Making of a Culture Repertoire: Turkish Migrants Perception in Europe through Movies

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Abstract

With the culture and identity-related events in Europe such as the Charlie Hebdo case, the need to reconsider the situation of Turkish people in Europe and their Muslim identity has (re)emerged. As it has been long acknowledged, culture is a socially and historically constructed term, which has been shaped by a number of common components including a shared history, language, and religion. During the construction process of culture, certain factors play initial roles to construct and maintain a culture *repertoire* to be presented to the society. Itamar-Even Zohar terms this process of choosing what to be presented to the society as "making of a culture repertoire". By referring to his theory, this paper aims to discuss the perception/identity of being Turkish in Europe as a part of the process of constructing a specific "culture repertoire". Within this brief background, the movies directed by European directors such as *Die Fremde* by Feo Aladag and *Takiye: Allah Yolunda* by Ben Verbong; and the movies directed by Turkish directors, namely *Kuma* by Umut Dağ and *Gegen die Wand* by Fatih Akın dealing with Turkish migrants in Europe are interpreted. It is possible to argue that deliberate actions, choices, and bias play crucial roles in representing and narrating a specific culture to another cultural majority and shape the perception regarding the represented culture. Moreover, when the tragic events overlap with fiction, the "culture repertoire" presented to a target audience becomes reinforced through repeated narratives.

Keywords

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Introduction

The concept of culture is a constructed term nurtured by the history, language, religion and customs of the society in which it has been woven. One may assume that the importance of the concept of culture emerges from the fact that it has the power to mobilize people as it has been experienced in the cases of Danish Cartoon Crisis and French Charlie Hebdo[*]. Beyond that, as well as culture itself, its representation in other cultures matters as this encounter of cultures creates reactions and shapes not only social relations, but also political relations between countries, which, as a whole, is a highly complex and interdependent process.

In this brief paper, this complicated and intertwined process of the construction of culture is examined by observing several movies on Turkish migrants living in European countries, especially in Germany and Belgium, on the axis of their represented and constructed cultures. In this respect, migration is also a multifaceted research field which impacts the culture and culture repertoire drastically.[**] In this paper only the social and cultural consequences of migration in a general perspective will be dealt with through the case of movies about Turks in Europe. One may argue that languages, religions, ethnicities and national histories people carry along with themselves while changing their living spaces are all markers of their present culture as well as the one they construct in their new places. The paper focuses on cultural portrayals of

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[*]   Danish cartoon crisis began after 12 editorial cartoons were published in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* on 30 September 2005. Depicting the Prophet Muhammad (Muslim), the cartoons lead to turmoil in the public and political circles. The issue eventually led to protests around the world, including violent demonstrations and riots in some Muslim countries. Likewise, in 2006, Charlie Hebdo reprinted these controversial cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed. In 2011, the magazine's offices were destroyed by a gasoline bomb after it published a caricature of the Prophet Mohammed.

[**]   John A. Scherpereel examines in his article "European Culture and The European Union's 'Turkey Question'" the political implications of Turkish otherness *vis- a- vis* European cultures. In accomplishing this, he borrows Laitin's statistical studies regarding the subject matter. In its essence, he argues that on popular culture comprising of music, movies and literature, Central and Eastern European Countries and the EU 15 share common characteristics. However, Turkey differs from these countries in terms of cultural characteristics (Scherpereel, 2010: 810-812). It is for sure that for a study of culture repertoire not only the movies, but also music, art and literature should be considered; yet this requires time and statistical skills. Merely mentioning movie dimension is a limitation of this study. For further information, for example on literature dimension of the subject matter, see: Adelson, A.L. (2005) *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature: Toward a New Critical Grammar of Migratio*n. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Turkish migrants in selected popular movies because movies carry, embrace, and transfer all the cultural markers aforementioned. It can be argued that while examining a culture repertoire constructed in a foreign country about the "others", the movies might serve as good examples to be able to get the gist about the perceptions of the constructed repertoire.

