural Studies)**, vol. 1, issue: 1 (2015): 114.

⁵⁹ ibid. 114.

⁶⁰ Uğur Kömeçoğlu, "Oryantalizm, Belirsizlik, Tahayyül, 11 Eylül", *Doğu Batı Dergisi.*, 20-II. (2011): 46 in Meryem Köse, Meryem Küçük, "Oryantalizm ve Öteki Algısı", **Sosyal ve Kültürel Araştırmalar Dergisi (The Journal of Social and Cultural Studies)**, vol. 1, issue: 1 (2015): 114.

⁶¹ Serpil Kirel, **Kültürel Çalışmalar ve Sinema**, (İstanbul: Kırmızı Kedi Yayınevi, 2010), 441.

*Kirel also points out to a possible influence Gerôme might have been on his two students from the Orient, Osman Hamdi Bey and Şeker Ali Paşa, and suggests examining their paintings in terms of self-Orientalism or Oriental Orientalism.

⁶² Semra Germaner, Zeynep İnankur, *Oryantalizm ve Türkiye*, (İstanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Yayınları, 1989) in Serpil Kirel, **Kültürel Çalışmalar ve Sinema**, (İstanbul: Kırmızı Kedi Yayınevi, 2010): 441.

⁶³ Kirel, 2010, 441.

which is also the cover of Said's book *Orientalism*, as "the century's most famous example of the convergence of homoeroticism and visual Orientalism."⁶⁴ This painting does have the overtones of homoeroticism of the Oriental and it can be argued that it puts both the lookers in the painting itself and the viewers of the painting in the position of a "voyeur" indulging themselves in the pleasure of looking at a naked boy.

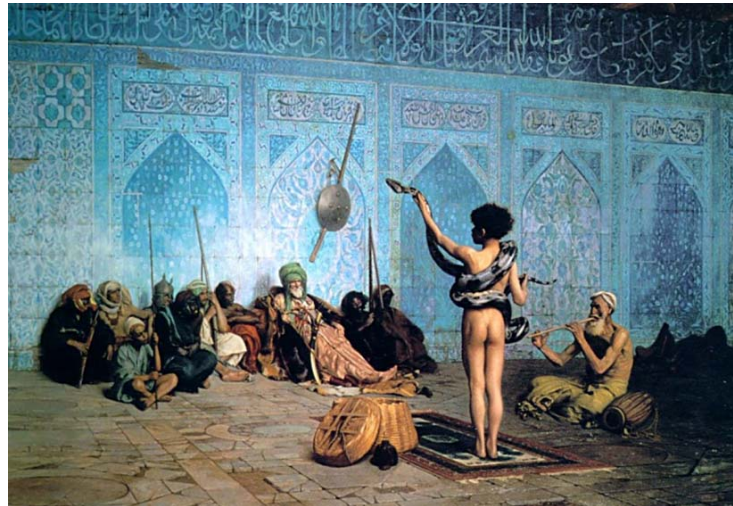


Figure 2: The Snake Charmer (1880) by Gerôme

<http://sites.middlebury.edu/amst0210a/2013/03/08/orientalism/>

As two important elements of the Oriental cultures, hamam and dancing boys have always appealed to Western curiosity and associated with non-straight sensuality. A hamam or Turkish bath is a public space for cleansing through full body wash (also as part of the religious practice of ablution) and relaxation through massage. Apart from the modern ones, hamams have separate chambers for men and women. Women's chambers are also hubs for socializing and entertainment. The masseurs who help wash clients by soaping and scrubbing their bodies are called *natır* (for females) and *tellak* (for males) in Turkish. Throughout the Ottoman period, the *tellaks* were selected from among non-Muslim subjects of the empire, as the practice of washing somebody was considered as beneath the dignity of a Muslim. In the early 20th century, the role of *tellak* boys was handed over to adult attendants.⁶⁵ Although the codes of sensuality and sexuality attributed to hamam culture were quite common and were re-produced

⁶⁴ Boone, *Homoerotics*, 341.

⁶⁵ Orhan Yılmazkaya, Deniz Oğurlu, *A Light onto a Tradition and Culture: Turkishbaths, A Guide to The Historic Turkish Baths of Istanbul*, 2nd ed. (Çitlembik, 2006), ISBN 978-975 6663-80-6, <https://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Turkish+bath> [26.03.2019].

in various illustrations and paintings, Burkay Pasin states that depictions of male homosexuality was not common in Turkish art and homosexuality was exclusively associated with *tellak* boys.⁶⁶ As the other cultural components which have been the object of Western curiosity with their bizarreness, male belly dancers were quite popular throughout the Middle East and Ottoman Empire.

These male dancers performing in feminine costumes (*köçek*, *zenne*, or *rakkas*) emerged in the 19th century when it was considered inappropriate for a woman to dance in public.⁶⁷ Joanna Mansbridge argues that “young *köçeks* performed in the palace and participated in the culture of pederasty practiced there.”⁶⁸ Potentials for male homosexuality in the Orient, generally associated with men’s hamams, particularly specific to the effeminate young *tellak* boys, and dancing boys (or *köçeks*), is illustrated in samples from both Eastern and Western works of art, which can be seen in Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6. In Figures 3 and 4, both the young *tellak* and the boys illustrated dancing in hamam are the passive objects of active male gaze. In that, *Huban-ı Tellak* (See Figure 3) by Enderunlu Fazıl and the illustration of dancing boys in a hamam (See Figure 4) by Münif Fehim Özerman are representations that “are coded with a heteronormative conception of sexuality, in which the men who appear to have the potential for homosexual relationships are identified according to their sex-roles as active/passive, conforming to the male/female dichotomy, in which the passive male is considered an effeminate homosexual.”⁶⁹ Notwithstanding the fact that the hamam illustrations from French art (See Figures 5 and 6) differ from these two, they do stand on an active – passive dichotomy, in that they both illustrate the passive bathers in nude as opposed to the half-naked *tellaks*.

⁶⁶ Burkay Pasin, “A Critical Reading of The Ottoman-Turkish Hamam As a Representational Space of Sexuality”, *METU JFA*, 33:2, (2016/2): 133.

⁶⁷ Judith Lynne Hanna, **Dance, Sex, and Gender: Signs of Identity, Dominance, Defiance, and Desire**, (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988) in Joanna Mansbridge, “Fantasies of Exposure: Belly Dancing, the Veil, and the Drag of History”, *The Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 49, no. 1 (2016): 38.

⁶⁸ Joanna Mansbridge, “Fantasies of Exposure: Belly Dancing, the Veil, and the Drag of History”, **The Journal of Popular Culture**, vol. 49, no. 1 (2016): 38.

⁶⁹ Pasin, 2016, 121-138.

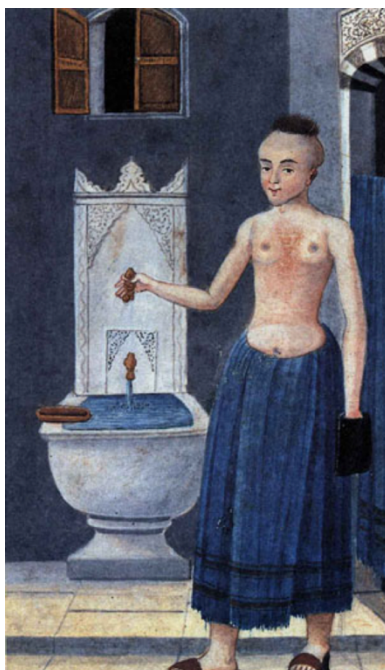


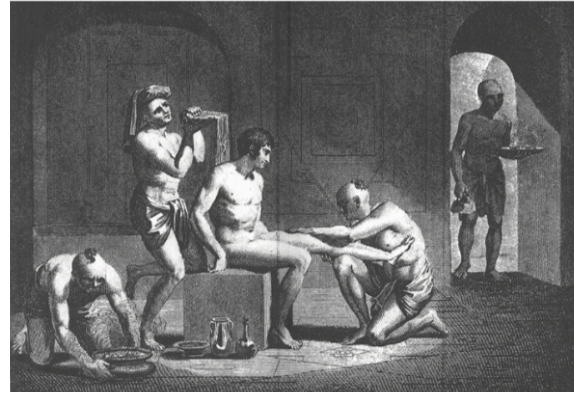
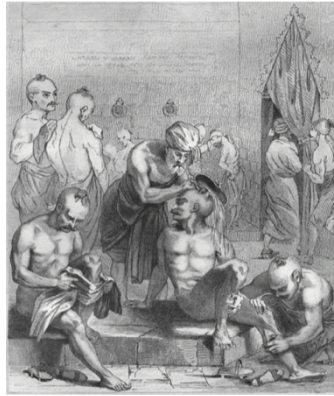
Figure 3: Huban-ı Tellak (1793) - an illustration in Fazıl Bey's Hubanname

Allen Joseph Boone, *Homoerotics of Orientalism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 79.



Figure 4: The illustration of dancing boys by Münif Fehim Özerman

Burkay Pasin, *A Critical Reading of The Ottoman-Turkish Hamam As a Representational Space of Sexuality*, METU JFA 2016/2 (33:2), 133.



Figures 5 & 6: Illustrations of hamam from French art

Left: Lithograph from page of unidentified French travel volume. *Right:* Illustration in Vivant Denon, *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt* (1803)

Allen Joseph Boone, **Homoerotics of Orientalism**, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 84.

The works of these artists are important in that they depend on first-hand observation and have documentary quality. Münif Fehim Özerman, born (1899) and died (1983) in İstanbul, embarked on a career as a screenwriter and a journalist; however, what he made a name for himself with was his illustrations. He has come to be known as one of the corner stones of publishing and graphic design history with book covers and magazine and book illustrations. Feyza Yıldırım states that illustrating historical themes and life in Istanbul, his works were also of documentary quality.⁷⁰ Vivant Denon, born (1747) and died (1825) in France was a French artist, archaeologist, and museum official who played an important role in the development of the Louvre collection. His sketches of the monuments and illustrations of daily life in Egypt where he went with Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798 were published in his *Travels in Lower and Upper Egypt* (1802).⁷¹ Enderunlu Fazıl was born in the city of Acre (now in the northern part of Israel) in 1757 and died (1810) in İstanbul. Following his father's and grandfather's death upon their riot against Abdülhamid I, he travelled to Istanbul with his sibling. He acquired influence with his talent in poetry and gazelle in the Ottoman

⁷⁰ Feyza Yıldırım, "Münif Fehim", TSA, <http://www.tsa.org.tr/tr/kisi/kisibio/17/munif-fehim> [6.04.2019].

⁷¹ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, "Dominique Vivant, Baron Denon", Encyclopedia Britannica (last updated April 23, 2019), <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Dominique-Vivant-Baron-Denon> [23.04.2019].

Empire. His eminent works are “Divân”, “Defter-i Aşk”, “Hûbânnâme”, “Zenânnâme” and “Çengînâme.” In **Hûban-nâme** (The Book of Beautiful Boys), he depicts the sexual and physical characteristics of young men from different nations of the world. In **Çengi-nâme** (The Book of Dancers), also known as **Rakkâsnâme**, Fâzıl depicts the famous dancing boys in İstanbul.⁷² The narrations and illustrations of beautiful men and women in his works were found so sensational that they were banned in the Ottoman. The quest for an Orientalist standpoint in these particular works brings us to a point where we can recognize the latency of Orientalism. It is obvious that not only the Western but also the Eastern artists of influence were preoccupied with putting the sensational iconography on canvas and poets with obtrusive narrations on paper.

A problematic emerges here on whether to consider each single work that depicts the Orient(al) as Orientalist. The answer to this question can be found in Said’s categorization on manifest and latent Orientalism as well as the internal consistency of the phenomenon. That is to say, whether it be a product of imagination or observation, what is kept at the forefront is what is woven with exotism. Besides, no matter how fractional the manifest can be, the latent is intrinsic and unitary.

2.5. Reflections of Orientalism on the Cinemas of the West and the Overtones of Orientalist Discourse in Turkey’s Cinema

Cinema is a collection of codes which operate on the subjectivities embodied in spectatorship. The effect expositied by the look of the camera possesses the cinematic image. As Serpil Kirel states in *Kültürel Çalışmalar ve Sinema*, “When a look turns into an action within which power relations and power patterns can be organized and seeing is used intentionally, what we have is no longer a look but a gaze.”⁷³ She contends that when the way the gaze is organized is examined thoroughly departing from how it shapes the positions of the looker and the looked, it turns into a cultural material which embodies very important cues about representation. The intentional and organized look of the camera turns into a gaze which shapes the dynamics of representation and spectatorship.

⁷² Ömer Utku Kahraman, “Osmanlının Sansasyonel Çocuğu: Enderunlu Fâzıl” (May 10, 2015), <https://sanatkaravani.com/osmanlinin-sansasyonel-cocugu-enderunlu-fazil/> [7.04.2019].

⁷³ Kirel, 2010, 137.

Michel Foucault argues that “the gaze is not faithful to truth, nor subject to it, without asserting, at the same time, a supreme mastery: the gaze that sees is a gaze that dominates; and although it also knows how to subject itself, it dominates its masters.”⁷⁴ So the gaze of the camera politically constructs the spectator’s look at the projection via an impression of reality, and this look, which has turned into a gaze now, abidingly shapes and dominates its beholder. Identifying with the camera, the spectator is what projects and being projected at the same time.

The inherent voyeurism or the ‘desire to see’ in the practice of going to films puts the spectator directly in the position of the looker and this is essential in understanding his/her identification with the one and the only power device, that is the camera. With regard to filmic texts, Laura Mulvey points to three different types of look, which explain how films in conventional cinema are viewed in accordance with phallogentrism. The first one accounts for the camera, the second one describes the engagement of the audience in the movie, and the third corresponds to the one involved in the interaction between the characters of a movie. Mulvey argues that in traditional narrative cinema, the filmic text is organized in a way that the spectator always identifies with the male protagonist who stands as the manifestation of power and the controller of events. The female is positioned as the passive object of the voyeuristic male gaze. So the looks of the camera and the spectator are subordinated to the intra-diegetic male gaze with the aim of reinforcing the voyeuristic pleasure and serve for the neurotic needs of the male ego, which traditional cinema relies on.⁷⁵ What goes beyond this kind of identification is an identification with the camera, in which the spectator’s subjective look is taken over by the gaze of the camera. In that, the look exposed in the act of watching a movie and in a movie itself is patriarchal and phallogentric as it represents the active and scopophilic male gaze the object of which is passivized and feminine. Laura Mulvey suggests that “the position of the spectators in the cinema is blatantly one of repression of their exhibitionism and projection of the repressed desire on to the performer.”⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Michel Foucault, **The Birth of The Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception**, trans. A. M. Sheridan (London: Routledge, 2003), 39.

⁷⁵ Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975): 17, **Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings**, eds. Leo Braudy, Marshall Cohen, 7th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 716.

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, 698.

In reference to Luce Irigaray, Kirel argues that investing into gaze is disproportionately prioritized along gender lines.⁷⁷ Accordingly, Laura Mulvey suggests that “in a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between the active/male and the passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure who is constructed accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*.”⁷⁸ The way of seeing inherent in this type of spectatorship, then, is of masculine orientation and it serves for the pleasure male ego takes from voyeurism. The female figure in Mulvey’s argument can be elaborated to an extent to include/correspond to anybody or anything considered as the Other. So, the gaze inherent in all ways of seeing is a manifestation of power and is organized so as to objectify and dominate.

Orientalist gaze is a term used in the field of Orientalism studies as a metaphor to refer to the way in which the Orientalist discourse envisions and depicts the Orient. An Orientalist gaze envisions the Other as being vulgar, awkward, immoral, and dangerous—or exotic and inferior.⁷⁹ The Orientalist gaze is also associated with the “male gaze,” which looks on the (Oriental) Other as being sensual, feminine, an object of both desire and revulsion, and again exotic and inferior. In colonial discourse, the Orient is inherently phantasmatic and the Western eye is inclined to construct the cinematic image of the eccentric Orient as a product of its Orientalist imagination.

In their article “Klasik Oryantalizm, Yeni Oryantalizm ve Oksidentalizm Söylemi Ekseninde Sinemada Değişen "Ben" ve "Öteki" Algısı” Baykal & Önal suggest that the representation of the Orient in the field of fine arts as an “object of desire” fits into Said’s account on latent orientalism:

“The clichés like silk, incense, the odalisques dancing in a dim and exotic atmosphere, the harem full of most beautiful women, and veil (mostly kitsch as possible) posed in all of those films that turn the East into an object of desire corresponds exactly to the representation of the East woven with sexual images, subconscious fantasies, desires, fear, and dreams Said points out to in his definition of latent orientalism.”⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Kirel, 2010, 138.

