

# TURKISH CINEMA

## **Course Description:**

This course will present a critical understanding and historical knowledge on Turkish Cinema. We will explore Turkish Cinema from the early years to the New Turkish Cinema through historical, cultural, political and social perspectives. These perspectives will be illustrated with the iconic examples from Turkish Cinema.

## **About the Professor**

This course was prepared by Nazli Bayram, Ph.D., Faculty of Communication Sciences, Cinema and Television Department, Eskisehir, Turkey.

## **Course Content:**

<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Topics</b>
1	Early Years
2	Pre-Yesilcam
3-4	Golden Age I
5-6	Golden Age II : Stars and Genres
7	Political Cinema: Yilmaz Guney
8-9	Women's Film
10-11	Break from the Past
12-13	New Turkish Cinema
14-15	Into the World Cinema

## Readings:

Akser, M. (2009). *Yilmaz Guney's Beautiful Losers: Idiom And Performance In Turkish Political Film*. Cinema and Politics: Turkish Cinema and New Europe. D. Bayrakdar (Ed.). UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Arslan, S. (2010). *Cinema in Turkey: a new critical history*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Buker, S. *The Film Does not End with an Ecstatic Kiss*. Fragments of Culture: The Everyday of Modern Turkey, A. Saktanber, D. Kandiyoti (Eds.), London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd.

Donmez-Colin, G. (2008). *Turkish Cinema: Identity, Distance and Belonging*. London: Reaktion Books.

Elsaesser, T. (2005). *European Cinema: Face To Face With Hollywood*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Erdogan, N. & Kaya, D. (2002). *Institutional Intervention in the Distribution and Exhibition of Hollywood Films in Turkey*. Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television, 22:1, Pp. 47-59.

Mutlu, D. K. (2007). *The Russian monument at Ayastefanos (San Stefano): Between defeat, and revenge, remembering and forgetting*, Middle Eastern Studies, 43:1, 75-86.

Mutlu, D.K. (2010). *Between Tradition and Modernity: Yesilcam Melodrama, its Stars, and Their Audiences*, Middle Eastern Studies, 46:3, pp. 417-431.

Suner, A. (2010). *New Turkish Cinema: Belonging, Identity and Memory*. London: I.B. Tauris.

Suner, A. (2011). *A lonely and beautiful country: reflecting upon the state of oblivion in Turkey through Nuri Bilge Ceylan's Three Monkeys*. Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, 12:1, Pp. 13-27.

## Week 1

### Early Years

#### *Historical Background*

"Ayastefanos'taki Rus Abidesi'nin Yikilisi" (The Demolition of the Russian Monument at Ayastefanos, 1914) by Fuat Uzkinay is regarded as the first Turkish film. The film's disappearance and only a small number of people having memories of it lead to a debate on its position as the first Turkish film. Despite this controversial aspect, Ayastefanos still has a significant role in the Turkish film history and it is still accepted as the first Turkish film and the first film by a Turkish cinematographer.

After the early years of cinema, Muhsin Ertugrul, who had a great impact on Turkish theater, joined the Turkish film industry as a director and an actor, as well. His contribution to film history with adaptations of European theater plays and films dramatically influenced the developing Turkish cinema. However, the director was also highly criticized for being theatrical and for his weak cinematography. The years he produced films, from 1922 to 1953, coincide with the "hegemony of theater" period in Turkish Cinema.

During this period, a famous movie star appeared on the stage: Cahide Sonku. She was the first film star of Turkish Cinema and she had a European look, which helped her become a celebrity in the Turkish film industry. In those times, Turkey was trying to establish an identity by employing particular Western codes, and Sonku was a response to this strong effort.

#### *Reading*

Arslan, S. (2010). Cinema in Turkey: a new critical history. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 23-61

Mutlu, D. K. (2007). The Russian monument at Ayastefanos (San Stefano): Between defeat, and revenge, remembering and forgetting, Middle Eastern Studies, 43:1, 75-86.