It might be suggested that deliberate actions, choices, and bias play crucial roles in representing and narrating a specific culture to another cultural majority, and it might significantly shape the perception regarding the represented culture. Within this background, in the first part of this paper Itamar–Even Zohar's arguments, steps, and components of the making of a "culture repertoire" will be referred to along with constructivism. This will be done with a view to understand how a Turkish image is being constructed through movies, and how a cultural repertoire of being a Turkish migrant in certain countries like Germany and Belgium is presented. The second part of the paper focuses on the perception/identity of being Turkish in the movies directed by European directors such as *Die Fremde* by Feo Aladag and *Takiye: Allah Yolunda* by Ben Verbong; and the movies directed by Turkish directors, namely *Kuma* by Umut Dağ and *Gegen die Wand* by Fatih Akın. The analyzed movies are chosen based on their relative popularity. There are dozens of movies on Turkish migrants in Europe, especially in Germany. Some of these include *Ich habe mich in einen Türken verliebt* (1969) by Halit Refiğ, *Die Kümmeltürkin geht* (1985) by Jeanine Meerapfel, *Yasemin* (1988) by Hark Bohm, and *Berlin in Berlin* (1993) by Sinan Çetin. These movies are also laden with cultural clichés. In them, cleavages between the images of the self and the other are also drastic, and protagonists are not only members of an ethnic group but also treated as representatives of that group in an essentializing way. Choosing these movies simply serves to understand the theory adopted in the paper. Namely, the paper merely tries to conceive the role of movies in constructing a "culture repertoire" with Itamar-Even Zohar's analytical perspective. Thus, the aim of the paper is succinctly to show that certain kinds of repetitions help to construct a "culture repertoire".

In specific genres like literature works, caricature or movies, a general perception with regard to identities can be traced. Roni Marguiles (2016) achieves this with profound archival work through caricatures and advertisement affiches. In literature, Charles Sabatos (2014) with his *Between Myth and History: The Turkish Image in the History of Literature in Central Europe* manages this. If the

movies are traced, a similar pattern might appear. However, for the sake of brevity and to be able to basically explain the "culture repertoire" theory by Even-Zohar, a few movies are touched upon. Nevertheless, it should be highlighted again that the four movies can give the reader an understanding of "culture repertoire" as a theoretical concept; yet, to be able to draw more comprehensive conclusions, a wider corpus of movies should be analyzed and interpreted.

Making of a "Culture Repertoire" and Constructing the "Other"

In 1992, Alexander Wendt published one of the most debated and by some the "best work" (Maliniak, et al, 2012) produced in International Relations Theory in recent years, namely the article titled "Anarchy is what States make of it: the social construction of power politics". In this groundbreaking article, Wendt radically argues that, unlike other theories assume, anarchy is not pre-existing in the international system, it is not inherent in the system itself; but a construction which is formed and shaped by ongoing processes of social practice and interaction process (Wendt, 1992). Since then, Wendt's social constructivist approach to International Relations has triggered further debates, gained a lot of interest, and it is among the main theories of international relations. Issues like Identity politics and multiculturalism studies in international relations have taken their share from Wendt's assumption and have been studied within Wendt's conceptual framework. In line with that, political matters such as culture and identity do not form in a *vacuum*, but they are formed and build through social actors.

It is possible to consider constructivism within the sphere of interpretivist studies according to which, being an "other" can be signified through how you dress, what is the general framework of the socio-cultural relations, what you believe in and not through the way you think or act in broader political terms. Interpretive research often relies upon case studies that focus on the use of particular discourses in a given context or representations of particular individual or events (Machin and Mayr, 2012). Thus, it tries to understand how particular notions taken for granted are constituted or contested. A focus on the narratives or constructed events can be helpful in illustrating contested notions such as "Europeanness". Combined with visual elements, the language of movie scripts is a means of social construction. Each of these kinds of resources like movies can allow the director "to set up a basic

shape of a social and natural world through their speech, text, or image. It allows them to highlight some kinds of meanings and to background others" (Machin and Mayr, 2012: 30). This approach consolidates the constructed repertoire. Göktürk's statement "Turks in German cinema have tended to be cast in one-dimensional roles, as victims on the margins of society, unable to communicate and integrate" (Göktürk, 2003: 229–243) is an example of this.