⁷⁸ Mulvey, Visual Pleasure, 715.

⁷⁹ “Orientalist Gaze”, Orientalism Studies, <http://www.orientalismstudies.com> [28.03.2019].

⁸⁰ Hülya Önal, Kemal Cem Baykal, “Klasik Oryantalizm, Yeni Oryantalizm ve Oksidentalizm Söylemi Ekseninde Sinemada Değişen "Ben" ve "Öteki" Algısı”, *ZfWT* vol. 3, no.3 (2011): 109-110.

As Baykal & Önal suggests, the Orientalist discourse might manifest in cultural products in such different representations as of the veiled women or dim spaces; however, the structure underlying the politically veiled realm of consciousness is more or less constant and internally consistent as defined by latent Orientalism. Serpil Kirel states that “It is easier to see behind the composition that dominates the picture by always being aware of the visible or invisible existence of power in cultural products and by pursuing small details and traces about representation.”⁸¹ The Orientalist discourse takes its place in various forms of representation in the cinematic territory, particularly produced in but not necessarily limited to the cinemas of the West. Directors from the Orient have shot films with a perfectly stereotypical view on the Oriental, proving how internalized the Eurocentric discourse is.

Ella Shohat contends that “the ‘birth’ of cinema itself coincided with the imperialist moment, when diverse colonized civilizations were already shaping their conflicting identities vis-a-vis their colonizers.”⁸² To build an analogy between Plato’s cave and Orientalist point of view in films, like the prisoners’ taking their own shadows reflected on the wall of the cave as their reality, the Oriental sees its projection on the screen via the light permeated by the West. Where the Oriental resides is dim, and the light comes from behind, the enlightened and bright West. The Oriental sees its reflection, and deceived by this illusion of reality, identifies with what it is made to see. The Oriental is “the victim of the illusion of reality.”⁸³ One of the ‘realities’ that the Orientalist illusion constructs and attaches to the cinematic imagery of the Orient is mysticism. Ella Shohat contends that “the cinematic Orient is best epitomized by an iconography of Papyrus, Sphinxes, and Mummies, whose existence and revival depend on the ‘look’ and ‘reading’ of the Westerner.”⁸⁴ The Orient, from a historiographical perspective, is defined as ancient and mysterious, so the Orient becomes available to be discovered, understood and defined, and the mysteries of the

⁸¹ Kirel, 2010, 154.

⁸² Ella Shohat, “Gender and Culture of Empire: Toward a Feminist Ethnography of the Cinema”, **Quarterly Review of Film and Video**, vol: 13, issue:1-3 (1991): 51, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10509209109361370> [07.03.2019].

⁸³ Jean-Louis Baudry, “The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to The Impression of Reality in Cinema”, **Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings**, eds. Leo Braudy, Marshall Cohen, 7th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 174.

⁸⁴ Shohat, **Gender and Culture**, 51.

Orient are there to be unveiled by the heroic Westerners. The Orient hereby becomes the object of the male Western gaze. It is associated with the feminine or the enigmatic, and in that, it turns both into an object of desire and, with its mystery, a threat to the solidity of the West.

Accordingly, in the arena of the Western film industry, the Oriental Other has been portrayed stereotypically as “exotic, frequently threatening and dangerous, often erotic and seductive, sometimes enticing, and generally garishly splendid.”⁸⁵ Orientalists have also envisioned and created images of Orientals intensely sensuous and sexual—including the homoerotic.⁸⁶ Baykal & Önal give an account of some films that the traces of fantasies shaped by a tendency to unaccountable free sexuality can be seen. In the narratives of such movies as *Arabian Nights* (1942), *Ali Baba and Forty Thieves* (1944), *Cobra Woman* (1944) and *Sinbad The Sailor* (1947) the Orient is garnished with an exaggerated flamboyance, mystery, and passion,⁸⁷ serving perfectly to the hegemonic discourse of Orientalism which locates the Oriental as the object of suppressed Western desires.

In her article *Gender and Culture of Empire: Toward a Feminist Ethnography of the Cinema* Ella Shohat elaborates on how Hollywood reproduces the colonialist mechanism via sexual difference by providing a detailed analysis on the films *Kismet* (1955), *Harum Scarum* (1965), and *Lawrence of Arabia* (1963).⁸⁸ The term Hollywood Orientalism is used to refer to the American film industry's dominance and influence in reflecting Orientalist discourse in cinema. Hollywood filmmakers have portrayed Arabs and Middle Easterners as exotic beings occupying the position of the evil as opposed to the Western good guys, which led to the creation of a stereotypical image of the Oriental Other.⁸⁹ In addition, films like *The Son of the Sheik* (1926), *The Garden of Allah* (1936), *Le Sang d'Allah* (1923), and *Yasmina* (1927)⁹⁰, *The Sheik* (1921), *Shangai Express* (1932), *Casablanca* (1942), *Cleopatra*

⁸⁵ “Cinematic Orientalism”, *Orientalism Studies*, <http://www.orientalismstudies.com> [07.03.2019].

⁸⁶ “Orientalist Fantasy”, *Orientalism Studies*, <http://www.orientalismstudies.com> [07.03.2019].

⁸⁷ Önal & Baykal, 2011,110.

⁸⁸ Shohat, **Gender and Culture**, 45-84.

⁸⁹ H. Hale Künüçen, Senem Güngör, “‘300’ and the Other” (2008): 188, https://www.academia.edu/996877/_300_and_the_Other [06.03.2019].

⁹⁰ Köse & Küçük, 2015, 107-127.

(1963), and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981)⁹¹ which were drawing upon the representations of Northern African and Asian cultures, reproduced all the stereotypes of traditional Orientalism and reached masses. It should be noted that the default dichotomy in Hollywood cinema is “the West and the rest”; however, the exemplary here is limited to the Oriental as the problematic of this study is a quest for Orientalist imagery in samples from Turkey’s cinema.

Hollywood has always been the major supplier of stereotypical Orientalist fantasies like seraglios, lustful slave girls, evil masters, minarets, and caravans.⁹² The two films coming to the fore in terms of their representations of seraglio and the voyeuristic gaze are *Harum Scarum* (1965) and *Kismet* (1955).⁹³ Shohat argues that Western cinema “diffused the anachronistic but still victorian obsession with sexuality through the cinematic apparatus” and “*Harum Scarum* (is) a reflexive film featuring a carnival-like Orient.”⁹⁴ Shohat explains that the seraglio imagery, with the mystery it offers, appeals to the primitive instincts of men and “authorizing a voyeuristic entrance into an inaccessible private space, the Harem dream reflects a masculinist utopia of sexual omnipotence.”⁹⁵

In her article *Hollywood Sineması'nın Yeni Oryantalist Söylemi Ve 300 Spartalı*, Zehra Yiğit provides an account of Orientalist films from the cinemas of the world, which will be summarized here. In the 1986 movie *Harem* by William Hale, the exotic Oriental women that the West dreams of are portrayed in the seraglio as a mystic and secluded site and as there is a kidnap/rescue story in the film, the Orient is also drawn as barbaric, noncivilized, and primitive. Based on events or persons from the history, films like *Alexander* (2004) and *300* (2006) portray the Orient as despotic, bigoted, underdeveloped, slaver, etc. in the framework of East/West dualism. In addition to Arab or the Middle Eastern nations being Orientalized, in films like *55 Days at Peking* (1963), *Year of the Dragon* (1985), *The Last Emperor* (1987), *Seven Years in Tibet*

⁹¹ Kirel, 2010, 454.

⁹² “Orientalist Fantasy”, *Orientalism Studies*, <http://www.orientalismstudies.com> [07.03.2019].

⁹³ Kirel, 2010, 455-456.

⁹⁴ Shohat, **Gender and Culture**, 70.

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, 70.

(1997), *The Last Samurai* (2003), the countries in the Far East are portrayed as pre-modern nations to be modernized.

Traces of Orientalism can be found not only in Hollywood cinema but also in the cinemas of Europe. Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor* (1987), *The Sheltering Sky*, and *The Little Buddha* (1993) are known as the director's Oriental trilogy. Another example is Frederic Mitterand's *Madame Butterfly* (1995) which is the story of a Western man turning an Oriental woman into his obedient subject, which reflects the idea that the Orient is an object of sexual desire for the West.⁹⁶

In his detailed study *18. Yüzyıl Batı Felsefesi'yle Yaratılan Oryantalist Türk(İye) İmajı Ve Sinemaya Yansımaları: IMDB Üzerinde Bir Analiz*, Dr. Akan Yanık analyzes 22 cinema films (See Table 1) chosen from among the Top 1000 films on IMDB (International Movie Database) in terms of Orientalist image(ry) of Turks and/or Turkey.⁹⁷ In his analysis in terms of the representation/discourse of mores and ethics, Yanık finds that the codes 'immorality', 'polygamy', 'hamam' and 'seraglio', 'free sexuality (homosexuality)', 'not being able to create/produce value, and annihilation of what is valuable' are attributed to the Turks 32 times in 9 movies. *Lawrence of Arabia* (1963), *Amadeus* (1984), *Angst Essen Seele Auf* (1974), and *Les Enfants du Paradis* (1945) are the ones that come to the fore particularly in terms of the emphasis placed on Oriental immorality and perversion.⁹⁸ In the following parts of the study, Turkey's representations/imagery in terms of location and site is analyzed. Among the most frequent codes are 'dreadful' 'pre-modern,' 'center and source of crime,' 'uncivilized,' 'threat for the West,' and 'dark and gloomy.' The movies in which these codes are most frequently used are *Angst Essen Seele Auf* (1974), and *Midnight Express* (1978).⁹⁹

In a similar study on Turkey and the Turkish imagery in American cinema in terms of Orientalist discourse, Sezai Türk and Fatih Şahinoğlu analyzes 23 films with a 'Turkish typology,' 'Turkish values,' and a 'Turkey profile' from American cinema

⁹⁶ Zehra Yiğit, "Hollywood Sineması'nın Yeni Oryantalist Söylemi ve 300 Spartalı", **Selçuk İletişim**, 5, 3 (2008): 239-245.

⁹⁷ A. Yanık, "18. Yüzyıl Batı Felsefesi'yle Yaratılan Oryantalist Türk(İye) İmajı ve Sinemaya Yansımaları: IMDB Üzerinde Bir Analiz", **International Journal of Social Science**, Doi number: <http://dx.doi.org/10.9761/JASSS3228>, Number: 43, Spring I (2016): 361-381.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, 361-381.

⁹⁹ *ibid.*, 361-381.

made in the post-1990 period. They conclude that in the films analyzed, the imagery attributed to Turkey and/or Turks is characterized by barbarism, cruelty, despoliation, despotism, tyranny, lasciviousness, immorality, irreligiousness, vulgarity, unintelligence, irrationality, ignorance, threat, and terrorism.¹⁰⁰

Table 1: The list of films analyzed in Dr. Akan Yanık's study

N	IMDB Sıra	IMDB Puan	IMDB Oylayıcı Sayısı (RV)*	Film Adı	Yıl	Ülke
1	002	9.2	1.012.909	The Godfather	1972	ABD
2	023	8.7	647.348	The Usual Suspects	1995	ABD - Almanya
3	058	8.5	5.447	The Satantango	1994	Macaristan - Almanya
4	061	8.5	168.051	Lawrence of Arabia	1962	ABD - İngiltere
5	097	8.4	237.401	Amadeus	1984	ABD
6	117	8.4	97.625	Det Sjunde Inseglet	1957	İsveç
7	153	8.3	13.293	Les Enfants Du Paradis	1945	Fransa
8	240	8.2	58.689	The Manchurian Candidate	1962	ABD
9	329	8.1	56.833	Trois Couleurs: Rouge	1994	Fransa-Polonya
10	348	8.1	10.971	Angst Essen Seele Auf	1974	Almanya
11	575	7.9	9.797	Flåklypa Grand Prix	1975	Norveç
12	593	7.9	13.359	One, Two, Three	1961	ABD
13	607	7.9	7.163	Simon	2004	Hollanda
14	617	7.9	9.690	La Grande Vadrouille	1966	Fransa-İngiltere
15	641	7.9	447.428	X-Men First Class	2011	ABD
16	689	7.8	27.153	The Day of The Jackal	1973	İngiltere-Fransa
17	755	7.8	17.876	Knockin' On Heaven's Door	1997	Almanya
18	785	7.8	60.299	Mississippi Burning	1988	ABD
19	847	7.7	60.466	Lolita	1962	ABD - İngiltere
20	865	7.7	23.668	Les Invasions Barbares	2003	Fransa-Kanada
21	902	7.7	36.786	The Producers	1967	ABD
22	945	7.6	49.489	Midnight Express	1978	ABD - İngiltere

A. Yanık, "18. Yüzyıl Batı Felsefesi'yle Yaratılan Oryantalist Türk(İye) İmajı ve Sinemaya Yansımaları: IMDB Üzerinde Bir Analiz", **International Journal of Social Science**, Doi number: <http://dx.doi.org/10.9761/JASSS3228>, Number: 43, Spring I (2016): 371.

As a recap, in movies addressing the binary opposition between the West and the East or inter-cultural encounters, the orthodoxy, devoutness, and masculinity of the West is countered by the mysterious, uncanny, dangerous, maybe sometimes eerie, and feminine or epicene East. In addition, in the cinemas of the West, the Orient is a site of phantasm that can be freely shaped by the eyes of the filmmaker, the camera, and

¹⁰⁰ M. Sezai Türk, Fatih Şahinoğlu, "The Presentation of Turkey and Turkish Image Formed in The Light of Orientalist Saying in American Cinema" **The Journal of International Civilization Studies (Uluslararası Medeniyet Çalışmaları Dergisi)**, Volume III/ Issue I ISSN: 2548-0146, Nevşehir/Turkey, <http://www.academia.edu/37777116> [08.03.2019].

the spectator as it is inherently submissive and far from speaking for itself. This serves perfectly to the constructive and dominative discourse of Orientalism.

This discourse is so effective and powerful that the cinemas of the East have come to depict itself from an Orientalist point of view, as well. The Orientalist style of thought and the political sphere of influence it has reached has apparently created its own '*Oriental Orientalists*'. This term is generally used to refer to the discourses, institutions, and practices in the Orient that reflect how their self-understanding is influenced by the Western Orientalist thinking. "The Orientals use international cultural agencies, such as the cinema, to perpetuate Orientalist understandings of their own culture and society. Generally, 'Oriental Orientalism' is considered as a subconscious, unintentional process"¹⁰¹ which is in line with the latency of Orientalism.

In Turkey's cinema, the East/West opposition has generally been given through the phenomenon of emigration, especially starting from the 1970s. Some examples are *Bir Türk'e Gönül Verdim* (1969), *Dönüş* (1972), *Otobüs* (1974), *El Kapısı* (1974), *Almanyalı Yârim* (1974), *Almanya Acı Vatan* (1979), *Gül Hasan* (1979), *Ölmez Ağacı* (1984), *Gurbetçi Şaban* (1985), *Cumartesi Cumartesi* (1985), *40m² Almanya* (1986), *Polizei* (1989), *Sahte Cennete Veda* (1989), *Umuda Yolculuk* (1990), *Sarı Mercedes* (1992), *Berlin in Berlin* (1993), *Elveda Yabancı* (1993), *Duvara Karşı* (2004), *Willkommen in Deutschland* (2011).¹⁰² In most of these films, the characters are highly stylized and the emigrated Oriental is depicted as 'backward, traditional, unsophisticated, poor, and illiterate' as opposed to the civilized, sophisticated, bourgeois, and wealthy' Western characters.

In *90'lı Yılların Türk Sinemasına Genel Bir Bakış: Şiddet, Oryantalizm ve Minimalizm*, Rıza Kıracı states that following the emigration films which dwell upon East/West opposition, in the second half of the 1990s, another point of view effective in Turkey's cinema was featuring Orientalist motives via minimalizing the story. This phenomenon was particularly characterized by the curious gaze of the West to the Orient, stylizing sites, people, social interactions, and rituals. This approach met with

¹⁰¹ "Oriental Orientalism", Orientalism Studies, <http://www.orientalismstudies.com> [07.03.2019].