Article: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00263200601079682>

#### *Essay Questions*

1. Describe the characteristics of film screening as a spectatorial practice in the early years of Turkish Cinema and the effects of traditional entertainment conventions on the emergence of cinema in Turkey.
2. Explain the relationship between the documentation of the demolition of the Russian Monument at Ayastefanos and the Russia-Ottoman War.
3. Explain why Muhsin Ertugrul has been criticized as being theatrical.

## Week 2

### Pre-yesilcam

#### *Historical Background*

During the 1940s and 1950s a great number of films were made. Turkish cinema was a profitable sector but wasn't industrialized yet. Filmmakers began to benefit from the local narratives such as: folk stories, songs, novels and theater plays. New actors and film stars began to catch the public's attention.

The films in this period were mostly adaptations and imitations, and also had a strong sense of melodramatic modality. They relied on the characteristics of domestication and Turkification. Additionally, the screenings of Egyptian and Indian films had a great impact on shaping the dominant perspective of that period.

Turkish Cinema benefited from the Western and non-Western cultural sources in defining the general structure of films. However, instead of directly applying those rules on Turkish films, film makers chose to translate and transform the sources according to the characteristics of the Turkish society.

During and after World War II, the importation of film equipment, raw films and feature films from Europe were interrupted, which led to the rise of the Egyptian and Indian film industry. Hollywood, Egyptian and Bollywood films became very popular. Melodramatic modality of Egyptian films attracted the spectators and influenced Yesilcam's film making style, established in 1950s.

Production, distribution and exhibition were not standardized and not based on a clearly defined system. Even though the film sector was rapidly growing as a mass entertainment medium, films were aesthetically weak and they were highly dependent on the traditional perspectives. This tradition began to change in the 1950s with the help of the emergence of new filmmakers. In the 1950s Lutfu Akad and then Metin Erksan, Osman Faruk Seden, Memduh Un, Atif Yilmaz began to make films and were welcomed by historians. The films were found stronger than the previous films, in cinematography and storytelling. Those auteurs had distinct artistic vision and motivation to tell stories which were consistent with the social reality. This novel understanding about the Turkish cinema inspired the new directors to produce aesthetically and contextually stronger films in the 1960s.

#### *Reading*

Arslan, S. (2010). Cinema in Turkey: a new critical history. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 63-97

#### *Essay Questions*

1. Describe the conditions of filmmaking and film exhibition in 1940s and 1950s.
2. Explain the term "Turkification" in terms of the filmic storytelling.
3. Identify Yesilcam's melodrama as a modality

### **Week 3-4**

#### **Golden Age I**

##### *Historical Background*

Yesilcam's production, distribution and exhibition system was clearly established for those who work in the area of filmmaking in 1960s. Until the end of 1970s, the working principles of Yesilcam's film industry were defined by the rules within that system.

During the economic crisis, Yesilcam manipulated the system and found its own solutions to cope with financial problems. Between the years of 1960-80, a vast number of films from various genres were made such as melodrama, comedy, sex, and also the hybrid genres like sex-comedy, comedy-adventure. During

those decades, Turkey went through political turnovers and Yesilcam was also affected by those shifts in politics.

### *Industry*

Film distributors had a determinative role in film production. Turkey had six different film distribution regions. Each region had different cultural and economic status, and spectators' demands were shaped by the characteristics of the area.

Distributors had a significant role on deciding which film would be produced and shown in theaters, or not. Their decisions were shaped by the major theme and the narrative patterns of the film, and the stars that were in them, which were the indicators of the box office revenue.

The financing of filmmaking with bonds and postdated checks became the standard. Producers were paying the fees by bonds and checks in order to avoid taking possible financial risks. As this financing and paying system became a common and standard practice, the loan sharks and distributors gained the most crucial role within the industry.