The issue of blurred boundaries of its fields is among the main characteristics of social sciences. Therefore, it turns out to be quite common to borrow concepts in between and among fields such as history, sociology, philosophy, and politics. This paper tries to understand the formation of a culture repertoire with a theory borrowed from translation studies. Prior to the formation of a culture repertoire, the term culture should be briefly mentioned. As well as being exposed to ongoing construction, the concept of culture is an "essentially contested concept" (Gallie, 1956). From food to the way people dress, from beliefs people hold, to the political choices they make; they can all be located within the broad spectrum of culture. From an ultimate philosophical perspective, to decide what counts within the sphere of culture and what does not might be exhausting. Prominent sociologists Giddens and Sutton define culture as "the way of life, including knowledge, customs, norms, laws, and beliefs, which characterizes a particular society or social group" in a comprehensive way (Giddens and Sutton, 2014: 269). In addition to that, culture can be briefly defined as "... the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next" (Matsumoto 1996: 16). From an institutional and more standard perspective, it is also possible to make a three-fold classification of the concept of culture:

a) Culture as *art*

b) Culture as *a set of attitudes, beliefs, customs, values and practices which are commonly shared by a group*

c) Culture as *a tool to qualify a sector of activity: the cultural sector*" (italics in original). (European Commission, 2006: 42).

Languages, beliefs, customs and, more importantly, literature works and other forms of art are all essential components of cultures and they help create and construct a culture repertoire by accumulating in a society within time. Israeli Translation Studies Scholar Even-Zohar states that there are two major conceptions of culture which

are commonly used in various discourses such as daily and official parlance and academic discourse. These two conceptions of culture frameworks consider culture either as a good which characterizes "mostly official and everyday use, as well as various sections of the "humanistic traditions" or as a tool which is characterized as "all academic disciplines which have worked with the idea of 'culture' from at least the end of the 19ᵗʰ century" (Even-Zohar, 2010: 9). It can be claimed that combining these two aspects of culture, namely considering culture both as a tool and good together, paves the way towards constructing a culture repertoire. More succinctly, Even-Zohar defines culture repertoire as the "aggregate of options utilized by a group of people, and by the individual members of the group, for the organization of life" (Even-Zohar, 1997: 166). Movies, literature, other forms of art can all be considered as components of the culture repertoire of a society. Movies on Turkish migrants in Europe focusing on certain themes and clichés form a "repertoire" in itself (especially in German and Belgian society). This accumulation of a repertoire conducts and shapes politico-cultural relations of countries as well as their social life spheres. Herein, these two aspects of culture will be elaborated before delving into the culture repertoire.

1.1. **Culture as a Good**

It has been stated that culture has a broad spectrum of meaning and contents; but beyond that, namely beyond its abstract meanings, it has also a tangible dimension which can be purchased or marketed. In this respect, Even-Zohar enunciates culture as having a material dimension "the possession of which signifies wealth, high status, and prestige" (Even-Zohar, 2010: 10). Literary works, sculpture and other forms of art can be considered within this context. Movies and their success at the box offices can also be considered from that perspective.

> "Once a defined set of such goods acquires the condition of evaluability by mutual recognition, in an established market (or Stock Exchange), it is assigned a specific value. Goods which cannot be evaluated by such a market cannot have value, and therefore are not marked as "culture." Therefore, social entities may be stigmatized as "having no culture" by other social entities, if diagnosed as not being in possession of the required and acknowledged set of goods." (Even-Zohar, 2010: 10).

Thus, it can be argued that, to be assessed as a culture, cultural goods should be recognized. When they are not recognized or when their

value is underestimated, further attempts to produce such kinds of cultural goods diminish and a canon comprising such goods cannot be created. Therefore, from setting out the notion of "cultures as good" it can be deducted that cultural products should meet certain criteria and expectations of the audience in order to be recognized and valued. In the case of the Turkish migratory movie, it can be argued that these movies should meet Europe's expectations to be accepted and valued in Europe, which is a notion relatively overlapping with Edward Said's *Orientalism* as well. In other words, the movies touched upon in this paper take their popularity from their repeated clichés and "expected" potentials. In such movies, the stories are told in a way which is bordered and narrated by Europe itself, namely how Turkish people have been seen from the vantage point of Europeans. As Said argues "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (Said, 1979: 3). Göktürk's (2003) argument of Turks often being depicted in one-dimensional roles, as victims on the margins of society, unable to communicate and integrate in German cinema can be interpreted in that way.

1.2. Culture as a Tool

It can be argued that transcending the limits of sheer being of "goods", cultures have a tool role in manipulating the societies and shaping the realities. In this respect, culture is conceived "as a set of operating tools for the organization of life, on both the collective and individual levels" and again according to Even-Zohar, there are two types of tools: active and passive (Even-Zohar, 2010: 12). With regard to passive signs, Zohar states:

> Passive tools are procedures with the help of which "reality" is analyzed, explained, and made sense of for and by humans. This perspective is in fact based on the hermeneutic tradition: it views 'the world' as a set of signs which need to be interpreted in order to make some sense of life (Even-Zohar, 2010: 12).