¹⁰² Ömer Osmanoğlu, "Türk Sineması'nda Dış Göç Olgusu: Sosyo-Kültürel Karşılaşmalar, Kimlik Çatışması ve Yabancılaşma", *Marmara İletişim Dergisi*, issue: 25 (2016): 77-98, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315480711> [07.03.2019].

the audience via the films of directors from Turkey, living abroad. Different from the Orientalist gaze in 1970s and 1980s, these films appealed also to the foreign spectators.¹⁰³ Rıza Kır a  lists *Il Bagno Turco* (1997) and *Harem Suare* (1999) by Ferzan  zpetek, *Mektup* (1997) by Ali  zgent rk, *Usta Beni  ld rsene* (1997) by Barıř Pirhasan, and *Yara* (1998) by Yılmaz Arslan as the films that have the overtones of Orientalism in 1990s' Turkey's cinema. Among these,  zpetek's films *Il Bagno Turco* and *Harem Suare* have provided grounds for much speculation on whether the camera and/or the film-maker holds an Orientalist position.

In their article *Said, Oryantalizm, Resim ve Sinemanın Kesiřme Noktasında Harem Suare*, G liz Ulu  and Murat Soydan analyze the movie *Harem Suare* in terms of the resemblance between certain frames from the film and paintings of Orientalist painters Eduard Debat Panson, Jean Leon Gerome, John Frederick Lewis and Paul Desire Trouillebert (See Figure 7). They conclude that in *Harem Suare*, Ferzan  zpetek, whether deliberately or coincidentally, predicates on the drawings of these Orientalist painters, which is an absolute indicator of the hegemonic discourse of latent Orientalism.¹⁰⁴

On the part of *Il Bagno Turco*, Ferzan  zpetek was criticized for having an Orientalist stand point. He responded that the film had nothing to do with either Turkey or Orientalism. However, he frankly added that this was an important test for him as he, upon criticisms, asked himself if he subconsciously had an Orientalist tendency.¹⁰⁵  zpetek's response is significant in that it reveals how hegemonic latent Orientalism is: it is hidden somewhere in the labyrinths of his mind and even if his intention is not to shoot an Orientalist film, what reflects on the screen -in some way or other- has something to do with Orientalism.

¹⁰³ Rıza Kır a , "90'lı Yılların T rk Sinemasına Genel Bir Bakıř: Őiddet, Oryantalizm ve Minimalizm", **25. Kare**, 31 (2000): 11-17.

¹⁰⁴ G liz Ulu , Murat Soydan, "Said, Oryantalizm, Resim ve Sinemanın Kesiřme Noktasında Harem Suare", **Bilig Dergisi**, issue: 42 (Summer 2007): 35-53.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, 42.

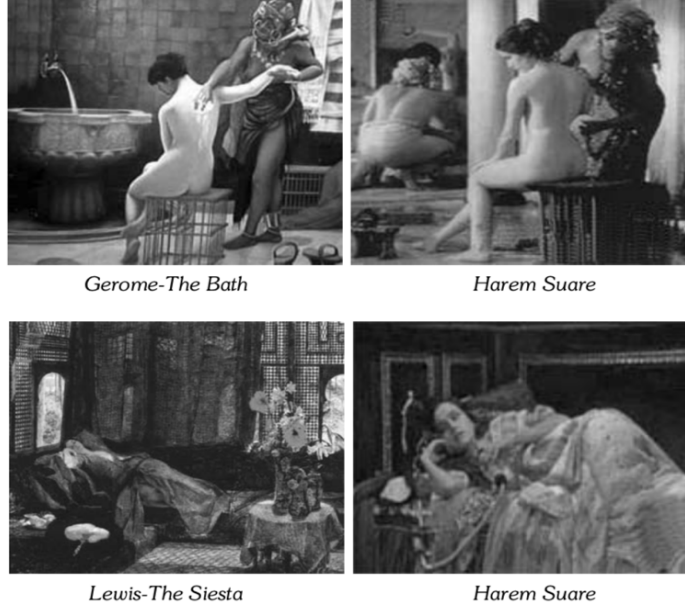


Figure 7: Resemblance between frames from Harem Suare and paintings of Orientalist painters

Güliz Uluç, Murat Soydan, “Said, Oryantalizm, Resim ve Sinemanın Kesişme Noktasında Harem Suare”, *Bilig Dergisi*, issue: 42 (Summer 2007): 47.

An eminent cinema critic from Turkey, Atilla Dorsay acknowledges that there certainly is an Orientalist tone in Özpetek’s films, but he does not consider this as a reason to underappreciate his films. Rather, he suggests that this is a way for the Orientalists to provide the West with the opportunity to know and understand the Orient. And there is nothing wrong with loving, studying, trying to understand and glorifying the Orient.¹⁰⁶ Dorsay’s treatment of the Orientalist tone in Özpetek’s films is a good exemplary instance of the romantic Orientalist outlook in that he considers depicting the Orient in a way that appeals to the phantasmatic desires of the West as a sign of loving and blessing the Orient.

Among the samples from Turkey’s cinema, *Il Bagno Turco* aka *Hamam* (1997) by Ferzan Özpetek, *Zenne Dancer* (2012) by Caner Alper and Mehmet Binay, and *Auf Der Anderen Seite* (2007) aka *Yaşamın Kıyısında* by Fatih Akın stand out with their unorthodox representations on sexual difference and in that, they have a significance in Turkey’s cinema. In the films, the most important common characteristic is that the East/West opposition is given via inter-cultural non-straight romantic affairs, which

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, 42.

makes them suitable for an analysis from the perspective of sexual difference accompanied by a quest for the Orientalist imagery.

3. FILM ANALYSES

3.1. Selection of Films, Limitations, Methodology, and Rationale

The studies made on the Orientalist imagery in Turkey's cinema (See Section 2.3.), focus on the films on emigration (particularly from Turkey to European countries). Emigration is also on the focus in Fatih Akın's cinema. Another locus of the studies is hamam or harem, as with *Il Bagno Turco* and *Harem Suare* by Ferzan Özpetek. There are also MA dissertations that depend on a quest for self-orientalism in Turkish media and cinema.¹⁰⁷ From the analyses on the films with explicit similes of the Orient (hamam and harem) which directly connote sexuality, homoeroticism -with regard to sexual difference- has not been taken as a departure point in analyses of Orientalism in samples from Turkey's cinema. Therefore, this study encompasses dramas from the past three decades of Turkey's cinema (1990-2019) with homosexual imagery on the trajectory of East/West opposition, with an aim to embark on a quest for Orientalism from the perspective of sexual difference. Although Özpetek's and Akın's films might be categorized as samples of "transnational cinema,"¹⁰⁸ the research locus of this study does not have grounds in a questioning of the nationality of a film. In this study, *Il Bagno Turco* and *Zenne Dancer* are considered as part of Turkey's cinema. When selecting the films, taken as criteria are the narration styles, themes, different types of gaze used, representations of the West(ern) and the East(ern), and the overlaps and variations among the story lines, which all together provide grounds for an in-depth analysis. Documentaries are excluded as the problematic of this study is not to uncover congruences or incongruences between Orientalist representation and documentation of facts. Rather, this study looks for an Orientalist ground and potential reproductions of Orientalist imagery in selected films. The commentary largely relies on sociological

¹⁰⁷ The ones that can be accessed on <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/giris.jsp> are *Oryantalizm: Türk Medyasında Self-Oryantalizm* [2014] by Turgay Yerlikaya; *Kültürel Temsiller Oryantalizm ve Sinema: Türk Sinemasında Kürt/Doğu Temsilleri* [2009] by Sebahattin Şen; *Türk Televizyon Dizilerinde Oryantalizmin Etkisi: Muhteşem Yüzyıl Örneği* [2016] by Emine Yıldırım; *Televizyon Dizilerinde Oryantalizm Etkisi: Muhteşem Yüzyıl Dizisinde Harem Temsili* [2014] by Şeyma Yazıcı).

¹⁰⁸ Asuman Suner, **New Turkish Cinema: Belonging, Identity and Memory**, (The USA: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 153.

and cultural analysis utilizing Roland Barthes's conceptualizations on semiotics as a supporting component.

Semiotics is a discipline so broad in scope and the main purpose of this study renders it redundant to provide the reader with a comprehensive literature review on semiotics. Therefore, the following paragraphs serving as a basic-level outline on semiotics are limited to explain the main concepts of semiotics and how they are utilized in film analysis.

Semiotics emerged by an interest in symbols and the way they communicate. The modern disciplines of semiological analysis started with American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) and Swedish linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913).¹⁰⁹ Both first explained the concept of sign and in Europe, philosophers like Jakobson, Guiraud, and Barthes elaborated on the characteristics of 'sign' which has brought about new dimensions to the discipline of semiotics.¹¹⁰

The word 'semiotic' is derived from the Greek word for sign; 'semeion.' In essence, semiotics is the study of signs. Saussure divides the sign into two elements, the signifier and the signified. He puts forward that the relationship between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary and this suggestion was of great significance in the development of semiotics.¹¹¹ For Peirce, there are three types of sign; icon (in complete resemblance with its object), index (carries the connotations of its object), and symbol (no causal relation between the form and the content).¹¹² However, both theorizations rely on more or less the same grounds. In that respect, the signifier is the acoustic form of the word (Saussure) or what we see and perceive (Peirce); it corresponds to the physical and sensory dimension. The signified is the mental image or meaning that a signifier evokes; it corresponds to the conceptual dimension. It is the internal and subjective response to the signifier. Barthes applied semiotic methods to the "myths" that surround us, which contributed to a great extent to the expansion of the discipline.

Barthes maintains that anything in culture can be a sign which can send a particular message and describes some ways to decipher these messages. In his eminent work

¹⁰⁹ Arthur Asa Berger, **Media Analysis Techniques**, (California: Sage Publications, 2019), 3.

¹¹⁰ Doğan Aksan, **Anlambilim**, 3rd ed. (Ankara: Engin Yayinevi, 2005), 38.

¹¹¹ Berger, 2019, 4.

¹¹² Berger, 2019, 4.

Mythologies, Barthes principally asserts that “myth is a type of speech”, “a system of communication” or “a message,” a “mode of signification.”¹¹³ For Barthes, everything can be a myth as long as it is meaningful, or it conveys a specific message. Depending on the premise that “human history converts reality into speech,” he argues that “speech of this kind [i.e., myth] is a message” and it is not limited to oral or written speech.¹¹⁴ That is, any object turns into speech if it has a meaning. Signifiers are all the available signs that have a meaning but acquire additional meanings when used as myths.¹¹⁵ For Barthes, the signifier in myth is the form, and the signified is the content. This ‘form’ uses a fully meaningful sign ‘inherited’ from culture, which points out to two levels of signification¹¹⁶.

The example Barthes provides for the two levels of signification is an analysis of the cover of Paris-Match (See Figure 8). The “first-level” meaning conveyed is “a black soldier giving the French salute,” which is what we immediately see when we look at the photograph. The “second-level” meaning conveyed is “France is a great Empire, and all serve it without racial discrimination.”¹¹⁷ In second-level signification, myth is not deprived of its proper meaning; the first-level meaning is still in place. What myth does is to distort the meaning of the sign to send an intentional message.¹¹⁸



Figure 8: A black soldier giving the French salute (the cover of Paris-Match)

<https://blackpropaganda.wordpress.com/2010/09/11/roland-barthes-paris-match-semiotics/>

¹¹³ Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: The Noonday Press, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1972), 109.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*, 110.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, 114.

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, 115.

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, 116.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*, 122.

A fundamental aspect of semiotics is that “the sign exists within a system of differences; therefore, a sign is part of a code, which permeates the whole of social life.”¹¹⁹ For Peirce, “the semiotic processes that constitute the individual are always grounded in community, history, and materiality. To understand the interpretative constitution of the self, one must understand the various “external” environments that contribute to it.”¹²⁰ For Eco, “meaning production or semiosis is a social activity.” However, he contends that “subjective factors are involved in each individual act of semiosis,” as well. By referring to Peirce and Eco, Teresa de Lauretis states that semiosis is a term coined to “designate the process by which a culture produces signs and/or attributes meanings of signs.”¹²¹ Semiotics then focuses on both the subjective aspects and the social aspect of signification. From the subjective perspective, meaning is a product of “subject-effect” and from the social perspective, meaning is construed “as semantic value produced through culturally shared codes”.¹²² Teresa de Lauretis finds a common ground between these two phases of semiotics by suggesting that in their extension, there is an intersection point between the subject-effect and social effect, which she calls *experience*. And as Warren Buckland points out, “Semioticians maintain that it [film] is a system of signification that articulates experience.”¹²³

What makes semiotics highly instrumental in film analysis is that films construct meaning through signs and that semiotics makes it possible to question, analyze and reveal filmic signification patterns which articulate experience. Warren Buckland maintains that “film semiotics reflects on the very nature of film’s existence, together with the consequences it has on culture and society” and “adopts the two-tier hierarchy between perceptible and non-perceptible levels of reality.”¹²⁴ Semiotics, then, facilitates going beyond the level where images are simply linked with their referents and provides the film analyst with grounds to figure out and put forward possible meanings produced on the non-perceptible level. Such an explanation requires

¹¹⁹ <https://nptel.ac.in/courses/109106078/Semiotics%20of%20Films.pdf>

¹²⁰ “Intersections Between Pragmatist and Continental Feminism”, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, (first published: Dec 6, 2002; substantive revision: Feb 24, 2015) <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/femapproach-prag-cont/> [04.05.2018].

¹²¹ Teresa De Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema*, (UK: Mac Millan, 1984), 167.

¹²² *ibid.*, 167-168.

¹²³ Warren Buckland, *The Cognitive Semiotics of Film*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 6-10.

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, 6-10.

deploying data from sociology, psychology, aesthetics, history, and the like.¹²⁵ There is no doubt that the semiotic analysis for hidden meanings on this non-perceptible level of signification is instrumental in the quest for Orientalist codes inherent in latent Orientalism as it is the site of the unconscious. And this is the rationale behind relying not only on sociological and cultural analysis but also benefiting from semiotics, which are mutually authoring indeed, in the film analyses part of this study.

The initial quest for the Orientalist imagery in the selected films is based on an analysis of whether the camera holds an Orientalist gaze and whether the film takes a stand parallel to the ideas conceived in Orientalism from a sexual difference perspective. Another question the analysis is based on is whether there are denotations or connotations of Orientalism in intra-diegetic gaze (in the gaze between the Western and Eastern characters). How the settings and the characters are depicted is also analyzed from the perspective of Orientalization by making use of semiotic patterns. Overall, the scenes in the three films are analyzed as a whole, encompassing camera angles, *mise-en-scene*, lighting, music, sound and narration. Finally, benefiting from the grounds that semiotics provides, the course of the story line in each film is mapped out with the purpose of pursuing the footprints of latent Orientalism.

3.2. *Il Bagno Turco* aka *Hamam*

As is well-illustrated in the 1863 painting *The Turkish Bath* (See Figure 1) by French painter Ingres, cultural elements belonging to the Orient has always been a center of attraction and mystery for the Western eye. Ingres portrayed women in a bath from the angle of a peephole, demonstrating a voyeuristic gaze. The bath is illustrated “like a theatrical, fantastic library, parading before the anchorite’s gaze.”¹²⁶ The 1997 movie *Il Bagno Turco*, hamam is portrayed as the object of the Western phantasy of rescue, the locus of phantasmic desires, hidden sexual practices, and transformation. It is possible to analyze the movie on the basis of a juxtaposition of Rome and Istanbul or of the Western eye and the Oriental. In this section, the movie is analyzed in terms of records of latent Orientalism and from the perspective of sexual difference.

¹²⁵ Seçil Bükler, *Sinema Dili Üzerine Yazılar*, (Ankara: Dost Kitabevi Yayınları, 1985), 50.

¹²⁶ Said, 1979, 188.

Year:	1997
Genre:	Drama, Romance
Technical Specifications:	94' / 35 mm. / 1.85:1 / Color
Country:	Turkey, Spain, Italy
Producer(s):	Paolo Buzzi, Cengiz Ergun, Ozan Ergun, Marco Risi, Aldo Sambrell, Maurizio Tedesco
Company:	Promete Film, Sorpasso Film, Asbrell Productions
Director(s):	Ferzan Özpetek
Writer(s):	Ferzan Özpetek, Stefano Tummolini, Aldo Sambrell
Cast:	Alessandro Gassman (Francesco), Francesca d'Aloja (Marta), Carlo Cecchi (Oscar), Halil Ergün (Osman), Şerif Sezer (Perran), Mehmet Günsür (Mehmet), Başak Köklükaya (Fusun), Alberto Molinari (Paolo), Zozo Toledo (Zozo), Ludovica Modugno (Voice of Aunt Anita)
Cinematographer:	Pasquale Mari
Art Director(s):	Ziya Ülkenciler, Virginia Vianello
Editor(s):	Mauro Bonanni
Release Date:	24 October 1997

3.2.1. Plot Summary

Directed by Ferzan Özpetek, in *Hamam* aka *Il Bagno Turco* (1997), the Western imagery is given mainly via three Italian characters; Madam Anita, Francesco, and Marta. Madam Anita is an Italian lady who, upon an unfortunate marriage, left her country after World War II and moved to Istanbul, got married to a very rich man, got divorced twenty days later with a considerable compensation, and became the first female Western owner of a Turkish bath in Istanbul. She wrote letters from Istanbul to

her sister in Rome. However, she stopped sending them upon receiving back the first letter she had sent. Madam lived with a Turkish family in the same three-storey wooden house till her death. Francesco - Madam Anita's nephew - and Marta are an Italian couple living in Rome in the "prison" of their turbulent marriage. They run a small interior architecture business with their partner Paolo. Francesco gets a letter from Turkey informing him about his aunt's death and her heritage. It is not mentioned in the letter that the heritage is a ruined hamam attached to a wooden house.