In 1970s, Yesilcam encountered deep financial problems that were mostly caused by the growing popularity of foreign films. Moreover, the spectators lost the habit of going to the theaters because of the terror on the streets, economic problems and the rapid growth of television broadcasting. In order to overcome these obstacles, Yesilcam came up with its own solution and started to make cheap sex films or quickies.

Dramatic changes in the economy and politics of Turkey, Yesilcam's financial system and the status, and also the other things that affected the film making processes in Yesilcam, resulted in an excessive number of films that lacked aesthetic quality.

### *Reading*

Arslan, S. (2010). *Cinema in Turkey: a new critical history*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 63-124

Erdogan, N. & Kaya, D. (2002). Institutional Intervention in the Distribution and Exhibition of Hollywood Films in Turkey. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 22: 1, Pp. 47-59.

### *Essay Questions*

1. Describe the production, distribution and exhibition system of Yesilcam in 1960s and 1970s.
2. Explain the most important factors that affect filmmaking in 1960s and 1970s.
3. Discuss the effects of institutional intervention of Hollywood films in Turkish cinema.

## **Week 5-6**

### **Golden Age II**

#### *Stars and Genres*

1960s is regarded as the golden age of Turkish cinema and have a special place in the Turkish cinema history. In one decade, over 1000 films were produced.

New actors and stars emerged in this era. The films brought high box office revenue. New movie theaters were opened. Above all, cinema was the cheapest and the most popular kind of entertainment. In terms of narration and direction, significant films were made.

#### *Genres*

Melodrama, comedy, romantic comedy. During the 1940s and 1950s rural melodramas were popular. In 1960s many urban melodramas were produced. The proliferation of those films can be considered a sign of urbanization in Turkey. These films dealt with the conflicting values of the urban and the rural as well as different ways of lives.

Comedy and melodrama were the primary genres since early years. During the 1960s comedy was as popular as melodrama. Additionally, as a sub-genre romantic comedy's popularity was rising. Regardless of genre differences, stardom was a determinative factor in film production in Turkey.

#### *Stardom*

Yesilcam was a star cinema. Audiences from all around Turkey formed different identifications with the filmic and the extra-filmic images of stars. Turkan Soray rose to stardom in 1960s. Her star image was associated with the identity of the Eastern woman, whose characteristics were constructed as self-sacrificing and honest.

Turkish cinema is deeply rooted in the discussions on modernization, since through storytelling and direction as well as stardom, Turkish cinema opens a discursive space where the dichotomy of tradition and modernity could be discussed.

#### *Reading*

Arslan, S. (2010). *Cinema in Turkey: a new critical history*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 125-200

Mutlu, D.K. (2010). *Between Tradition and Modernity: Yesilcam Melodrama, its tars, and Their Audiences*, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 46:3, pp. 417-431.

Buker, S. *The Film Does not End with an Ecstatic Kiss*. *Fragments of Culture: The Everyday of Modern Turkey*, A. Saktanber, D. Kandiyoti (eds.), London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd.

#### *Essay Questions*

1. Explain the relationship between the desire for upward social mobility and yesilcam melodrama's discourse on good/bad, domestic/foreign oppositions.
2. Discuss how Yesilcam Melodramas ideologically displace class conflicts.
3. Discuss the relationship between Yesilcam stars and attempting to deal with the anxieties caused by modernization in Turkey in terms of audiences.
4. Watch "Vesikali Yarim" (Omer Lutfi Akad, 1968) and identify the similarities and differences with Yesilcam's melodramatic modality.

### **Week 7**

**Political Cinema:** Yilmaz Guney

*Historical Background*

Television had a huge impact on the film industry of many nations around the world, including Turkey. In the early 1970s, TV broadcasting began and rapidly advanced in metropolises. Later, in the late 70s, small towns and villages also got introduced to TV. The main reasons underlying the rapid decrease in box office revenues in the second half of the 70s were the growing prevalence of the habit of watching TV, and the terror on the streets. Due to the political situation and terror, people could not easily leave their homes, and TV had almost the most important role in their lives.