It can be argued that, with respect to Even-Zohar's above-cited remarks, the movies which focus on Turkish culture's dilemmatic network of relations can be considered as passive tools; named facts which are interpreted by their directors and attempt to give a meaning to Turkish culture within European culture. However, as Even-Zohar states, 'active' tools are "procedures with the help of which both an individual and a collective entity may handle any situation encountered, as well as produce any such situation" (Even-Zohar, 2010: 12). Passive

tools of culture attempt to understand or make sense of the realities surrounding social lives. However, active tools try to change the existing parameters of culture. To illustrate, with a possible proliferation of a specific genre, for example, Turkish migrant workers in Europe, the whole network of cultures and social perceptions are affected in a way in which cultural markers presented in the movies govern or at least shape the general considerations. In terms of considering cultures as active tools having the ability to change, a connection between this notion and social constructivism theory[*] can be formed, as one of the basic tenets of social constructivism is the concept "change". However, from the perspective of Even-Zohar's arguments, it can be claimed that migrant movie culture serves as a "tool", as it does not change the perception of Turkish culture, but rather reinforces the repeated narratives and interprets the reality, turns out to be passive rather than being active.

According to Göktürk (1999), this politics of representation culminates in an essentialist migrant worker identity reflected in the movies from a 'social worker's perspective' and represented as 'the Other' of German purity and authenticity. Similarly, Leslie Adelson (2005: 127) states that "the Turkish Gastarbeiter ['guest worker'] is not merely an outdated stereotype, but also a stock figure in the cultural fable of migrants suspended 'between two worlds'". With regard to Turkish figures, Leslie further acknowledges that there are "cultural difference and a social reality that are a priori known and knowable only in predetermined ways" (Leslie, 2005: 17).

The Case of Turkish Migratory in Europe Through Movies

Turkish migration to Europe with economic interests in mind started in the early 1960s with Germany opening its borders to the foreign workforce. Prior to workforce-oriented migration to Europe, there had been migration from Turkey to Europe, but probably not in masses as it was the case in *gastarbeiters*[**] case. In due

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[*]   Wendt, A. (2001) *Uluslararası Siyasetin Sosyal Teorisi*. İstanbul: Küre Yayınları.

[**]   For further information on Turkish workers' migration to Europe and recent contemporary debates on migration and integration of them to Germany, Belgium and France on the axis of their Muslim identity see: Kaya, A. (2009) *Islam, Migration and Integration: The Age of Securitization.* London: Palgrave.

course, with the workers and their families' gradual integration to German social life, there has also been a plethora of movies telling the stories of migrants' problems, the difficulties they encounter and the dilemmas they face in terms of their traditional cultures versus the "civilized" European culture. The movies *Die Fremde*, *Takiye: Allah Yolunda, Kuma* and *Gegen die Wand* can be considered within this context with the stories they tell which are interwoven with clichés.

INSTITUTION

REPERTOIRE

PRODUCER––––––––––CONSUMER MARKET

PRODUCT

(Even-Zohar, 2010: 16).

Even-Zohar's above-cited schematization roughly recapitulates the process of making a culture repertoire. If this schema is applied to the case studied in this paper, the institution is the receiving country of the culture, namely Germany and Belgium in our case. *Repertoire* is the accumulation of cultures as its name implies and, in our case, it is the movies taking Turkish migrants as their main plot. Producer refers to the patronage mechanism of this construction process as its name implies. Consumers who generally demand "authentic" aspects of the "other" culture are the receiver of those movies. In other words, consumers demand these movies as cultural "goods" as explained in the previous paragraphs. And finally, products are the movies which give the general audience the aspects they want to see, the stories and clichés they want to hear, and the 'realities' they want to believe to be true. Namely, they are the cultural "tools" changing or simply altering the reality in a way in which the so-called cultural "inequalities" are highlighted. This argument also overlaps with Giddens' claim that "cultural reproduction involves not just the continuation and development of language, general values and norms but also the reproduction of social inequalities" (Giddens and Sutton, 2014: 270). Moreover, according to Said "the ensemble of relationships between works, audiences, and some particular aspects of the Orient therefore constitutes an analyzable formation […] whose presence in time, in discourse, in institutions (schools, libraries, foreign services) gives it strength and authority" (Said, 1979: 20); thus the attempt to analyze

the movies with that perspective carries importance as they form a crucial part of the "aggregate of options utilized by a group of people, and by the individual members of the group, for the organization of life" entitled as a "culture repertoire" (Even-Zohar, 1997: 166).