Francesco leaves Rome, arrives in Istanbul and visits the family with which Madam Anita lived in the same old house till her death. This is a family of four members, Osman the father, Perran the mother, Füsün the daughter, and Mehmet the son. Though Francesco is initially indifferent, Istanbul and the Oriental culture start to be very attractive for him as he has a life not very colorful back in Rome. Following his recurring engagements with seducing Turkish culture, with the hamam as the epicenter, Francesco is drawn to Istanbul; he decides to stay and restore the hamam. So, the whole family together with people from the neighborhood and friends of Mehmet and Füsün start to work in cooperation to repair, clean, and resurrect the hamam.

Marta arrives in Istanbul with the intention of informing Francesco that she wants a divorce. Just in the second day of her stay at Osman's house, Marta wakes up at midnight and she finds out that Francesco is not in the bed. She gets up, walks through doors and dim aisles that lead her to the door of the hamam. When she looks inside, she sees Francesco and Mehmet together in the bath, kissing each other with passion. Now, Francesco, Mehmet and Marta are all different persons.

Toward the end of the movie, Francesco is killed by an unknown attacker for his insistence on not selling the hamam (we understand that the contractor is behind this murder as Zozo warns Francesco that these are dangerous people for several times). In the final scene, Marta is in the hamam that Francesco and all the others have worked hard to repair. This scene is a replication of Francesco's first tour in the hamam. Marta moves very slowly, examining every detail and breathing the atmosphere in the hamam. Marta smokes with Madam's cigarette holder. She seems to have taken the place of Madam Anita. It is clear that she will be the next person to be the owner of the hamam.

3.2.2. The Quest for Orientalist Gaze in *Il Bagno Turco*

The quest for an Orientalist gaze in *Il Bagno Turco* can be based on two types of gaze in filmic texts: the gaze of the camera and the intra-diegetic gaze.¹²⁷ Accordingly, the analysis has two phases. However, gaze is not only analyzed in terms of camera angles. The scenes are analyzed as a whole, encompassing *mise-en-scene*, lighting, music and sound. With regard to the gaze of the camera, the question is whether the camera holds an Orientalist gaze or not. In her master's thesis submitted to Bilkent University in 2004, Evrim Engin analyzes Ferzan Özpetek's films *Il Bagno Turco* and *Harem Suare* in terms of Orientalist discourse and argues that both films are caught within the Orientalist conventions of representation despite the attempt they make to reverse the negative image of the Orient. One of the aspects she dwells upon is sexual difference. Her reading of the two films reveals that

“both films stage the Orient as the locus of desire and sexual emancipation exclusively for the Western protagonists whereas effectively erasing the very conditions that render Orient available for such erotic quest of the Western subject. Both texts are authorized with a fantasy of reciprocal desire and an operation that reduces the Oriental to a mere object of desire who is not capable of resistance and rejection.”¹²⁸

In line with Engin's analysis, as the eye of the camera moves from Rome to Istanbul, in other words, as the Western gaze is directed to the East, the reflections of an Orientalist gaze become recognizable. The story is told from the perspective of the Italian characters, reinforced with Madam Anita's voice-over throughout the film. However, it would not be a fair evaluation to argue that the camera holds an Orientalist gaze to characterize the Orient with awkwardness, immorality or threat. Rather, the camera occupies a position which romanticizes the Orient with the dominant imagery of warm-hearted people, the family atmosphere, solidarity, feelings of joy, relief and belonging, and bodily pleasures. The camera also displays the Orient as an object of knowledge and desire reinforced with the leitmotifs like locked doors, windows, drawers, dark or dim spaces connoting Oriental mysticism. Yet, it should be noted that the murder of Francesco and the takeover of hamam by Marta, in the final analysis, ends the story with a depiction of the destructive nature of the Oriental and a solidification of the rescuing, ruling/dominating, and civilizing role of the Western.

¹²⁷ The gaze between the characters of a film

¹²⁸ Evrim Engin, “Figuring The Orient: A Discussion of Orientalism Within The Context of Ferzan Özpetek's Films” (Master's Thesis, Bilkent University, 2004), 160-161.

As for the intra-diegetic gaze, the spectator can trace variations of the Orientalist gaze on a path from distant and detached ‘look’ to curious, and even voyeuristic gaze. What is shared by the Italian characters is that they come to the Orient with reasons other than a desire to look at and learn about the Orient, but they all develop a curious eye towards the Orient as the story develops on the orbit of a ruined hamam.

Francesco is initially detached and never involved. However, with his subsequent encounters with the Orient as “a living tableau of queerness” he experiences a “bizarre jouissance” that the Orient offers.¹²⁹ So to speak, there is an “overflow of homoeroticism” which is “synonymous with Istanbul’s liminal position as the meeting point of West, East, Europe and Asia.”¹³⁰ The imagery on a curious eye can be found in many scenes of the movie such as Francesco’s lingering around the streets of Istanbul, getting in ruined buildings, and being more and more interested in the hamam. The scenes reinforce the appeal that is attributed to the Orient, accompanied by a piece of music performed with percussion instruments. The whole *mise-en-scene* facilitates the spectator’s identification with the look of the camera which corresponds to the Orientalist gaze, the object of which is the Oriental signified, in this case, with the hamam.

On the part of Marta, following her initial indifference, she is soon attracted to the surrounding Oriental atmosphere and she turns into an explorer and a watcher. When Marta arrives at Osman’s house, she enters Madam Anita’s room and curiously stares at her belongings. She puts on a colorful kaftan and she tries Madam’s cigarette holder as if she is trying to experience what it is like to be a much-respected Madam in this Oriental house. She seems to be impressed but she pulls herself out of this atmosphere and goes to a shopping mall. Instead of exploring the city, she prefers spending her time in shopping malls. On the first day of her stay in Istanbul, she goes to shopping centers as if she is resisting to explore what attracts her husband, what attracted Madam Anita before, and what attracts herself as well.

The imagery of curious eye can also be seen in Madam Anita’s transformation from a refugee to a hamam owner who eventually takes the opportunity to watch the most private experiences (homosexual affairs implied) of the Oriental men from a peephole.

¹²⁹ Said, 1979, 102.

¹³⁰ Boone, **Homoerotics**, preface xxxiii.

Throughout the scenes in which Francesco and others work to restore the hamam, we listen to a letter of Madam Anita from her own voice informing her sister about her decision to run a hamam in Istanbul. She writes: *“I will run a hamam, I will be the first female Western hamam owner here and in this way, I will be able to watch their most private pleasures. Hamams are strange places. All those family guys would be grateful to me for offering them this opportunity to hide their practices.”* Madam Anita clearly decorates herself with the power of the revived omnipotent gaze by deciding to run a hamam with the intention of reaching beyond the hidden. She considers herself as a protector of the private lives of the Oriental men. In turn, her power would be restored, providing her with the chance to go beyond the hidden, and uncover the mystery. This time the beholder of the voyeuristic eye is a female; yet, she occupies a masculine position as the holder of the Western gaze the objects of which are Oriental men in homosexual affairs. This is an illustrative example of shifting subject-positioning in the sphere of Orientalist representation.

In addition to the imagery of the curious Western eye, two scenes in which voyeuristic gaze is given show parallelism to what Mulvey suggest on male voyeur and the veil. The first one is when we see Francesco watch Mehmet for quite a long time; Mehmet catches his eyes on himself, he first hesitates but then he starts to look at Francesco, as well. This is the first time they explicitly look at each other romantically. The looker is Francesco, and he clearly attracts Mehmet’s attention. These scenes of this prolonged looking experience facilitate the spectator’s identification with the camera. The spectator looks at Mehmet from Francesco’s eyes, which puts the spectator in the position of the looker. In another scene, Mehmet and Francesco are together in hamam. It is steamy, hot and wet inside. They sit close to each other and Mehmet tells about the first time he was taken to a hamam. It is clear for the spectator that it was Madam Anita who granted Mehmet with his first bath experience in a hamam, from which it might be interpreted that an Easterner learns about the tradition of going to a hamam from a Westerner. Here, the Westerner is depicted as the guarantor and the perpetuator of Oriental values. Mehmet talks about the relief he found having a bath or a massage, making the whole body relaxed and sublimating the soul. As Mehmet speaks, Francesco leans back and listens to him, so we see Mehmet in a close-up, from the back (See Figure 9). Francesco is the watcher, but he watches from the back, which is literally voyeuristic (See Figure 10). In this point of view shot, that the camera is

positioned behind Mehmet puts the spectator in a male voyeur position together with Francesco. The camera stands as the guarantor of the masculine Western eye, feminizing, or more specifically, homoeroticizing its Oriental object.



Figure 9: Mehmet in a close-up from the back



Figure 10: The voyeuristic gaze of Francesco

The second one is when Mehmet takes Francesco up to the dome-shaped roof of women's hamam as Francesco asks whether it is true that Turkish women epilate all the hair on their bodies. Female body is the object of attention. Reinforcing the mystery, the roof of the hamam has a hole on it which is covered by a piece of stone. Meyda Yeğenoğlu states that she considers "the European's immediate object of attention in the horizon of Muslim culture as his construct: the veiled woman is not simply an obstacle in the field of visibility and control, but her veiled presence also seems to provide the Western subject with a condition which is the inverse of Bentham's omnipotent gaze."¹³¹ Replacing the veiled woman in Yeğenoğlu's argument with the covered hole in the roof of the women's hamam, Francesco and Mehmet's voyeuristic experience represents the desire to know. The presence of the veil/cover deprives the male gaze of its power and in this sense, is something to be evaded. Accordingly, Mehmet uncovers the hole and they start peeping the women

¹³¹ Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial*, 43.

bathing (See Figure 11). This scene emphasizes the curiosity about what is behind the hidden, as in the case of a veil, phantasizing about it, and eventually going beyond the cover through voyeur and finding out. The partly nude female body is the passive object of the male voyeuristic gaze (See Figure 12). This is supported with the position of the camera; in line with the gaze of the camera, the spectator looks from the peephole directly at the women bathing. In a subsequent shot, the camera is behind the peepers, who are now more intimate, making the spectator voyeur of voyeurs. These types of spectatorship are patriarchal and phallogentric as they represent the active and panoptical male gaze passivating its female or feminized/homoeroticized objects. And peeping into what is veiled or forbidden reflects the male desire to know and control.



Figure 11: Mehmet and Francesco peeping the women bathing in a hamam



Figure 12: The partly nude female body as the passive object of the male voyeuristic gaze

As a conclusion, regardless of their gender, the beholders of the voyeuristic gaze correspond to the phallogentric Western eye, and again regardless of their designated gender roles as female or male, the Orient, signified with a hamam, is the passive object of it. In line with that, in the aforementioned scenes, the position of the camera

or the choice of voice-over facilitate the spectator's identification with the gaze of the camera, in this case, the male-oriented Western eye.

3.2.3. The Orientalist Imagery in *Il Bagno Turco*

The Orientalist imagery in *Il Bagno Turco* is drawn both on the characters and on the settings. Throughout the movie, we watch Istanbul and Istanbulites, or *the Oriental*, from the eyes or experiences of three Italian characters. The first implicit Orientalist message in the movie is when Francesco gets a letter from Turkey informing him about his aunt's death with a heritage and he asks Marta to go to Istanbul to take care of the procedure. Marta does not accept his offer by saying that "A man should go to Turkey; they *favor* men out there." These words of Marta attribute a homoeroticism to the Orient at the same time. When Francesco leaves Rome and arrives in Istanbul, he meets Zozo –the initiator of the prospective sale of the heritage— takes him to a night club (pavyon) where men listen to music from flamboyant singers, watch belly dancers, drink and eat under red lights and in an arabesque atmosphere. The veiled woman Francesco sees on the street the next day also belongs to the Orientalist imagery. Though not elemental in this movie and with the opposition they present, pavyon, belly dancers and the veiled woman signify the eccentricism of the Orient. Other imageries of cultural elements that are overtly Oriental can be listed as the circumcision of a boy and the following feast, coffee reading, and a bridal procession.

On the part of the characters, the Italian characters of the movie "possess whatever belongs to an Orientalist, cold and rational Westerner image."¹³² "None of them are nice or warm-hearted; they have a stressful, career-based life in which appearance is foregrounded."¹³³ On the other hand, Osman's family displays warm and welcoming attitudes. As an indicator, the table is always set with various and delicious food. One of the leitmotifs of the movie is Füsün and Perran informing the others that the supper or the breakfast is ready. And other than Mehmet, none of the Oriental characters seem to have any libido, which singles out Mehmet favoring Francesco's point of view. There are moments in which Füsün looks at Francesco, which might signify female libido. However, these moments are not amplified and Füsün eventually gives up on her feelings to get married to a man she does not really want. The female imagery in

¹³² Bülent Diken, Carsten B. Laustsen, *Filmlerle Sosyoloji*, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2014), 44.

¹³³ *ibid.*, 43.

the movie is in line with an Orientalist point of view. The Oriental female characters are generally portrayed while serving the men. Back in Rome, in Marta and Francesco's house, the female servant also has a Far Eastern look. The only female character who does not comply with a stereotypical Orientalist depiction is the contractor. She is a powerful businesswoman; however, her power is destructive and dangerous for she wants to buy all the old wooden buildings in Osman's neighborhood to construct shopping malls. Zozo warns Francesco for a couple of times that "these are dangerous people." So, the only powerful female Oriental character is depicted as dangerous who eventually gets Francesco killed. On the other hand, the Western women –Marta and Madam Anita- are portrayed as liberal businesswomen and entrepreneurs, which puts them in a relation of dominance with the Oriental.

In her article *Veiled Fantasies*, Meyda Yeğenoğlu cites Timothy Mitchell who "argues that Orientalism does not simply provide knowledge about Oriental societies but is itself constitutive of 'absolute differences' which enable the European to code the Oriental as his reverse image or as the 'exterior of the West.'" With all its leitmotifs and sounds, the movie *Il Bagno Turco* plays around many contrasts to illustrate the numb West against the warm, eccentric and appealing East. The Italian characters' home in Rome is spacious and bright while the characters are most of the time distressed due to their relationship and hectic business lives. There is no music in frames from Rome, and the only sound pertaining to Rome is Francesco's cell phone ringing frequently. The scenes from the house in Rome are given in depth-of-field shots which speak more to the audience and attributes almost no eccentricity. On the other hand, Istanbul is depicted as so alive and moving in the film. Colorful and noisy fish bazaar, the food halls, old wooden houses, fishermen, street food, the voices around, and the people seem to constitute an authentic harmony. We watch Francesco walk around the streets, and the music in these scenes reinforces the feeling of excitement and eccentricity. The interior settings are generally dim and most of the places are timeworn or ruined. There are many doors and windows symbolizing the veil and the hidden. More framing is at work in scenes from Istanbul, which serves for emphasizing the attributed mystery. Even in depth-of-field shots, the depth of space is disrupted by the presence of doors and gates.