Yesilcam movies were popular mass entertainment media during the 60s. The Yesilcam industry told stories that follow very similar narrative patterns and made hundreds of films until the end of the 70s. However, there were also films that showed novelties in the narrative patterns and cinematographic styles. Directors like Lutfi Akad, Atif Yilmaz and Halit Refig had debates over such terms as national cinema and public cinema. In addition, while they tried to produce films that reflected the realities of society, they also aimed to satisfy the public's expectations.

#### *Filmmakers*

In 1970s, Yilmaz Guney made *Umut (The Hope)*, without relying on Yesilcam's star and distributor-based system. This film was considered a milestone for both Yilmaz Guney, who had been a star of famous gangster and action movies, and for the Turkish Cinema. Guney worked in Yesilcam as a screenwriter and as an actor for long years. Guney became a phenomenal star with his spectacular life, filmography and political side.

Yilmaz Guney created one of the milestones in the Turkish film history with *Umut (The Hope, 1970)*. Although his films were mostly accepted as a social realist, his personae cannot be discussed only through this perspective. He had a strong political side, and at the same time, he was a popular artist. Before *Umut*, almost every one of his films were structured around a lumpen character, played by Guney himself. Although Guney was a charismatic actor and a star, and his films appealed to the popular culture, it was also possible to find in them criticism of, and a perspective against, capitalism.

In the period beginning with *Umut*, he made films that revealed the social problems with a realist perspective. His films, even the ones that were more populist and closer to Yesilcam's typical narrative patterns, constantly stressed the inequality and injustice in the society. As a director, an actor and a screenwriter, he emphasized the class conflicts, highlighted the bitter facts in the feudal system and committed himself to socialism, instead of nationalism. Starting from the late 1970s until he died, he found ways to continue making films even during his imprisonment and exile. *Suru, Yol* and *Duvar*, were the final projects of Guney, and they belong to that difficult period of his life.

#### *Reading*

Donmez-Colin, G. (2008). *Turkish Cinema: Identity, Distance and Belonging*. London: Reaktion Books. Pp. 116-141

Akser, M. (2009). "Yilmaz Guney's Beautiful Losers: Idiom And Performance In Turkish Political Film" in *Cinema and Politics: Turkish Cinema and New Europe*. D. Bayraktar (ed.). UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

#### *Essay Questions*

1. Describe the common themes of Yilmaz Guney's films which were produced in the period began with *Umut*.

2. Watch *Umut* and discuss the social realist approach to the problems that the film deals with.
3. Identify the lumpen character who belongs to the first period of Guney's works and compare it with *Umut's* main character Cabbar.

## **Week 8-9**

### **Women's Film**

#### *Historical Background*

The financial crisis Yesilcam faced continued during the 1980s. The industry could not cope with it, and neither were temporal solutions sufficient for overcoming the problem. Yesilcam's heyday, which had taken place in the 60s, was over. The number of films produced decreased and Yesilcam lost the majority of its audience. As a result, Yesilcam lost its existence as a system, and as a symbol of cinema in Turkey. Turkish cinema could not win back its spectator until the second half of the 90s.

In the 1980s, Turkey also went through a significant change in politics and economics; therefore, it was not only Yesilcam that had a critical period, but Turkey itself as well. In the 1980s, the military coup and government's shifting attitude towards state-based economy, which resulted in the government favoring the capitalist economy, gave birth to cultural and social changes in Turkey.

#### *Industry*

Proliferation of video-cassette players and films that were recorded on video tapes provided another alternative to going to movies, besides watching television at home. During this period, Yesilcam started to record old movies on video tapes, and at the same time, produced films using less costly video recording technologies. However, these attempts were not sufficient for Yesilcam to raise its popularity, and gradually, Yesilcam started to lose its power. As a side note, a distinctive feature of the 1980s was the films that focused on gender identity and women's issues. Films started to evaluate these issues from a different perspective from Yesilcam's earlier productions.