1.3. Movies by European Directors

Die Fremde is directed by Austrian-born Feo Aladag who is married to a Kurdish man. In the movie directed by Aladag in 2010, Umay is a young Turkish woman who is probably the second or third generation of a migrant couple's daughter. Being married to a Turkish man and having a son, she suddenly notices that she does not love her husband anymore. As she is suppressed by her family, she tries to strive for an independent life and during her struggle, the patriarchal nature suffocates her. Umay tries to escape from her family, her brothers, and husband by taking her son with herself. However, Umay's futile attempts result in a life-threatening situation and her son is accidentally stabbed to death by his brother at the end of the movie.

This movie roughly tells the audience that Turks in Germany, especially the younger generations, feel more "European"; this is especially apparent in Umay's acts of denying her family. In the movie, Umay also has a younger sister who is much more free and independent than Umay. It can be argued that she represents hope and gives that message to the future generations; the more they live in that foreign country they become more "European". The most important message of the movie is Umay's resorting and sheltering to German police; by this act, she accepts and reinforces the idea that Europeans are civilized; unlike her society and parents, Germans value human rights, woman rights and they respect and protect individual freedoms.

The problematic aspect of this movie is its portrayal of Turkish families as prone to violence, and the notion that beating a woman is almost a need for them. If a woman behaves improperly, she must be beaten. And honor killings are presented as a characteristic of Turkish culture and showed as if they are quite common. Throughout the movie, German people are presented in a quite friendly manner and they would like to help Umay. However, the Turkish wedding ceremony clichés, the traces of being underdeveloped in terms of both welfare and culture are given as ordinary traits of a cultural community in the movie.

As for *Takiye: Allah Yolunda* which is directed by Ben Verbong in 2010; it tries to present the hypocrisy of Muslims in Germany. This kind of movies generally include a conspiracy-based plot. But, in its subtexts, the movie gives the message that majority of Muslims uses religion for their own interests. In that movie, Metin and his family are pious Muslims living in Cologne, Germany. Metin practices his religion through his father figure Hüseyin, who is the head of an Islamic community in Germany. However, Hüseyin, in his deep character, is not the person Metin believes him to be. Hüseyin starts an investment fund and Metin, who trusts him completely, convinces his family and friends to put all their savings in it. To put it briefly, the investment fund turns out to be a scam. Metin becomes the target of his neighbors and the funders. His enemies kill the Hodja, who is also Metin's father-in-law, and Metin's beloved wife, and injure his young son. Following these events, the relations between the pseudo-fund and the murders of Metin's family emerge; throughout Europe, savings of Muslims are collected for them to gain more – which is a point to be highlighted; normally, according to Islam interest is forbidden; but when they are told that the money and interest is permitted, if it is for Allah's will and for Allah's sake, it turns out to be permissible. This point is also a marker of hypocrisy. Subsequently, those savings are laundered in Turkey and given to terror organizations. Metin then realizes the fraud; Hüseyin is put into prison and Metin lives with his family – his mother, his ever-protective brother, and son. When they are told that they will gain more, Metin's pious neighbors and relatives support him, but as soon as they learn about the scam and the fact that they will lose their money, they attempt to kill him. Hüseyin, who continuously cites from the Holy Qur'an, advises benevolence and philanthropy, turns out to be the fraudster.

1.4. **Movies by Turkish Directors**

Kuma is directed by Umut Dağ in 2012. In this movie, 19-year-old girl Ayşe from an underdeveloped village in Turkey is brought to Vienna with the pretext of a marriage to handsome Hasan who is one of the six children of a Turkish couple residing in Vienna. The movie starts with a crowded Turkish wedding ceremony. During the wedding, Ayşe's family looks happy because they think that their daughter is going abroad where she will be happy and be well-situated. However, when Ayşe arrives, it turns out that she is brought there to be the second wife to Fatma's husband. Although the family welcomes her, she feels like an outsider. Among the many aspects, the basic contradictory aspect of the movie turns out

to be the situation that it is normal to be the second wife of a man; and if she does not obey the conventional way of life of that family, she can be beaten. She is beaten by Fatma and, throughout the movie, homophobia, patriarchy and strong attachment to traditions surface in the lives of that family. Ayşe runs away from the family, which is full of secrets, lies, and hypocrisy.