There is a recurrent emphasis on the hidden, constructing the Orient as a site of phantasm. Locked doors, closed windows, drawers, chests, boxes, and eventually

letters in sealed envelopes (See Figure 13) are the symbols of the hidden treasures of the Orient waiting to be discovered, leading and authorizing the Western to take control of them by unveiling them. A good example is the unopened and unread letters of Madam, which are unveiled and read by Francesco, Marta and the spectator via the voice-over of Madam throughout the movie. The letters of Madam might well be a reference to British poet Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters*. Her narratives on the Oriental way of living paved the way for other male and female travelers from Europe to come and 'see' the Orient. Her intriguing statement that Turkish women, with a chance to cover all their bodies and hereby all their secret practices, indeed had more liberty than British women was greeted with astonishment. And her description of life inside the Ottoman harem influenced 19th century Orientalist painters and writers.¹³⁴

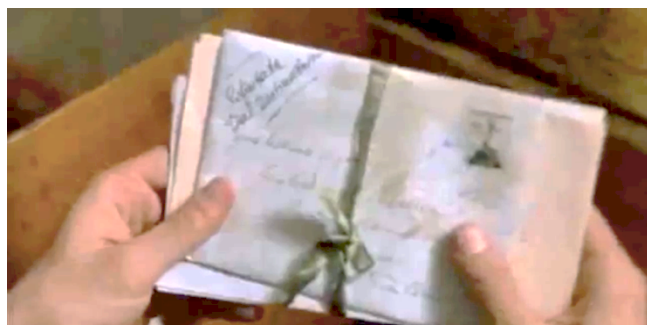


Figure 13: Madam Anita's letters in sealed envelopes

Meyda Yeğenoğlu suggests that "... the veil is that curtain which simultaneously conceals and reveals; it conceals the Orient's truth and at the same time reveals its mode of existence, its very being, a being which always exists in a disguised and deceptive manner, a being which exists only behind its veil. Therefore, the veil represents simultaneously the truth and the concealment of truth."¹³⁵ In this context, the locked doors, the secret gateway, the drawers, boxes, the unread letters and the like are all symbols of inaccessibility, privacy and latitancy, and these elements pertaining to the practice of veiling turn what's hidden behind into a site of phantasm, bringing about a desire to unveil and peep into or attain to the hidden.

¹³⁴ Carolyn McDowall, "Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: Adventuress & Woman of Influence", (May 6, 2016), <https://www.thecultureconcept.com/lady-mary-wortley-montagu-adventuress-woman-of-influence> [08.04.2019].

¹³⁵ Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial*, 48.

All the connotations of the veil are objects of fantasies. One can envisage what is behind the veil and in order to discover what is hidden behind, one needs to go beyond. As Meyda Yeğenoğlu suggests, “Frustrated with the invisibility and inaccessibility of this mysterious, fantasmatic figure, disappointed with the veiled figure's refusal to be gazed at, Western desire subjects this enigmatic matter to a relentless investigation. ... The veil is one of those tropes through which Western fantasies of penetration into the mysteries of the Orient and access to the interiority of the other are fantasmatically achieved.”¹³⁶ A good example for the desire to see behind the veiled and thus the enigmatic interiority is Francesco’s encounters with the hamam. Wandering in the streets of Istanbul, Francesco bumps into an old man, exhausted by the hot weather and walks him to a Turkish bath. The old man vehemently suggests Francesco to have a bath in the hamam. First Francesco is reluctant but then he decides to go in. In the hamam, the camera hovers around men with their peshtemals, some having a bath, some laying down on the marble stone next to each other having a chat. It is dim, hot, steamy and wet inside. And, in a close-up, a very young and good-looking man is shown singing one of the very well-known songs of Turkish classical music. Together with Francesco, from the eye of the camera, the spectator watches the young man; he is the object of the curious Western gaze. The highly stylized imagery of this young man is reminiscent of the effeminate bath boy (Huban-ı Tellak) illustrated in Fazıl Bey’s *Huban-name* (1793) (See Figure 14).

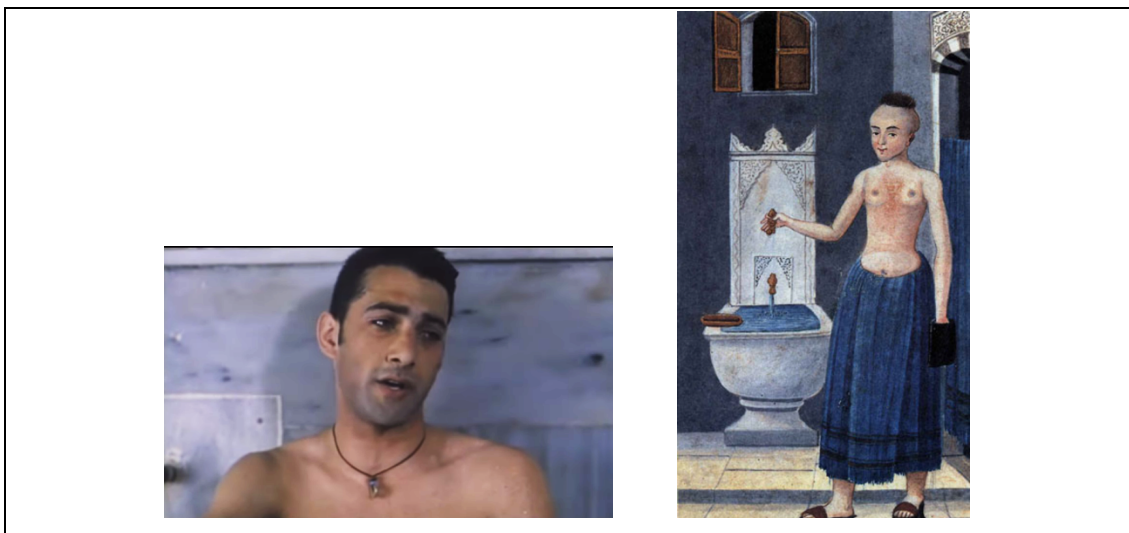


Figure 14: The resemblance between the imagery of the young man singing in hamam in *Il Bagno Turco* and the effeminate tellak in *Huban-ı Tellak*

¹³⁶ Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial*, 39.

In the following scene, Francesco takes a bath in the hamam, the light comes from the top passing through grids just on him, which stands as an epiphany. The camera is motionless and as objective as possible about the imagery; the only thing that speaks is the lighting, illuminating Francesco amidst all the things that frames his life and desires. Francesco is so content with his bath experience that when he learns from Zozo that Madam's heritage is a ruined hamam, he is quite surprised, and he wants to see it. Together they go to see the hamam, the name of which is *Aynalı Sultan Hamamı*. The "mirror" in the name of the hamam suggests a hope for self-discovery, of seeing oneself on what reflects from the mirror of the Oriental. The outer door of the hamam is locked, reinforcing its mystery and Francesco's desire to get in. All his visual and kinesthetic experiences with hamams seem to have helped him break out from his shell, push him to get *in* and willingly possess what is calling him. Here, Francesco's being manifests as a representative of the Western desire to "rescue." The hamam, if not rescued and owned by Francesco, the savior, will be sold and destructed by the inconsiderate Orientals.

Francesco's entering into the ruined hamam his aunt left him and the following scenes are another manifestation of the Oriental appeal. Osman takes Francesco to the old hamam passing through two doors and a gateway. The door of the hamam is again locked with a padlock. When they get in, the first thing we see is the hall of the hamam from the top angle. It is again dim and dusty inside. The hall does not seem so ruined; the colorful decorations can still be seen on the walls. Again, the same drum music starts and accompanies the audience during all that time Francesco walks in the hamam, very slowly, looking at every detail with a great sensation. When they go down the stairs, again there is a gateway to the center of the bath, which is half illuminated with the rays falling down to the floor and on the walls from the dome-shaped roof. Francesco lights a cigarette in the gateway and takes his time enjoying every single breath he takes in. This is the second time we see Francesco so enchanted (the former one was in the Çinili Hamam, when he was having a bath for the first time in a Turkish bath). Loud and moving music, yellow dimness, the smoke of the cigarette and the slowness of Francesco's moves all together make the audience feel in a daydream of Francesco. When they leave, there is a clear feeling that Francesco may change his mind and not sell the hamam. This is a clear sign of Francesco's satisfaction with the Oriental experience. Proving this, in a montage sequence, we watch Francesco

learn Turkish from Füsün at home, spend most of his time with Mehmet, play tavla, go to football matches and smoke a lot with the same music on again. The Orient is portrayed as a hub of entertainment and laziness detached from the hectic business life of the West. How the Orient is pictured in these scenes is reminiscent of the *harum-scarum* atmosphere on the canvases of many romantic Orientalist painters. On the part of Francesco, there is more that speaks to the spectator. These are the signs of a transformation that he is going through; he is in a process of drifting away from the West, finding his true self, which brings with it a relief as displayed in the moments when Francesco cuts the telephone conversations with Marta short and when he falls asleep following a feast-like dinner in Osman's house (See Figure 15). The Oriental settings and characters offer a break to the austere state of the Western.



Figure 15: Francesco finding relief in the pleasures of the Orient

The themes of Westerner's self-discovery in the Oriental is developed by characterizing the Orient with free sexuality and homoeroticism, which is a very important point to elaborate on. Upon Marta's seeing Francesco and Mehmet together in the hamam, she asks Francesco whether he was doing the same in Rome. When Francesco says no, she cynically asks if he discovered it here. Then she tells Francesco that this is why he actually wanted to stay, that he has never cared about the hamam or the other things, what he is interested in is just having fun and doing *what he cannot do back in Rome*. As Edward Said acknowledges in his eminent book *Orientalism*, "...with regard to the Orient there was a frank acknowledgment that it was a world elsewhere, apart from the ordinary attachments, sentiments and values of our World in the West."¹³⁷ Having mentioned Flaubert's identification of 'the Orient with the escapism of sexual fantasy', Said explains the European's associating the Oriental with licentious sexual intercourse as follows:

¹³⁷ Said, 1979, 190.

“... the association is clearly made between the Orient and the freedom of licentious sex. We may as well recognize that for nineteenth-century Europe, with its increasing embourgeoisement, sex had been institutionalized to a very considerable degree. On the one hand, there was no such thing as "free" sex, and on the other, sex in society entailed a web of legal, moral, even political and economic obligations of a detailed and certainly encumbering sort. Just as the various colonial possessions--quite apart from their economic benefit to metropolitan Europe--were useful as places to send wayward sons, superfluous populations of delinquents, poor people, and other undesirables, so the Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe.”¹³⁸

What Said argued can be clearly seen in Marta’s reaction. In Marta’s words, the Orient is depicted as a hub of deviance, where the Westerner can experience all his pervert fantasies. There is an economy of desire, a supply-demand equilibrium between the European and the Oriental. These two endlessly construct and determine while simultaneously exclude each other. “Why the Orient seems still to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, deep generative energies, is something on which one could speculate ... one must acknowledge its importance as something eliciting complex responses, sometimes even a frightening self-discovery, in the Orientalists...”¹³⁹

The abandoned building that Francesco and Marta visit is another signifier of discovery and transformation. The building was constructed by an Italian architect in 1921 and both Francesco and Marta unknowingly get in the same building in which they find a click that lead to change in their lives. This is where Francesco feels he belongs to here and cannot turn back to Rome and where Marta internalizes the fact that Francesco is not who he was. The building signifies the Westerner’s indigenous identities now abandoned in the Orient. Francesco confesses to Marta that he was not content with his life in Rome. He talks about how warmhearted the people are, how they care about him and how Mehmet listens to him, understands him and dignifies him. The next morning Marta is ready to leave. Before she leaves, Francesco gives her Madam Anita’s letters to read and give back to him. Marta reads the letters on a ferry as Francesco did before. She goes to see Oscar, an old friend of Madam Anita. Oscar says, “All this odor of oldness makes me sick, but I am a masochist, I just can’t leave this place.” These scenes suggest that the Orient, as Said acknowledges, is where Francesco finds answers about his life, thereby discovering and reconstructing himself

¹³⁸ Said, 1979, 190.

¹³⁹ Said, 1979, 188.

and where Oscar, Madam Anita, and eventually Marta are inexplicably and happily stuck in.

In the final scene, upon Francesco's death, Marta is in the hamam that Francesco and all the others have worked hard to repair. This scene is a replication of Francesco's first tour in the hamam. Marta moves very slowly, examining every detail and breathing the atmosphere in the hamam. In the meantime, we hear Marta's letter to Mehmet who went away after Francesco's death. Marta smokes with Madam's cigarette holder. She seems to have taken the place of Madam Anita. It is clear she will be the next owner of the hamam and the next person to have turned into a new person in the Orient.

3.3. *Zenne Dancer*

Directed by Caner Alper and Mehmet Binay and inspired by true events, *Zenne Dancer* (2012) is the only fiction film in the past two decades that stands as a pioneer with its depiction of a gay character's life and a queer relationship different from the mainstream films. *Zenne Dancer* is an important film in Turkey's cinema with its humanistic approach to the lived experiences of Oriental homosexuals and to the love affair between Daniel and Ahmet. In this part, the film is analyzed with regard to its representation of the Orient, Oriental characters and socio-political structure. There is also a quest for a reproduction of the Orientalist discourse and whether the film is another cultural product in which latent Orientalism is at work.

Year:	2012
Genre:	Biography, Drama, Romance
Technical Specifications:	99' / 35 mm. / 16:9 HD / Color
Country:	Turkey
Producer(s):	M. Caner Alper & Mehmet Binay
Company:	Medya Vizyon
Director(s):	M. Caner Alper & Mehmet Binay
Writer(s):	Caner Alper

Cast:	Kerem Can (Can), Giovanni Arvaneh (Daniel Bert), Erkan Avcı (Ahmet), Tilbe Saran (Sevgi), Rüçhan Çalışkur (Kezban), Ünal Silver (Yılmaz), Jale Arıkan (Şükran), Tolga Tekin (Cihan), Esmem Madra (Hatice), Hülya Duyar (Müjgan), Mehmet Bozdoğan (Kerem), Aykut Kayacık (Zindan), Yvonne Rosenbaum (Emmanuella), Bulut Reyhan (Cavit), İhsan Gören (Military Jury #1)
Cinematographer:	Norayr Kasper
Art Director(s):	Hüseyin Binay, Maja Zogg
Editor(s):	Jasmin Guso
Release Date:	13 January 2012

3.3.1. Plot Summary

In the 2012 movie *Zenne Dancer* aka *Zenne* by Caner Alper and Mehmet Binay, the main characters are Can, Ahmet, and Daniel. Can is the protagonist, the zenne dancer, who lives in Istanbul with his aunt Şükran and her partner. His mother and elder brother live together in İzmir. Can cannot stay in his own house as he is a draft dodger. The police regularly visit his mother's house to find out if he is there. Can's mother is a widower whose husband served in the military and lost his life in an armed conflict in Mardin. His elder brother Cihan is a half-insane and an alcoholic veteran soldier. Can, as the only 'marginal' member of the family defies heteronormativities that are enforced by the society.

Ahmet comes from a deeply conservative family living in Urfa. Ahmet's mother Kezban is the head of the family, everybody, even her husband is beware of her. The father is a submissive man; he cannot defy his wife's rule. Ahmet's sister is a university student in Istanbul and two siblings stay together in a flat. However, the sister was actually sent to Istanbul to keep an eye on her brother and take care of his needs. Every time Ahmet clears out, his sister makes up lies on the phone for her mother. Kezban is like a surveillance tower. She wants to know about each step Ahmet takes and she also

hires men to follow Ahmet in Istanbul. Whenever the parents visit Ahmet and his sister or talk to them on the phone, they tell Ahmet to do his military service and turn back to his hometown to take care of his father's business which is on the brink of bankruptcy. Ahmet's difference has been known by the family members since his childhood as he has always liked to dance in a ballerina costume and put on make-up. Although the father and the sister do not care much about his different tendencies, the mother is very strict about this and she beats and punishes him for his girlish attitudes during his childhood. Ahmet's tendency to behave and dress like a girl is suppressed, which eventually leads to his being ashamed of who he is and how he feels like.

Daniel is a German photographer who travels around to take photos. Before Istanbul he is shown in Afghanistan taking photos of the people whose lives are ruined by the war. Throughout the film, we watch scenes depicting his days in Afghanistan taking photos. One day, Daniel's insistence of taking a photo of the Afghan children causes their death as Daniel's trying to catch the perfect shot leads them to step on a mine. For a long time, he cannot feel relieved of the guilt, and he comes to Istanbul to feel "*more protected and safe, far from all that dust and the fire*" and to have one last chance in life. Here he meets Ahmet with whom he develops an emotional intimacy.

The obligatory military service is the biggest trouble for Can and Ahmet as both of them are draft dodgers. Frustrated by the fugitive life, both decide to get the certificate of exemption from military service by documenting their homosexuality. By this way, Can will be free to go out and visit her mother in İzmir and Ahmet will be able to flee to Germany with Daniel. After getting the certificate of exemption, Ahmet calls his father to confess about his homosexuality and begs for pardon. Upon this news, the father, although very sad and unwilling, comes to Istanbul and kills his son before he and his partner Daniel manage to leave. He "cleans the stain on their honor." When the father turns back home, he commits suicide.