#### *Themes*

The women were considered, and represented in certain forms such as family woman, prostitute, seducer, "honest like a man", femme fatale, fallen woman or source of disorder. By the 1980s, this established perspective on women began to change and some directors started to depict a new woman image, focusing on a new evaluation of women's identity. This change was provoked by the feminist movement and economic liberation of women all over the world.

Main themes in the women's film produced in that era were emotional, social and sexual desires, and needs of women. Atif Yilmaz, Omer Kavur and Serif Goren were the male directors who concentrated on women's issues in the 1980s and their films were regarded as women's films.

At the same time, debates on the concepts like women film and women's point of view began. Women filmmakers, critics and academicians discussed the meaning and significance of women's cinema, and the representation of women in films.

Against the male hegemony that had dominated the film industry, woman directors started to make films in 1980s. In fact, since the 1950s women had been making films in Turkish Cinema, and also working in the film area; however



they had previously been disregarded. Additionally, Turkish women filmmakers' female point of view and their artistic visions were questioned and are still being questioned.

#### *Reading*

Arslan, S. (2010). *Cinema in Turkey: a new critical history*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 201-236

Donmez-Colin, G. (2008). *Turkish Cinema: Identity, Distance and Belonging*. London: Reaktion Books. Pp. 142-179.

#### *Essay Questions*

1. Describe the main changes in representation of women in the 1980s Turkish Cinema.
2. Identify the themes of women's films which were made in the 1980s and later.
3. Select a film which was made in the 1980s and considered as women's film from Atif Yilmaz's filmography. Discuss the representation of women in it.

### **Week 10-11**

#### **1990's : Break from the past**

##### *Historical Background*

In the 1990s, Turkey was trying to cope with political and economic difficulties, while undergoing significant cultural and social changes at the same time. The Turkish economy was integrating with the world's capitalist system, which was strongly related to Turkey's severe economic problems such as many corporations and banks going bankrupt. Moreover, during those times Turkey was also confronted with ethnic separatism and terrorism incidents, caused by the inequalities in income distribution in southeast Turkey.

On the other side of things, the state's dominance in television and radio broadcasting was ceased. As a result of the privatization policies, private television and radio channels acquired the right to broadcast for the first time. Through this legal arrangement, private TV and radio channels started to broadcast. Thanks to the developments in printing technologies, journals, magazines and newspapers became widespread, and advertising business grew rapidly. All of these significant changes and obstacles also affected the film industry.

##### *Industry*

The crisis in the film industry had been getting more severe. The number of both the films produced and the spectators had been decreasing every other year. Popular cinema succeeded in gaining audience with *Eskiya* (The Bandit, Yavuz Turgul) in 1996 and *Vizontele* (Yilmaz Erdogan) in 2001.

American film distribution companies reigned over the industry in the 90s. On the one hand, their dominance inhibited the opportunities for many Turkish films to be shown in theatres; on the other hand, it helped improve the conditions in movie theatres and enabled Turkish spectators to see Hollywood movies almost at the same time with international viewers. During the 90s, film viewers' profiles

notably changed. In the Yesilcam period, spectators had mostly consisted of low and middle income families; whereas, in the period of the 90s, there were educated, young, urban, and middle or high income spectators.

#### *Filmmakers*

In the 1990s, some new filmmakers started to make films without being influenced by Yesilcam, and stayed out of the conventional production system. These filmmakers had the opportunity to work without being restricted by the rules of the production agencies, and independent cinema was born as a stable tendency.

The directors who made their first or second films in the 90s began to attend international festivals, and became successful. Their cinematic language and narrative styles were different from the popular conventions of Yesilcam. These directors continued to make films during the 2000s and they gained popularity among new spectators. All of these developments helped establish the concept of "Turkish cinema" as known today.