As for *Gegen die Wand* directed by Fatih Akın in 2004; in this movie, Cahit is a German Turk in his 40s. After losing his beloved wife, he becomes addicted to cocaine and alcohol. One night, he decides to kill himself and crashes into a wall by driving fast. When he is taken to the hospital, he meets a girl, Sibel, another German Turk who has also tried to commit suicide. Feeling suffocated because of her family pressuring her, Sibel asks Cahit to marry her so that she can get rid of the pressure. After all, in a patriarchal family, when she becomes a married woman, her husband will be responsible for her. As she will arrange this fake marriage, she presumes that Cahit will not pressure her; she will be an independent woman making her own decisions. Cahit doubts the plan at first, but then agrees to take part. When Sibel tells him that she's interested in absolute freedom involving other men and he agrees, they start to live as roommates with separate private lives for a while. Then the movie takes a different turn, and they no longer see each other as two indifferent roommates; they fall in love. However, Sibel's quest for freedom does not end here. In due course, Cahit, because of his envy of Sibel, murders a man and goes to prison. However, this killing, rather than being presented as a matter of envy, is presented or understood by the Germans as an honor killing. At the end of the movie Sibel goes to Istanbul and starts a new family there. The question of the role of the cultural memory and its role in the sustainment of identity is also controversial.

Stereotyping in Movies and a Reinforced Culture Repertoire

Although being interwoven and plotted with complex networks of cultural markers and messages; these movies, in their essences, flow with a few clichés regarding Turkish culture abroad. In its essence, culture incorporates ideas, customs, socially constructed behaviors, and practices of a group or a society. According to Bogen and Goldstein, religion is a part of culture. They underline the broad scope of culture arguing that "culture includes both government and religion because they are aspects of the ways in which a group of humans live" (Bogen and Goldstein, 2009: 48). However, in these

movies religion is not reflected in an authentic way. It is represented in a pejorative and often misunderstood way by the portrayed Turkish society living there. If a general sum of messages is to be drawn, below the mentioned remarks might emerge:

- Turkish migrants are still blindly attached to their traditions; even if they live like Europeans, they think like "Turks" e.g. as Cahit and Sibel do so.

- They are presented as not knowing the essentials of their religion but they practice it as a custom, or they practice it due to community pressure. As Metin conceives the hypocrisy of religion he even denies religion, and then turns back to it in an enlightened way.

- Women feel suffocated in the society they live. They want to escape from it. Umay, Sibel, and Ayşe all have this tendency. Unfortunately, none of them succeeds to free themselves, neither materially nor emotionally from the traditions of their societies. If they attempt to do so they get punished or get killed. Patriarchy is difficult to overcome in Turkish societies.

It should be highlighted again that the number of movies analyzed here simply isn't enough to conclude that this is the general portrayal of the Turkish society. In other words, it cannot be claimed that these are all biased against the Turkish society; they are merely the reflections of the socio-cultural practices of Turkish migrants portrayed in those movies. Yet, the problematic aspect emerges in the movies, which comprise an essential part of the culture repertoire, when Turkish migratory population has never been depicted with good characteristics. Mothers defend the patriarchal system; fathers always value their sons over their daughters. Brothers are reminiscent of their fathers to their sisters, and this vicious circle of suppression never changes. Europe moves forward, but Turkish society stays the same, maintaining same cultural parameters for most of the time. Culture, in Zohar's term, is treated as "goods" to be sold throughout the movies, and selling these goods requires meeting certain expectations with regard to that culture. Besides, culture is also a "tool", in our case a "passive" tool, which does not change the existing perspectives with regard to Turkish migratory population residing in Europe for decades.

In addition to the stereotyped plots the directors or screenwriters' frame, there are also the multiculturalism debates and its challenges.

When these individuals encounter the European way of life, they hold on to theirs tighter and, accordingly, their socio-cultural relations turn into a socio-political issue as well. In a general sense, the concept of multiculturalism relates to an ideology or policy which contains cultural diversity or pluralism as its name implies. The concept can be defined as "the state of society or the world containing many cultures that interact in some significant way with each other" (Gutmann, 1993: 171). Moreover, the concept can be examined under "the politics of recognition and difference".*

> Contemporary multicultural societies have emerged against the background of nearly three centuries of the culturally homogenizing nation-state. In almost all pre-modern societies the individual's culture was deemed to be an integral part of his identity in just the same way as his body was. Cultural communities were therefore widely regarded as the bearers of rights and left free to follow their customs and practices in their autonomous cultural spaces (Parekh, 1999: 3).