3.3.2. The Quest for Orientalist Gaze in *Zenne Dancer*

As with *Il Bagno Turco*, Orientalist gaze in *Zenne Dancer* can be traced both on the path the camera takes and on intra-diegetic gaze. To start with the intra-diegetic gaze, Daniel's being a photographer is the leading indicator of the Western gaze and voyeur. Throughout the film, we watch scenes depicting Daniel's days in Afghanistan taking photos, so the Oriental is gazed at by the Western eye. Photographed are men, veiled

women, children all weakened and impoverished by the war, ruined buildings, tenements, dusty streets. Even caused by the war, the Orient is shown in a complete dirt and poverty which together echo with underdevelopment, poor health, and ignorance. Afghanistan is associated with war and danger, which is a piece of quite an Orientalist discourse. Again, the photos that Daniel takes in Afghanistan, signified with war and chaos picture the country with a perfectly Orientalist point of view. In the film, Afghanistan is pictured as a hub of chaos, danger, destruction, and poverty (See Figure 16).



Figure 16: Afghanistan from Daniel's camera

Besides, his insistence on taking photos of the Afghan children posing exactly the way he wants them to and his insistence on changing Ahmet's life symbolize the Westerner's desire to permeate, on which Edward Said writes the following:

“... Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, "us") and the strange (the Orient, the East, "them"). This vision in a sense created and then served the two worlds thus conceived. Orientals lived in their world, "we" lived in ours. The vision and material reality propped each other up, kept each other going. A certain freedom of intercourse was always the Westerner's privilege; because his was the stronger culture, he could penetrate, he could wrestle with, he could give shape and meaning to the great Asiatic mystery, as Disraeli once called it.”¹⁴⁰

In a dialogue between an Afghan guy and Daniel, the Afghani says the children love Daniel for the chocolates he gives them, and they remember their dead fathers when they look at him. The West is what destructs. The West takes the fathers of the children

¹⁴⁰ Said, 1979, 44-45.

of the Orient and appoints itself as their new father. Accordingly, in their conversations, Daniel states that he cannot understand the reason behind Ahmet's being so beware of living the way he feels and tries to convince him to break free of his chains. Daniel is like the statue of the prevalent and the mighty West, trying to be more and more involved in the Oriental mystery to be able to give shape and meaning to it. He appoints himself as the savior of Ahmet upon causing the death of Afghan children. However, his desire to know and shape leads to the destruction of the Oriental. He asks the question "What could possibly happen?" twice; first, when the Afghani guide tells him that he is taking him to the safest places to take photos and second, when Ahmet tells him that he cannot be honest to his parents about his homosexuality. Daniel's question "What could possibly happen?" is the signifier of the great difference between the West and the East in terms of being 'civilized.' And this is also the question that caused the destruction of the Oriental as Daniel's insistence results in the killing of Afghani children and Ahmet. The West's aspiration to "civilize" eventually destroys the Oriental.

Following the catastrophic incidence in Afghanistan in which he causes the death of children, he cannot feel relieved of the guilt for a long time, and he comes to Istanbul to feel "*more protected and safe, far from all that dust and the fire.*" He defines Istanbul as a safer place to be while he says he is not a romantic person and he does not believe in fairy tales, and this is not his reason to come to Istanbul. Although he does not clearly state his reason to come to Istanbul, the spectator understands from his voice-over just in the beginning of the film that he is in search of answers and "*one last chance*" for happiness in life. Daniel's quest for happiness or answers is analogous to Westerner's turning their gaze to the Other for self-discovery. Daniel, who signifies the West, looks at the Oriental, takes pictures of anything that belongs to it and eventually blends in the Orient, finds what makes him happy in the Orient.

Daniel's desire to know more and take photographs of the zenne dancer signifies curious Western gaze and has the overtones of Orientalist paintings or illustrations of dancing boys both by Western and Oriental painters. Two examples are Paul Avril's illustration named *Depravities in the Desert* (See Figure 17) for Hector France's fictionalized travel narrative *Musk, Hashish, and Blood* (1886), the illustration of dancing boys in a hamam (See Figure 4) by Münif Fehim Özerman (date unknown),

and the engraving *Danseur Turc* (1714) (See Figure 18) by Gerard Jean Baptiste Scotin.



Figure 17: Depravities in the Desert (1886) - Paul Avril's illustration for France's *Musk, Hashish, and Blood* (1886)

Allen Joseph Boone, *Homoerotics of Orientalism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), xix.



Figure 18: Danseur Turc (1714) - Engraving by Gérard Jean Baptiste Scotin

Allen Joseph Boone, *Homoerotics of Orientalism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 103.

In the first two, the effeminate male body is explicitly illustrated as the object of male voyeuristic gaze and desire. The dancing boys are characterized by femininity as opposed to their macho-looking male spectators. There is a distinction between the roles attributed to males as the lookers are the holders of active male gaze while the ones being looked at are passive feminized objects, which suggests that the passive objects of active male gaze are considered effeminate homosexuals. In *Danseur Turc*, on the other hand, the effeminate male body is the direct object of the spectator's gaze. However, there is also extra-diegetic gaze here as the dancer looks directly at the

spectator. In this painting, the spectator is both positioned as the active looker and caught up in their voyeuristic gaze.

On the part of the representation of an effeminate Oriental body, the first dance scene in *Zenne Dancer* speaks a lot and this language is analogous to the illustrations of dancing boys. In the beginning of the film, there is a dance scene of Can, watched by a male audience, including Daniel (See Figure 19). The camera synchronically dances with Can as it plays around close-ups, medium shots, reverse angle shots, and over-the-shoulder shots (See Figures 19, 20, 21, 22, 23). In particular, the close-ups are utilized to highlight intra-diegetic voyeuristic gaze. There is a go-between in different positions: the camera is either positioned on a level with the holder of a subjective Orientalist gaze (See Figures 21 & 22) or it occupies an objective position from where it displays intra-diegetic voyeuristic gaze (See Figure 23).



Figure 19: Daniel watching Can's performance (intra-diegetic voyeuristic gaze)

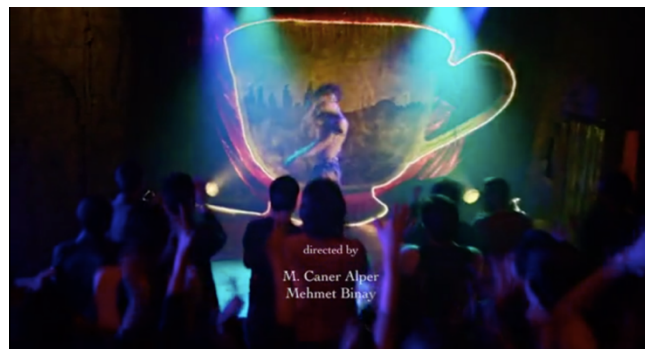
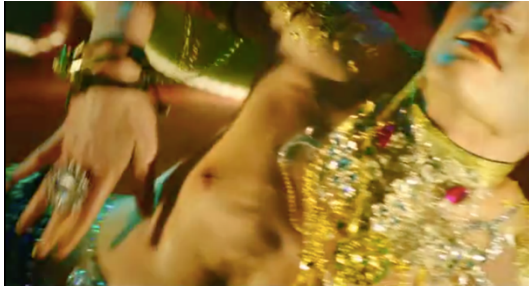


Figure 20: Intra-diegetic voyeuristic gaze



Figures 21 & 22: The camera positioned on a level with the holder of a subjective Orientalist gaze



Figure 23: The camera occupying an objective position from where it displays intra-diegetic voyeuristic gaze

As it was mentioned previously, the belly dancers are like a prerequisite to draw an Orientalist imagery. Can's body, as a zenne dancer, is an immediate object of male gaze/voyeur. In the dance performance the zenne dancer is the object of the combined gaze of the film spectator and the intra-diegetic audience. During his performances, parts of his body are shown in close-ups. Although there are several non-straight characters in the movie, Can's is the body that is displayed the most, serving for the Orientalist gaze as an object of desire with the costumes ornate with paillettes, froufrou, and tulle. In this sense, the effeminate dancing body signifies the feminized or homoeroticized Orient, objectified and passivized by the phallogentric gaze. As Daniel comes to the night club, watches Can's performance and wants to take artistic photographs of him, he becomes an Oriental object of Western male gaze.

3.3.3. Orientalist Imagery in *Zenne Dancer*

As the significant indicators of overall Orientalist imagery, Can's and Ahmet's beings (which signify the Orient), both as social subjects and cinematic elements are objectified, suppressed and literally incarcerated. Can's life is like a prison; he cannot walk around in day time, he has to work as a fortuneteller to earn a little bit more, he cannot even visit his mother who lives in İzmir. His being entrapped is regularly

pictured throughout the film in his dance scenes. Dancing in a cage and a rooster that he carries in a cage (See Figures 24 & 25) with himself are the other leitmotifs in the film which reinforce the image of entrapment and complications of being the Other and a difference to the heteronormativities. What Can longs for is to be able to perform his dance freely and be known for his art. He dreams of himself dancing in white costumes on the clouds, which stands for his desire to fly free as a bird. Likewise, Ahmet is continually displayed as in danger and in fear for he tries to escape both the police and the man following him. From this perspective, Can and Ahmet signify the Oriental in danger and in need of being rescued. Daniel, signifying the West, is pictured as the potential savior of Ahmet. The signs of the Western rescue phantasy can be traced in this film, differently from that in *Il Bagno Turco*. The Western rescue phantasy is latently at work on the same axis in both films; however, the difference manifests in the depiction of what is to be rescued: a hamam in *Il Bagno Turco* and a homosexual man in *Zenne Dancer*.

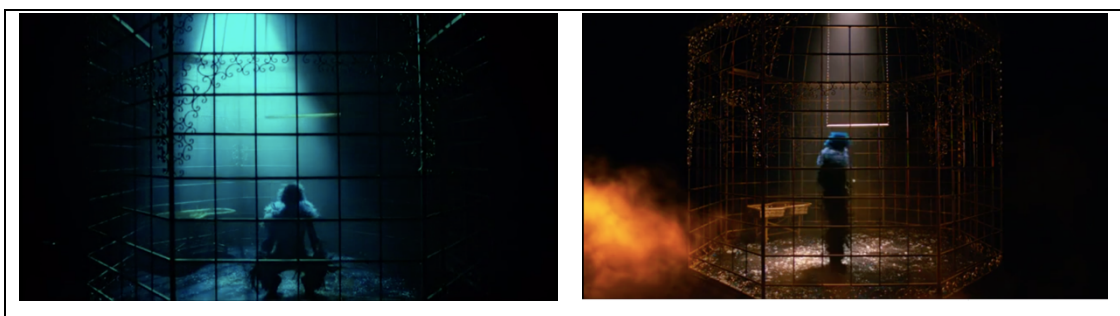


Figure 24: Can dancing in a cage



Figure 25: Can's rooster in a cage

Although Istanbul is first a safe port for Daniel, as the story develops, it turns out that it is actually a cage that incarcerates almost all the characters. Ahmet's uneasiness because of the man his mother hired to follow him, Can's being scared of the young men on the street as he thinks they will attack him, their fear of being caught by the

police for being draft-dodgers are altogether the signifiers of the eeriness of the Orient. And eventually, with the torture that Can is exposed to and the murder of Ahmet by his own father, the Orient is literally granted back its characteristic of pre-modernity or backwardness and will to destroy. Daniel, the signifier of the West with his camera, is the watcher of the Orient. Accordingly, the photographs that he takes in Afghanistan include the ones that picture birds in cages which signify the Orient. The cage is utilized here as the metaphor of being entrapped and Daniel takes photos of birds in cages (See Figure 26) with a latent motivation to depict this entrapment. His desire to be involved is thwarted by the destructive nature of the Orient. Therefore, he is destined to stay as a watcher, and the only thing he can do is to imprint and seal the Orient on frames that he can carry with him.



Figure 26: Birds in cages in Afghanistan

With regard to the other characters, almost all the Oriental males are given in an imagery which defies normative masculinity. On homoeroticism of the Oriental, Edward Said writes that the colonies had more to offer than raw materials to the West: “Just as the various colonial possessions -quite apart from their economic benefit to metropolitan Europe- ... the Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe”.¹⁴¹ Accordingly, most Oriental men in the film manifest in a homosexual imagery; whether implicitly or not, Can, Ahmet, Ahmet’s

¹⁴¹ Afary & Anderson, **Foucault**, 289.

father, the men Ahmet meets on the streets are all portrayed to be non-straight or non-hetero. Ahmet's father is called *fagot* by his wife. When she says Ahmet was born *male* but could not manage to be a *man*, she uses the expression "*the pear does not fall away from its tree.*" She accuses/blames her husband for her son's homosexuality and for not destroying him when he was little.

Daniel, as the only Western male character, is portrayed in a way that the spectator understands that he goes through a transformation in the Orient with an Oriental man. And the evidence of his transformation in the Orient is given with his growing a moustache on Ahmet's demand, indulging in delicious food (See Figure 27) and the beauties of Istanbul which signify the Oriental self-indulgence and jouissance, trying to speak Turkish, and the telephone conversations with Germany getting shorter. Gradually he is blended in the culture and he starts to feel content with the person he has turned into.

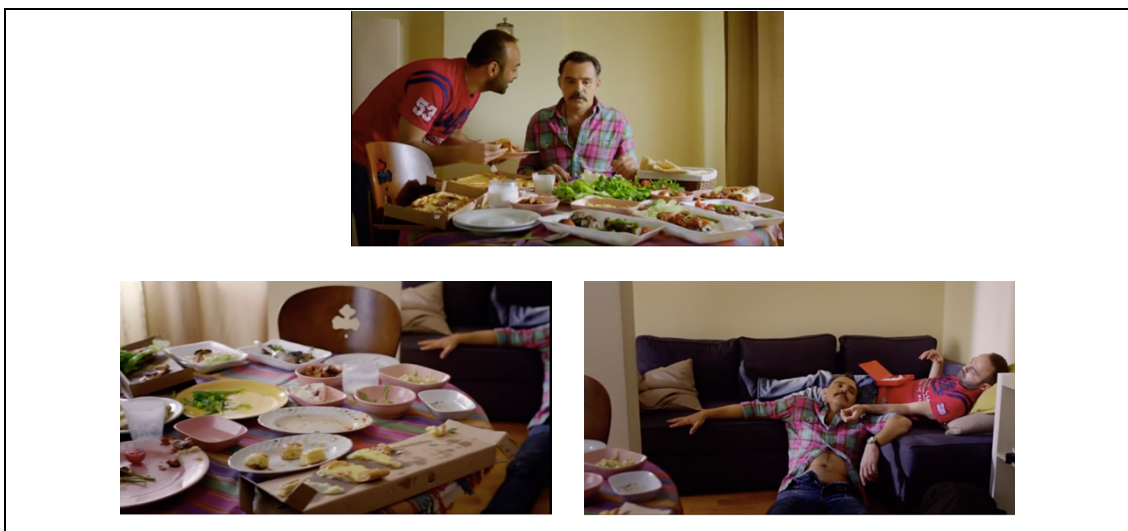


Figure 27: Oriental self-indulgence, laziness and jouissance

Daniel's female friend from Germany frequently calls him and from their conversations it is found out that they had a relationship before; however, they are no longer together as things have changed about Daniel since he came to the Orient. In one of their conversations, the woman mocks Daniel by saying "*Why don't you adopt a gay child from each Third World country? You would set up a commune of rainbow bears for yourself.*" This is an explicit example of the queerness attributed to the Oriental by the Western.

The Oriental female characters of the film are given in an imagery that is framed by abundance, being entrapped, and being in pain. The Oriental female characters are the

members of Ahmet's and Can's families and the only Western female character is Daniel's friend in Germany whose imagery is drawn upon mobility and independence; she is also the only employed female character in the film. On the other hand, despite presenting the differences in their lifestyles, the film objectifies and limits options for the Oriental women. However, there are representations that break free of stereotypical imagery, as well.