Zeki Demirkubuz, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Reha Erdem, Dervis Zaim, Yesim Ustaoglu were the pioneering independent filmmakers in the 1990s. Except Reha Erdem, who made his first film *A-Ay (Oh, Moon!)* in 1987, the rest of the directors made their first films in the 90s. They told their own stories, or otherwise, only shot the stories they liked. In the 2000s, popular domestic films continued their success in box offices; "New Turkish Cinema" gained international acclaim in film festivals and won numerous awards.

#### *Reading*

Suner, A. (2010). *New Turkish Cinema: Belonging, Identity and Memory*. London: I.B. Tauris. Pp. 1-23.

Donmez-Colin, G. (2008). *Turkish Cinema: Identity, Distance and Belonging*. London: Reaktion Books. Pp. 180-223

#### *Essay Questions*

1. Identify the major themes in New Turkish Cinema and explain how they represent a break from the Yesilcam cinema. Please use at least two films to support your arguments.
2. Explain the effects of the American film distributors to Turkish cinema in the 1990s.

### **Week 12-13**

#### **New Turkish Cinema**

##### *Historical Background*

In the 2000s, the Turkish cinema industry underwent drastic changes. The number of films produced, spectators and box offices was increased. Films were produced in many different genres such as horror, thriller, action, comedy, romantic comedy and drama. The industry got introduced to new directors.

##### *Industry*

During the 2000s, both the mainstream movies and the "New Turkish Cinema" productions had a breakthrough. In the second half of the 2000s, mainstream Turkish films had more box-office success than international films. Distribution

companies made most of their profits from Turkish films. "New Turkish Cinema" gained international.

These developments were driven by the advancements of digital technologies that decreased production costs, advertising, and the stability in Turkey's economy. In addition, TV series drew attention to Turkish mainstream movies, and producers invested in film production, which helped the Turkish cinema industry gain success once again.

The directors who made their first films during the 90s, attained significant achievements, and won awards in the international film festivals in the 2000s. Moreover, numerous emerging directors and their productions established Turkish Cinema's lively and renewed characteristics. With the support of the "Ministry of Culture and Tourism" and foundations such as Eurimages, many low-budget yet influential art house films were produced.

#### *Filmmakers*

**Reha Erdem** started his career as an advertisement director, and used his earnings in the advertising industry to finance his films. Filmography: *A Ay (Oh, Moon!, 1988)*, *Kac Para Kac? (A Run for Money, 1999)*, *Korkuyorum Anne (Mummy, I'm Scared, 2004)*, *Bes Vakit (Times and Winds, 2006)*, *Hayat Var (My Only Sunshine, 2008)*, *Kosmos (2010)*.

**Yesim Ustaoglu** started her film career directing short films. Her first long feature film was *İz (Trace)*, made in 1994. Filmography: *Iz (Trace, 1994)*, *Gunese Yolculuk (Journey to the Sun, 1999)*, *Bulutları Beklerken (Waiting for the Clouds, 2003)*, *Pandora'nın Kutusu (Pandora's Box, 2008)*.

**Dervis Zaim** drew attention with his first film *Tabutta Rovesata/ Somersault in a Coffin (1996)*. Filmography: *: Filler ve Çimen (Elephants and Grass, 2001)*, *Çamur (Mud, 2003)*, *Cenneti Beklerken (Waiting for Heaven, 2006)*, *Dot (2008)*, *Gölgeler ve Suretler (Shadows and Faces, 2010)*

**Semih Kaplanoglu:** *Bal (Honey)*, the last part of the reverse-order trilogy after *Egg* and *Milk*, won the Golden Bear award in 60th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin, 2010. Filmography: *Herkes Kendi Evinde (Away from Home, 2001)*, *Meleğin Düşüşü (Angel's Fall, 2005)*, *Yumurta (Egg, 2007)*, *Süt (Milk, 2008)*, *Bal (Honey, 2010)*.