In the movies, there is a sense or a presented perception that Turkish cultural community which is free to follow their customs and cultural practices accomplishes this in a pejorative way and the message of Turkish culture's compatibility** to European culture surfaces sporadically. Considering the movies through a network of clichés, a dichotomy of the good and the bad, a civilizing force and a civilized society (or the need to be civilized) emerges. To illustrate, Umay resorts to the German police to be able to save herself and her son from her family. The police try to improve the situation, yet they fail; the government's attempts also fail. This and other similar images bear the challenges of coexistence of these two different cultural spaces.

Another important point is the situation that both Turkish and European directors use the same clichés during the recognition and representation processes. This overlapping plots or narratives of the movies depend on a multitude of factors. The scenes they

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*   "The gist of politics of recognition can be put forward as 'everyone should be recognised for his or her unique identity. … [Within] the politics of difference, what we are asked to recognise is the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctness from everyone else'"(italics in original). See: Taylor, C. (1994) The Politics of Recognition, p. 38.

**   For further information on Turkish identities compatibility to European identity/culture see the critical analysis by Çapan, Z.G. and Onursal, Ö. (2007) Situating Turkey within the European Union. Perspectives on European Politics and Society. 8(1): 98-108. They argue that "the question of how compatible Turkish identity is a misleading one in light of the fact that the EU identity is still in the process of construction (Çapan and Onursal, 2007: 100).

depict are not a general portrayal of the Turkish society. However, this situation also governs the socio-political notions with regard to Turks residing in these countries. Said's below-cited statement also supports that notion:

> Arabs, for example, are thought of as camel-riding, terroristic, hook-nosed, venal lechers whose undeserved wealth is an affront to real civilization. Always there lurks the assumption that although the Western consumer belongs to a numerical minority, he is entitled either to own or to expend (or both) the majority of the world resources. Why? Because he, unlike the Oriental, is a true human being (Said, 1979: 108).

Unfortunately, with the reiterated narratives in these fictional movies, Said's notion can be regarded as relevant for Turkish migrants in Europe as well. However, the movies focus on the "eccentric" aspects of Turkish culture both as goods and tools that therefore shape the German culture repertoire of migrant movies in that way.

Conclusion: A Culture Repertoire and Beyond

Since it is a socially constructed concept, culture in Even-Zohar's perspective can be considered both as "goods" and as "tools". As goods, the migrant movies serve to meet certain criteria and expectations of the audience in order to be recognized and valued. The paper claims that the migrant movie culture as a "tool" does not change the perception of the Turkish culture, but rather reinforces the repeated narratives and interprets the reality. By means of movies, directors can set up a basic shape of a social and natural world through their speech, text, or image. It allows them to "highlight some kinds of meanings and to background others" (Machin and Mayr, 2012: 30). This brief paper has attempted to show how a specific culture repertoire, which is the "aggregate of options utilized by a group of people, and by the individual members of the group, for the organization of life" (Even-Zohar, 1997: 355), is formed in a given society through movies. Turkish migratory perception or "repertoire" related to them is claimed to be formed through narrating same clichés rendering the culture a "passive tool". It can be argued that these clichés might govern the general

idea regarding Turkish culture living in these countries, and it affects the socio-cultural relations between the communities as well as the socio-political relations. The main criticism regarding these movies is that they focus only on one side of the coin; and by doing that, or taking culture as "goods" to sell and preferring to focus on certain specific aspects, they reinforce the above-mentioned situations. Moreover, by underestimating and generalizing the phenomenon, the movies might play a role in hampering the construction of a healthier dialogue between the communities. Particularly, the idea of an EU identity necessitates the existence of common values[*] but also a respect to cultural diversity. The situation of Turkish culture and its representation causes serious concerns on its coexistence in Europe. Said (1979: 23) stipulates that "our role is to widen the field of discussion, not to set limits in accord with the prevailing authority" yet, the current repertoire clearly sets certain limits on the representation of Turkish culture and opening this subject for discussion should trigger further studies.

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[*]   Human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights are listed as the core values of the EU which are set out at the beginning of the Treaty of Lisbon. They need to be implemented and guaranteed by all Member States, and any European country wishing to become a member of the Union must respect them.

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