Ahmet's mother is a woman who seems to have devoted her life to her son as she is sick of her husband's submissiveness and impotence. Her imagery is characterized by religiousness, conventionality, and conservativeness. She demands male domination and the lack of a masculine power in her house leads her to be the masculine power itself. So her devotion to her son is actually to annihilate his difference. She cuts Ahmet's colorful T-shirts off whenever she visits their house in Istanbul. The white T-shirts of Ahmet are the symbols of heterosexuality and cleanliness while the colorful ones are of homosexuality, deviance, and dirt. In *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault suggests that "Discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise... it is a modest, suspicious power, which functions as a calculated, but permanent economy... The success of disciplinary power derives no doubt from the use of simple instruments; hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement and their combination in a procedure that is specific to it, the examination."¹⁴² Among all the others, Ahmet's mother is most specifically portrayed as both the object and the instrument of dominating gaze. She acts as the instrument of hierarchical observation, examination and there is no doubt that she tries to normalize and make her son a *man*. In a dialogue with her husband, she blames him for not killing Ahmet when he was little, when she found out that he would be a *zenne* dancer in the future. Upon her husband's referring to conscience, she responds that *the custom is bigger than conscience*. She is obsessed with cleaning and she is pictured most of the time either praying, cleaning or making her daughter clean the house. It is like she is trying to pay the dues for and get rid of the *stain* her husband and her son cast on their family. Although she seems to be a dominant female character as opposed to stereotypical female imagery, actually she

¹⁴² Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 170.

does not speak for herself, but the custom speaks for her, which locates her as both the object and instrument of dominating gaze.

The imagery of three female characters, Can's aunt, Ahmet's sister and Can's mother, stand as a difference to stereotypes, as well. Can's aunt Şükran is a widower who lived in Germany before she moved back to Turkey. It is implied that she worked as a hostess or the like but then she quit as she could not bear the sexual harassment of her boss. Now she lives on Can's earnings and her partner's support although she does not know and ask for it. When she finds out that her partner secretly pays for the rent, she goes crazy. She also does not want to get married to her partner. These are elements that complicate a stereotypical imagery of an Oriental woman. She also stands as a difference as she supports Can and his lifestyle, and even makes his stage costumes. On the other hand, how the story develops and ends for Şükran is quite stereotypical as she gives birth to a child, becomes a "mother" and reconciles with the idea of having her partner in her life. It is not explained whether they get married or not, but they become parents. Şükran's having lived in Germany for a while and having turned back to Turkey might be a stand point for her character analysis. She is an "in-between" woman with characteristics which complicate a stereotypical Western(ized) or Oriental imagery. Secondly, Ahmet's sister who was sent to Istanbul to keep an eye on her brother and take care of his needs, not for the original purpose of education, is not portrayed doing anything for herself or expressing herself; she always cleans the house, serves the family, and assists her brother on whom her life literally turns around. Her femininity turns her into nobody. However, in the end, following the death of her brother and father, she turns back to Istanbul, alone; this time her imagery is characterized by self-confidence and determination illustrated with letting her hair free. Her transformation is elemental in that it stands as a counteract to disciplinary power. On the part of Can's mother who lives with her elder son Cihan in İzmir, she is half-incarcerated in her house as she cannot leave her son alone.

This is again reinforced with the leitmotif of cage. In several scenes (See Figure 28) displaying Can's mother at home, the camera is positioned behind the bars on her house's windows. She lost her husband in an armed conflict; her elder son has lost his mind in the military and her younger son Can is a gay dancer whom she cannot see because he is a draft-dodger. However, in the end, following Can's getting the document of exemption and Cihan's being sent to mental hospital, she gets back her



Figure 28: Can's mother behind bars on windows

freedom illustrated with her going to the seaside, a pleasure which she has been deprived of for a long time. In both imageries, there is a sacrifice; Ahmet's sister will probably not be seeing her mother throughout her life and Can's mother will be detached from her elder son. However, at the end of the day, they get rid of their chains.

3.4. Auf Der Anderen Seite aka Yaşamın Kıyısında

Auf Der Anderen Seite aka Yaşamın Kıyısında (2007), directed by Fatih Akın and Betül Akın is a film the story of which is built on being on the edge as the film's title suggests.

Year:	2007
Genre:	Drama
Technical Specifications:	115' / 35 mm. / 1.85:1 / Color
Country:	Germany, Turkey, Italy
Producer(s):	Fatih Akın, Klaus Maeck
Company:	Anka Film & Corazon International
Director(s):	Fatih Akın
Writer(s):	Fatih Akın
Cast:	Baki Davrak (Nejat), Nurgül Yeşilçay (Aytan), Tuncel Kurtiz (Ali), Nursel Köse (Yeter), Patrycia Ziolkowska (Lotte), Hanna Schygulla (Susanne).

Cinematographer:	Rainer Klausmann
Art Director(s):	Seth Turner
Editor(s):	Andrew Bird
Release Date:	26 October 2007

3.4.1. Plot Summary

The Turkish immigrant father and son, Ali and Nejat, live in Germany where Nejat works as a professor of German language at a University in Hamburg. Ali is a widower who decides to weather his loneliness by proposing Yeter, a prostitute, to live with him in return for an amount of money on a monthly basis. Yeter, who is being threatened by two Turkish conservatives to give up prostitution, accepts Ali's offer which is an opportunity to regularly send money to her daughter Ayten living in Turkey. When Nejat meets Yeter and finds out about her profession, he is first displeased; however, he reconciles with her upon learning that she sends money to her daughter. Upon Yeter's being unintentionally killed by Ali, Nejat decides to go to Turkey and find Ayten. However, he is stuck in his homeland which he has never thought of turning back to and starts to live in Istanbul where he is now the owner of a house and a bookstore.

Ayten is a member of an illegal armed political group in Turkey which, in her words, fights for 100% human rights, 100% freedom of speech, and 100% social education. Following a police raid, she flees to Germany where she meets Lotte and falls in love with her. Lotte is a university student who lives with her mother Susanne. The mother and daughter have differing political stands; while Lotte is for equal rights for everyone, Susanne holds her bias against foreigners. Although she does not approve of their lesbian relationship, Susanne hires an attorney when Ayten is arrested and tries to help her in her demand for political asylum which is denied by the German court.

Following Ayten's deportation and incarceration in Turkey, Lotte decides to go to Turkey to help her and fight for her freedom. She hires a room of Nejat's house and waits for the day she can get a permission to visit Ayten in prison. On the visiting day, Ayten secretly gives Lotte the address of the block at the rooftop of which she had hidden a gun, tells her to get it and that somebody will come and take it from her. Lotte

follows the instructions, takes the gun, and on her way back home, she is held up by a group of street children who grab her bag and run away. Lotte runs after them and eventually she finds them in the backyard of a ruined building. However, death comes so easy for her as she is shot by one of the thinner addict children with the gun she got to help Ayten. Susanne comes to Istanbul to find out about Lotte's days in Istanbul where he meets Lotte's landowner Nejat, and following a couple of days in Istanbul, she decides to stay and settle down in this city.

3.4.2. The Quest for Orientalist Gaze and Orientalist Imagery in *Auf Der Anderen Seite*

Auf Der Anderen Seite elaborates from a perspective of East-West opposition on 'being on the other side.' Istanbul signifies the Orient, and Germany, the West. On the part of the characters, Ali, Ayten, and Yeter signify the Oriental while the Western imagery is given via Lotte, Susanne and Nejat. As the position that the camera occupies is more or less in line with the intra-diegetic gaze and the overall imagery, the film is analyzed in terms of the overall Orientalist gaze and Orientalist imagery under the same title.

To start with the characters, Lotte and Susanne represent two extremes of Orientalism. In Ayten's first dialogue with Susanne, Susanne tries to learn as much as possible about who she really is. Ayten talks about what they fight for in Turkey, and Susanne refers to the EU admission process of Turkey as a hopeful situation for the solution of their problems. However, Ayten says the EU countries are all colonists, and their organization is fighting against globalization. The dialogue follows as:

Susanne: Maybe you're a person who just likes to fight.

Ayten: Do you think I'm crazy? If a country kills its people just because they think differently, you fight back.

Susanne: Maybe things will get better once you get into the EU.

Ayten: Fuck the EU!

*Susanne: You cannot talk like that in **my** house, you can talk like that in **your** house.*

Ayten speaks from a typically Occidental point of view and her attitude is characterized by rigor. On the part of Susanne, she is not very welcoming towards this stranger, but she tries to stay calm and be kind during their conversation. Her reference

to the East-West opposition from upon *your house-my house* metaphors is a reminder of slum versus elite neighborhood. Susanne explicitly shows a classic Orientalist approach as she believes that the Orient, by definition, is a hub of conflict and may be tamed by the West.

Lotte, on the other hand, is a romantic Orientalist looking for a meaning for her life in the Orient. Ayten is the object of her gaze as we watch Lotte, so to say, interrogate her a little while after they meet. She asks questions about what she does, why she is in Germany, and where she stays. Their conversation is given in a shot/reverse shot in which Lotte asks and Ayten replies. Each shot of Ayten's answers isolates her and traps her in her situation illustrating being *looked-at-ness* (See Figure 29). The Oriental, signified with Ayten and her mysterious state, is the object of knowledge and desire for the Western. Ayten is also the character by whom the Oriental is homoeroticized as she initiates a lesbian relationship with Lotte by kissing her at the bar. She explains why she is so obsessed with helping Ayten by saying that her life has a meaning now. This explicitly stands as an illustration both of the Western rescue phantasy and will to know for a potential self-discovery in the Orient(al). What is more, Lotte is depicted as being more and more attracted to this mysterious Oriental throughout her days in İstanbul while gradually drifting apart from the West, which is signified by the shortening telephone conversations with his mother back in Germany.



Figure 29: The mysterious Oriental as the object of knowledge and desire for the Western

Although Susanne disapproves Ayten's activities, the language she uses, and her non-straight relationship with her daughter, she helps Ayten and pays for her attorney for a year. What is more, following Lotte's death, Susanne turns into a mother-like figure in Ayten's life. From the perspective of Lotte's and Susanne's will to help her, Ayten is "the woman to be rescued" (See Figure 30) by the romantic Orientalists from the dangers of the Orient. And in the end, Ayten is scraped off her marginality and she turns into a "Western mother's" daughter; so to speak, the Oriental is rescued and cared for by the West.

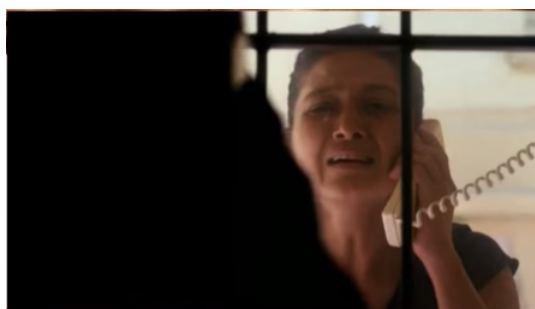


Figure 30: Ayten as the Oriental woman to be rescued

Nejat, as a Turkish man who lives in Germany and works as a professor of German language, feels more like a Westerner than an Easterner and does not dream of turning back to his homeland. He signifies the West(ernized); born and raised in Germany, modernized and more 'European'; gentleman, sophisticated, wise, and respectful towards women. He represents an Oriental Orientalist illustrated with his critical attitudes towards his father's typical Turkish macho conduct and the negligence of Turkish people about protecting their values. In a conversation between Susanne and Nejat on an abandoned old house, Susanne asks why such a valuable building is neglected and Nejat explains it with moral corruptness and uncivilization. In line with this, Nejat is also the signifier of the civilizing role the West attributes to itself. He comes to Turkey with the intention of finding and helping Ayten. He goes to the police station to get help in his search for her. On the question of the police officer about why he is trying to help Ayten, Nejat, a very well Westernized Turk, replies that knowledge and education are human rights. The police officer finds this answer very naïve and asks why he does not think of helping one of the hundreds of Kurdish children who are forced to kill or steal because of poverty and ignorance. Nejat is portrayed as the representative of all the supreme values that the West holds vis-a-vis the ignorant Orient. This theme is replicated in the scene of Lotte's visit to the German embassy

where her demands are cared and welcome, which is a clear sign of the West's respect for human life. On the other hand, when she goes to the body of lawyers in Istanbul to find out what she can do for Ayten, the Turkish officer is a little bit of sarcastic about her naïveté and demand to see Ayten. When she cries "What kind of a law is this?!" he replies: "*This is Turkey.*" Another moment from the film that points out to Oriental ignorance and backwardness is when the previous German owner of the bookstore that Nejat buys in Istanbul defines the city as 'a little bit dead on the part of culture and literature' and he says he yearns for his days in Germany. He sounds like he came to Istanbul mesmerized by its exotism; however, he was disappointed by what he found in reality.

On the part of the Eastern characters, Nejat's father Ali signifies the Orient with his stereotypically Oriental male imagery; rude, swearing, turning into a monster when drunk, jealous, thinking of women as men's property and inflicting violence on them (See Figure 31).



Figure 31: Ali, signifying the Oriental villain

The Oriental female is signified by Yeter, Ayten and Ayten's fellows. Beside their imagery as the Other just for being a woman, the Oriental female characters are portrayed as Others for prostituting, involving in political activities considered illegal or being in a non-straight relationship. Yeter is a woman who prostitutes to be able to send money to her daughter. She is not looked after by her relatives in Turkey, nobody knows her whereabouts, and her daughter thinks she works in a shoe store. Two Turkish men threaten Yeter for prostituting by saying that as a Muslim woman from Turkey, she cannot go on like this, she should quit and beg for mercy. As an outlet, she accepts Ali's offer to live with him. However, she soon finds out that Ali also regards her as his property, and the first time she resists his rudeness, she is beaten, and eventually, despite by accident, killed by him. Both as a bread-winner and an

abiding and serving housewife, Yeter is represented as an object to satisfy (and eventually turns into the victim of) phallogentric male ego. Ayten's otherness as a female is coupled by her being Kurdish, lesbian, and a political extremist. Despite her displayed strength and rebellion, her fragility manifests when she is turned down by her fellows. Just like Yeter, she is not looked for by her relatives; nobody from her family knows anything about her; she is pictured as a lonely woman. Her posture is like a man, she speaks like a man; in a quarrel with one of her male fellows in Germany, she cries "You yack like a woman!" So, Ayten's imagery embodies multiple opposing characteristics, problematizing a straight-ahead signification and definition. Yet, it is possible to find characterizations that apply to Yeter and Ayten from Helen Carr's analogy on the Oriental and female (See Section 2.3.). Yeter is represented as "ripe for government, needing leadership and guidance, described always in terms of lack" and Ayten as "outside society, dangerous, emotional, inconstant, wild, threatening, sexually aberrant, and unpredictable"¹⁴³ (See Figure 32). These two characters are the embodiment of multiple othernesses. Overall, in the film, there is a different imagery of the Oriental women than the stereotypical housewife serving men. However, the tones of Orientalism manifest in different forms, particularly in how the story ends for the Oriental women. Yeter is killed and as the holder of the most self-contained personage, Ayten's marginality ends in imprisonment, then being rescued and figuratively adopted by a Western woman.



Figure 32: Ayten pictured as rebellious and wild

Other aspects regarding the imagery of the political structure in the Orient are slipperiness and lack of true fellowship, which is exemplified with the attitudes of Ayten's fellows and of Turkish officers. When Ayten flees to Germany penniless, she borrows money from one of her fellows but when she cannot pay it back, the fellow

¹⁴³ Carr (1985) in Ania Loomba, 2015, 160.

gets so angry and kicks her out. In another example, one of her fellows in prison threatens her with death if she happens to put the future of the organization in danger. The same fellow, upon learning that Ayten gets out of the jail benefiting from the remorse law, curses her by calling her a whore and a traitor. On the part of the state officers, hypocrisy is given via their coming to talk to Ayten following the death of Lotte. They offer help in return of her help as there is an international crisis about the death of Lotte in Istanbul. They are ironically kind towards Ayten to be true in a situation like this compared to the imagery of the police in their treatment of the political extremists as depicted in previous scenes of the film. There is a confliction between the two representations of the Turkish police in the film, which is used as a signifier of uncanny Oriental.

Hints of Orientalism are also given with scenes of May Day demonstrations from Germany and Turkey. In Germany, it is pictured as just another day, people and bands march with banners and slogans; no police force is ready, passersby watch the demonstrators, and there is no chaotic atmosphere. Germany is the signifier of the Western common sense. On the other hand, May Day demonstrations in Istanbul are characterized by a dominance of political extremism and conflict signifying the chaotic Orient (See Figure 33).



Figure 33: May Day demonstrations from Germany and Turkey

Overall, the socio-political imagery in *Auf Der Anderen Seite* is drawn upon straight, mighty, all-correct, lawful, and savior West against chaotic, unlawful, and despotic Orient. The political structure pertaining to the Orient is characterized by obscurity on the part of the treatment of political extremists, slipperiness, indifference or lack of true mercy and intimacy while the political structure of the West is ornate with respect towards people's dignity and human rights, and lawfulness.