**Zeki Demirkubuz** can be considered one of the pioneers of New Turkish Cinema. His films are highly appreciated especially among the Turkish film spectators. He is both the director and the producer of his own films. Major themes in his films are "tightly structured plots", "tight interiors", recurring motifs like "prison as a physical space and as a metaphor", compulsive repetition in the narratives, characters who got stuck in metaphorical labyrinths, melodramatic overtones, meta-fictional references, and the theme 'fate'. Filmography: *C Blok (1994)*, *Masumiyet (Innocence, 1997)*, *Ucuncu Sayfa (The Third Page, 1999)*, *Yazgi (Fate, 2001)*, *İtiraf (Confessions, 2002)*, *Bekleme Odası (The Waiting Room, 2004)*, *Kader (Destiny, 2006)*, *Kiskanmak (Envy, 2009)*, *Yeraltı (Inside, 2012)*

**Nuri Bilge Ceylan** has a strong cinematic language which is nourished by his experience in photography. He produced his own films, gained international acclaim, and won prestigious awards in international festivals. His latest film *Bir Zamanlar Anadolu'da (Once Upon a Time in Anatolia, 2011)* won the Grand Prix award in Cannes Film Festival. *Uzak (Distant, 2002)*, *3 Maymun (Three Monkeys, 2008)*, *İklimler (Climates, 2006)* won numerous awards in Cannes Film Festival including the Best Director.

The major characteristics that define Ceylan's cinema and the themes in his films are minimalism, highly-aestheticized visuality, the themes of provinciality, praise to the mundane, belonging, homecoming, leaving home, recurrent motifs such as small towns, long takes, static shots, long silences, non-sympathetic characters.

Filmography: *Kasaba (The Town, 1997)*, *Mayis Sikintisi (Clouds of May, 1999)*, *Uzak (Distant, 2002)*, *İklimler (Climates, 2006)*, *3 Maymun (Three Monkeys, 2008)*, *Bir Zamanlar Anadolu'da (Once Upon a Time in Anatolia, 2011)*

#### Reading

Suner, A. (2010). *New Turkish Cinema: Belonging, Identity and Memory*. London: I.B. Tauris. Pp. 77-141

Suner, A. (2011). A lonely and beautiful country: reflecting upon the state of oblivion in Turkey through Nuri Bilge Ceylan's *Three Monkeys*. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 12:1. Pp. 13-27

#### Essay Questions

1. Describe the major themes in the films of Nuri Bilge Ceylan and Zeki Demirkubuz and discuss their relationship with the concepts; "identity" and "belonging".
2. Watch four films, two from Demirkubuz and Ceylan each. Describe the directors' differences with regards to visual style and narration, giving examples from the films you watched.

## Week 14-15

### Into the World Cinema

#### Historical Background

Turkish Cinema is a popular theme in academic spheres; it is open to debates and to various theoretical discussions. This popularity were driven by the "New Turkish Cinema's international success, spectators' interest in Turkish popular films produced in 2000s and the achievements of Turkey-based directors who are making films in other countries and in other languages, such as Fatih Akin and Ferzan Ozpetek. Moreover, in the last decade, films that represent different cultures and identities circulated in the world film market and with the help of the internet, intercultural sharing became widespread. Through these developments, concepts such as; "European Cinema" "World Cinema" "Multicultural" "Transnational" and "National" began to be questioned.

#### Key Concepts

Transnational, National, World Cinema, European Cinema, Postcolonial, Others' Cinema, Hollywood.

#### Filmmakers

Fatih Akin was born in Germany and grew up in a Turkish family. He does not classify his films with a certain national identity. He started to make film in the 90s. The director is best-known for the film, *Duvara Karsi (Head-on, 2004)*.

#### Reading

Elsaesser, T. (2005). *European Cinema: Face To Face With Hollywood*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Pp. 485-514

Arslan, S. (2010). *Cinema in Turkey: a new critical history*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 237-274.