4. CONCLUSION

In films with Orientalist elements, the cinematic gaze corresponds to the masculine Western gaze in the heteronormative plane. The technique and the narrative are organized so as to achieve spectator's identification with the camera and ornate the looker with the omnipresent power of masculine orientation. The visible/the one being looked at is not the subject but the object of power and in this context, the Orient is located as the passive, feminized or homoeroticized object of the Western eye. The analysis of the films *Il Bagno Turco*, *Zenne Dancer*, and *Auf Der Anderen Seite* in this study demonstrates that these films exhibit the footprints of the Orientalist discourse at the latent plane despite the picture's being complicated by the fragmentations of Orientalism at the manifest plane.

To begin with *Il Bagno Turco*, beyond any doubt, it is a ground-breaking film appraised particularly for portraying, though superficially, a homosexual love affair. It also offers quite a mild atmosphere for the spectator as it romanticizes Istanbul and hamam together with the protagonists. In his review of the film, Rıza Kıracı criticizes the film from a similar point of view. He asserts that the film confuses the spectator at the intersection point of highly stylized relationships with an Orientalist discourse. He argues that the story is a little far-fetched as homosexuality is ascribed to the atmosphere of the hamam, but the cause-effect relationship in-between is depicted weakly, its narration of biological and emotional/sensational change in men and women is too stylized, there is no depiction of an in-depth homosexual tendency, and the Italian character is murdered in the end.¹⁴⁴ When analyzed for Orientalist elements from the perspective of sexual difference, the film definitely embodies Orientalist subject-positioning. The spectator watches the film from the perspective of the Italian characters and identifies with them; the representatives of the modern, straight, sovereign/superior West. The camera holds an Orientalist gaze in that the Western characters represent the "look" and the Orient signified with a hamam representing

¹⁴⁴ Rıza Kıracı, "90'lı Yılların Türk Sinemasına Genel Bir Bakış: Şiddet, Oryantalizm ve Minimalizm", 25. *Kare*, 31 (2000): 11-17.

“*to-be-looked-at-ness*.” The West is also characterized by the male-oriented desire to know, control, and govern as the Italians Madam Anita, Francesco and Marta successively develop a curious eye on the Orient, blend in the culture with the desire to know more, own, and run the hamam. In this context, hamam signifies the Orient as an object of knowledge and desire, a site of phantasm, and a mystery to unveil. Throughout the film, the hamam passes from Madam Anita’s hand first to Francesco and then to Marta, which is a clear illustration of the Western as rescuers and owners of the Oriental in danger.

On the same axis, in *Zenne Dancer*, the costumes and the music in the dance performances of the zenne dancer and the performance of the body itself altogether stand for the queer, mysterious and phantasmatic Orient, a perfect object for the Western eye. The Western character, Daniel, is the looker, which is particularly reinforced by his being a photographer. And the objects of his gaze are Can the zenne dancer, and Ahmet, his lover. Again, as the objects of his curious eye, the Orient and the Oriental are romanticized and homoeroticized via this subject-positioning in the film. This time, the object of the rescue phantasy is Ahmet as Daniel devotes himself to convince Ahmet to flee and settle down in Germany with him. The overall Orientalist imagery in *Zenne Dancer* is drawn upon queerness on the part of the male, dependence and weakness on the part of the female, barbarism and pre-modernity on the part of the socio-cultural structure. Ahmet’s mother Kezban is one character that seems to complicate the stereotypical Oriental female imagery with the patriarchal authority she assumes. However, at the latent plane, it is perceived that she signifies the destructiveness of the Orient. Can’s dance performances, on the other hand, are the moments of manifest Orientalism. The typical belly-dance music with an Oriental scent, the flamboyant costumes of zenne dancer, the dim atmosphere in the performance hall and colorful lighting on the stage altogether point to the utilization of Orientalist elements in the movie. These elements are supported with other Orientalist patterns like coffee reading, the Islamic elements like *ezan* (call to prayer) and *namaz* (prayer), and the pleasure taken from the delicious food. However, the story itself and the depiction of the characters are so Oriental that they render all the other Orientalist elements peripheral.

Finally, in *Auf Der Anderen Seite*, Istanbul signifies the Orient, and Germany, the West. On the part of the characters, Ali, Ayten, and Yeter signify the Oriental while

the Western imagery is given via Lotte, Susanne and Nejat. With all her mysteries, Ayten signifies the phantasmatic Orient, and she is the object of knowledge and desire for the West. Ayten also characterizes the Orient with homoeroticism and locates it as the locus of the rescue phantasy of the West. Both Lotte and Susanne as the Western characters, and also Nejat as a Westernized Oriental, address themselves to help and rescue Ayten. And eventually, Ayten turns into the adopted child of a Western mother; that is, the Oriental is rescued and figuratively owned by the West. The importance of *Auf Der Anderen Seite* lies in the characterization and imagery of Ayten as a lesbian, Kurdish political extremist who, in this sense, embodies multiple oppositions to the prevailing political ideology. She suffers much, makes a sacrifice, but survives all of the challenges in the end. Although the film stands as a rupture to conventional representations even merely with the general imagery of this rebellious Oriental woman, it is built upon a stereotypical imagery of East-West opposition. At the end of the story, two female characters Yeter and Lotte are killed (one in the Orient, the other by the Oriental) and the only paradigm-shifting female character, Ayten, is ‘rescued’ and, figuratively speaking, adopted by a Western character.

From a semiotic perspective, the films analyzed in this study exhibit six main signs (or myths) examined in a two-phase signification: (1) civilization (Western and Eastern), (2) country/city, (3) bloodshed, (4) detachment and reattachment, (5) pleasure, and (6) women. **Table 2: Semiotic Analysis of *Il Bagno Turco*, *Zenne Dancer*, and *Auf Der Anderen Seite*** outlines the signs/myths, the referents at the first-level of signification, and their connotations, that is, the latent meanings conveyed at the second level of signification.

Table 2: Semiotic Analysis of *Il Bagno Turco*, *Zenne Dancer*, and *Auf Der Anderen Seite*

Film	Sign/Myth	Signifier	First-level signification	Connotations/Latent Meanings		
Il Bagno Turco	Civilization	Western	Francesco	a modern, strong Western man, in an endeavour to resurrect an oriental hamam	The West is the savior of the Oriental people, places and values that are in danger	
			Madam Anita	the first Western female owner of the hamam		
			Martha	the successor of Madam Anita and Francesco to run the hamam		The West is the subject and holder of gaze and power
Zenne Dancer				Daniel	a Western male photographer pursuing relief and meaning in the Orient; falling in love with an Oriental man	The West occupies an active and masculine position
Auf der Anderen Seite				Lotte	a young Western female with a resolution to help and rescue her Oriental girlfriend	The West has a civilizing role
				Nejat	a very well-Westernized Oriental man trying to find and help Ayten	The West is modern, sovereign, and superior
				Susanne	a middle-aged Western with an Orientalist perspective eventually turning into the stand-in mother of an Oriental young woman	
Il Bagno Turco			Eastern	Hamam	a historical and iconical piece of Oriental culture owned and restored by Westerners	The Orient(al) is the one to be rescued, loved, and accepted
				Mehmet	a young beautiful man turning into the object of desire for a Western man	The Oriental is the object of gaze, knowledge and desire (also of homosexual desire)
Zenne Dancer	Ahmet	a young homosexual man under surveillance of his mother and in danger of being a victim of honor-killing, turning into the object of desire for a Western man		The Oriental occupies a passive and feminine position		
	Zenne Dancer	a young homosexual belly dancer leading a fugitive life as he is a draft-dodger, object of male gaze when on stage		The Orient is a site of phantasm		
Auf der Anderen Seite	Ayten	a young beautiful woman, a member of an illegal political group, in danger of being held in prison, turning into the object of desire for a Western woman				
All	Country/City	Turkey/ Istanbul & Urfa Afghanistan	Locked doors Blinds on Back streets Veil Sealed/unsent/unread letters Dim/dark places Cage War/conflict Drums (music)	closedness, eeriness, vibrance, chaos	The Orient is exotic, mystic, exciting, and amazing The Orient curtails people's freedom	
Il Bagno Turco		Italy/Rome	Open doors No curtains No music	openness, clarity, modernity, staidness	The Occident is enlightened, free, straight, modern, and non-exotic	
Zenne Dancer & Auf der Anderen Seite		Germany	Lights on /bright spaces Non-chaotic atmosphere			

Table 2 - continued

Film	Sign/Myth	Signifier	First-level signification	Connotations/Latent Meanings		
Il Bagno Turco	Bloodshed	Knife	Death, violence (Francesco, Ahmet, Lotte, and Yeter are murdered, Ahmet's father commits suicide)	The Orient is barbaric and backward		
Zenne Dancer		Gun		Death is spontaneous in the Orient		
Auf der Anderen Seite		Gun		Human life is worthless in the Orient		
All	Detachment and reattachment	Telephone	Shortening telephone conversations with the West	The Western gradually detaches from the West and is drawn to the Orient The Western goes through a transformation in the Orient		
All	Pleasure	Turkish cuisine	Tables set with an abundance of delicious food	The Orient is lazy and seducing, and the Western finds relief in this		
Il Bagno Turco	Women	Eastern	Perran	a housewife generally pictured doing housework or serving men	Oriental women are servants; they are submissive Oriental women do not work or study; they are generally housewives Oriental women are deprived of rights their Western counterparts have Oriental women are spoken subjects If not submissive, then Oriental women are dangerous (in the contractor's and Ayten's case)	
Zenne Dancer			Füsun	a young woman, neither working nor studying, generally pictured serving men		
			The contractor	a businesswoman, in an endeavor to buy and destroy the hamam, accessory before Francesco's murder		
		Auf der Anderen Seite	Ayten	a member of an illegal political group, indulging in homosexual affair		
Yeter			a woman living on prostitution, getting married to an elderly man, being subject to violence and eventually murdered			
Il Bagno Turco			Western	Martha		a businesswoman, turning into the successor of Madam Anita to run the hamam
				Madam Anita		a refugee, turning into the first Western female owner of the hamam, peeping men bathing in the hamam
		Zenne Dancer	Daniel's friend and manager from	an independent businesswoman		
		Auf der Anderen Seite	Susanne	a mother with an Orientalist perspective eventually turning into the mother of an Oriental young woman		
		Lotte	a university student with free-will			

In all the three films, the imagery of the Western and Eastern civilizations signified by the characters (and the hamam in *Il Bagno Turco*) is stereotypically drawn upon opposition. The Oriental is characterized by the unknown and the mysterious, and therefore the Orient connotes a site of phantasm, a veil to be uncovered, and an appealing territory of danger. All the films play around many contrasts drawn particularly through the depiction of Eastern and Western countries/cities to lay bare the openness, clarity, modernity, and staidness of the West against the closedness, eeriness, vibrancy, and the chaotic atmosphere of the East.

With regard to the socio-political structure, the Orient is pictured as destructive and backward, and bloodshed is like a *sine qua non* in the representation of the Orient in the films analyzed. In *Il Bagno Turco*, the Orient is pictured as dangerous and unappreciative of its values. Francesco works hard to rescue the hamam from the contractors and restore it, and in the end, he is blatantly murdered for the very same reason. In *Zenne Dancer*, the leitmotif of cage signifies backwardness of the Orient as it figuratively incarcerates its people. In the end, Can is punished for mocking the officers, Ahmet is killed by his father for the shame and stain he cast on his conservative family with his homosexuality, Ahmet's father commits suicide to clean the stain altogether, Daniel is punished with the murder of his lover; and Cihan is sent to a mental hospital, which altogether signifies the destructiveness of the Orient. Similarly, in *Auf Der Anderen Seite*, Germany signifies the Western common sense while Istanbul signifies the chaotic Orient. In addition, two striking scenes from the film picture the transportation of the coffins of Yeter and Lotte to their countries, which illustrates death's being so easy in the Orient and the pervasiveness of the Oriental malignancy. In *Auf Der Anderen Seite*, Yeter is first threatened and then killed (though by accident) for defying the men's rule, Ayten and her fellows are imprisoned for their political activities that are considered illegal by the state, and Lotte comes to a sticky end in Istanbul; being killed by street children while trying to help Ayten. Penalty, whether in the form of killing, incarceration or torment, is a clear indicator of the immaturity and barbarism generally attributed to the Orient.

In each film, a Westerner travels to the Orient for a reason and gets stuck in it although they witness, experience or feel the eeriness, which symbolizes the phallogocentric Western gaze directed at the mysterious and thus desirable Oriental. The Westerners' being fascinated by the Orient(al) and persistence to stay there despite the dangers are

moments that are quite analogous with the ambivalent characteristic of romantic Orientalism. Francesco, Daniel and Lotte are all informed about the dangers they might face, yet they persevere in their pursuit of rescuing the Orient(al).

What complicates the picture and accordingly what makes these films stand as differences is that in each of them a non-straight relationship between a Western and an Eastern character is depicted. The Oriental is the passive object of the Western eye, and in that it is feminized and/or homoeroticized. Although the Western characters come to the Orient with the intention of turning back as soon as possible, they are mesmerized and stuck in the eccentric and seducing Orient and they go through a transformation. Serena Anderlini-D'Onofri describes Mehmet and Francesco's relationship in *Il Bagno Turco* as a "bisexual/bicultural game placed at the centre of the diegetic space [which] enables the inner transformations that make the characters capable of creating a sustainable emotional environment around themselves."¹⁴⁵ The Oriental is pictured as an object of desire which is in this sense first made passive but which then turns into a mirror on which the Westerner looks at its reflection and goes through a process of self-discovery. The Oriental is both what is sexually desired and what transforms the bearer of the look and desire.

The transformation of the Western characters is given more or less the same way. The Western characters of the movies *Il Bagno Turco*, *Zenne Dancer*, and *Auf Der Anderen Seite* gradually take their disguise off, develop a curious eye, fantasize about the hidden, and eventually discover/meet themselves while looking at the other. While in the pursuit of discovering what is hidden behind the veil and giving meaning and a shape to it, they themselves are reshaped and reconstructed by the Oriental, and given a new meaning. The characters gradually detach from the West, which is signified by the shortening telephone conversations with their acquaintances back at home. Besides, they are increasingly attracted to the Orient which seduces them with the jouissance it offers. In all the movies, Turkish cuisine, signified by tables set with an abundance of delicious food, carries the connotations of the pleasures the Orient offers,

¹⁴⁵ S. Anderlini-D'onofrio, "Bisexual Games and Emotional Sustainability in Ferzan Özpetek's Queer Films", *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film*, 2(3) (2004): 163-74.

and the Western characters' indulgence in this extravagancy results in a bizarre relief that floods through them.

The Orientalist discourse also surfaces in the imagery of Oriental women in these three films as it is quite in line with Carr's categorization on the representation of women. The Oriental women are either "described in terms of lack" or "outside society and dangerous."¹⁴⁶ They do not work or earn money, if they happen to work, it would be a job which undignifies them. They suffer for various reasons, they live in their own little worlds, they do not have a vision, they do not have the potency to make changes in their lives, they are the victims of their destiny, waiting to be saved by the benevolent or by fortune. The three female characters with an out-of-the-box imagery are Kezban (Ahmet's mother in *Zenne Dancer*), Ayten (the protagonist in *Auf Der Anderen Seite*) and the contractor (in *Il Bagno Turco*). Nevertheless, they are depicted in line with Carr's definition as outside society (Ayten) or dangerous (all). On the part of the Western, the females in all these movies are portrayed as independent, self-sufficient and able to govern.

The final analysis reveals that the films analyzed in this study are of outstanding significance in that they present the conventionality of Turkey's cinema with novel imageries but also that take their place among the cultural products with connotations of latent Orientalism particularly with the way that the characters and the geographies are depicted vis-à-vis each other. In all the films analyzed in this study, the Orient is constructed as a site of phantasm and the Oriental is pictured as an object of desire with whom the "veiled fantasies" can be uncovered. In all the films, the moments where the power subsides can be easily traced as each one embodies a type of Orientalist gaze and examples of shifting subject-positioning in colonial discourse, and finally depicts the Orient(al) as chronically and even by definition destructive. From this point of view, the generation of similar representations in each film illustrates the textual attitude of Orientalism. They are cultural products in which latent Orientalism can be traced on the non-perceptible plane, the exploration of which is facilitated by semiotic film analysis. However, the Orient is also romanticized within the humanistic narratives of these films. The Orientalist visual elements and codes are enveloped by

¹⁴⁶ Loomba, 2015, 160.

humanism and romanticism that manifest as the story of each develops. To conclude, our analysis of the latent Orientalist elements of these films reveals that romantic Orientalism is the appropriate critical category in defining the visual and narrational structure of these films.

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