### *Essay Questions*

1. Identify the subject matters of world cinema and explain how they manifest themselves in Fatih Akin's cinema. Please use at least 2 films.
2. Discuss the position of the New Turkish Cinema in relation to the world cinema and explain which characteristics of the World Cinema you find within.
3. Explain the impact of the modes of production on the world cinema.
4. Describe the characteristics of the protagonists in the films of Demirkubuz and Ceylan. Compare and contrast them with the protagonists of your choosing from three different World Cinema examples.

## Syllabus

### **General Course Objectives: For Specific Learning Objectives, Refer to the Study Guide**

- O1. Identify major works and to analyze them from different critical stances.
- O2. Demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the works by responding to questions focusing on the context, authors, themes, and motifs.
- O3. Compare works and documents from different periods, traditions, and sub-genres.
- O4. Apply critical reading strategies to determine alternative interpretive possibilities, as well as motifs, figurative language, and potential interpretive possibilities,
- O5. Discuss the historical, social, cultural, or biographical contexts of the works' production
- O6. Compare and contrast themes, genres, and movements.

### **General Program Objectives**

1. To provide students with a broad perspective of approaches to world humanities and an understanding of the various ways in which they manifest themselves and to assess students' ability to express their perspectives through exams and essays.
2. To provide students with a deeper understanding of diverse traditions in the humanities the course focus and to express this deepened understanding in written tests and a critical essay.
3. To provide an overview of textual analysis and interpretation methods at a graduate level and help students apply these skills in writing essay examinations and a critical essay.
4. To read widely and critically in a variety of literary forms found in different genre studies and to demonstrate the depth and breadth of this reading in a critical essay.
5. To conduct graduate-level library research on a particular text or body of work, an individual writer, or an issue in the area of genre studies and to write a critical essay which incorporates their research.

### **Course Content:**

1. Texts that have been designated as being produced within the category of the course topic.
2. Discussion of the historical, social, cultural and biographical contexts in which those works were produced.
3. Literary movements in various periods.
4. Discussion of the theoretical issues and questions related to historical, social, cultural, and biographical approaches to the study of the course topic.
5. Historical contexts.

6. Criticism and reflection upon political and economic systems as reflected in literature.
7. Discussion of the relevance of course readings to the understanding of contemporary global issues.
8. Critical analysis and interpretation.
9. Scholarly research on and off-line.

**Course Outline:**

For the detailed course outline, please see the Study Guide.

**Course Readings:**

For a list of course readings, please see the Readings page on the Study Guide

**Course Preparedness:**

This course is a graduate-level literature course. It assumes the mastery of prerequisite college-level skills in spelling, grammar, punctuation, paragraphing, and essay writing. It also assumes the ability to read and analyze literary texts. This course provides instruction in world literature and does not address remedial writing issues at the sentence, paragraph, or essay level.

This course focuses on literary texts and analysis and requires college-level writing skills that exceed those required at the secondary level.

However, in some cases, students who have not yet completed a bachelor's degree may be allowed to take the course.

**Course Workload:**

For a sixteen-week course, students can expect to devote a minimum of 6 hours of independent study per week in order to complete the coursework. If students are taking the course in an accelerated 8-week mode, they can expect to devote a minimum of 12 hours per week of study.

**Assessment Strategy**

Learners will demonstrate their knowledge of the subject and their ability to engage in critical thinking and problem solving activities.

- *Journal Entries/Discussion Questions.* Designed to help students identify authors, their works, literary terms, and concepts. Students will also analyze texts, connect the authors, texts, and critical concepts. Finally, students look at texts from multiple perspectives in order to evaluate their own thought processes.
- *Synchronous Online Activities.* Designed to help learners apply the concepts in the course to texts, and to share their insights.
- *Essay / Research Paper.* Designed to help students write scholarly papers and engage in literary analysis. Students will develop a clear thesis which they support with literary citations, a close reading of the text, application of critical theories and perspectives. Students will focus on developing multiple interpretations of a single text, or will look at multiple texts within a movement, genre, or author's oeuvre.