Jin: 'Women' And 'Life' in the Light of the 'Difference[1]'

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Abstract
Sören Kierkegoard describes Jacques Derrida is as the best 'ironist' of our age. This is an emphasis on the success of the 'ironic seriousness game' in Derrida's writings. Through the 'Jin', it is also possible to consider the art praxis of Reha Erdem, trained in France, on the context of 'ironic seriousness game'. Thus Jin stores the law of the compositions and rules of the play from first glance and the first coming before, it is cannot be recognized and understood either. The film is 'blind-alley' with unexecuted 'introduction'. As Derrida underlines in 'The Archeology of the Frivolous: Reading Condillac' (2013:23), "the introduction seduces and starts a fake guidance. An introduction must not enter forcibly. It must not involve in text, first of all, it must not fill the text with reading. Introduction is seduction…" Based on Derrida's notion of 'difference' and on poststructuralist feminist methods, this presentation/paper offers an interpretation of Reha Erdem's who is regarded as auteur in Turkish cinema after 2000 last film 'Jin'. The Jin movie made in 2013 is important to turn into a movie to the Kurdish issue which is still going on claim lives in Turkey. Jin mean 'women' and 'life' in the kurdish language. At the same time, Jin is name kurdish guerrillas woman that she is leading actor of movie. As a Kurdish girl, Jin could have been a South American guerrillas, a African rebel, a Brave either. In this connection, the presentation/paper analyzed the Jin movie's intentional meaning.

Keywords: (cinema, poststructuralist feminism, ironi, Derrida, Reha Erdem, Jin.)

[1] This concept is used by Derrida as 'différance' instead of difference.

Introduction

Jin is kurdish origin. Jin mean ‘women’ and ‘life’ in the kurdish language. At the same time, Jin is name kurdish guerrillas woman that she is leading actor of movie. The Jin movie is important both to turn into a movie to the Kurdish guestion and women ıssue. At the same time, this matter is our basic motivation in film selection. Because Kurdish question have protect its feature is political trouble since Ottoman. This question, which wasn’t solved after the establishment of the, become a bleeding wound after 1980s. But armed movement is stopped with resolution process starting AKP goverment. İt is answered to expectations of Kurdish people. Such that a Kurdish side taking Turkish support get into parliament as make the cut in 2015 June elections. In parallel with these developments, it can be said that Kurdish issue takes part in Turkey and Turkish cinema. On this context, Kurdish issue is a metaphor which is represented by ‘Jin’ (life).

‘Being a woman in patriarchal structure’ is a frequently discussed topic in Turkey. Unfortunately, present situation is not satisfactory. In this context, produced narrative structures via cinema is quite important. So, thinking cinema independently of social context might be deceptive. Women matter is the epitome of ‘Jin’ from this aspect.

In this context the question of ‘what the purpose of this study?’ gains importance. This study focuses on the reflection of Kurdish issue and problems of women in the Turkey on the cinema. Sociological context is seen as significant and analysis is made on historical and social context. According to poststructuralist view, this type of dualisms reproduces ‘structure’. Jacques Derrida’s ‘deconstruction’ method is the source of inspiration of this study. This method tries to break oppositions. Actually, this study has also the same aim.

In fact, Derrida associates three types of women with the philosophy of Nietzsche. These are the castrated woman, the castrating woman and the affirming woman (Derrida, 2007:167). The castrated woman refers to dogmatic, metaphysical and scientific feminism. It claims to explore reality-woman. Derrida expresses that feminism is nothing short of actions of a woman who desire to be like a male (Derrida, 2007:151). The castrating woman is identical with illusion and to hide oneself is the epitome of a metaphysician. Also, artist bends the truth to withstand attempting to anchor her own meaning. “Her biggest art is lie and her highest interest is appearance and beauty” (Derrida, 2007:153). However, this type of woman has a loyalty to her ideals fanatically and actually if she forgets these ideals are created by herself, she might be seduced easily by her own illusion. Affirming woman refers to Dionysian power which refuses all bases and precisions by basing reality and life on the perspective. She is affirmed by accepting as an affirmative power, an artist, and an enthusiasm. And now, she is not affirmed by man. Woman affirms herself in man” (Derrida, 2007:165)

Derrida agrees with structural linguistics on two points: the basis of language is negative and linguistic structure consists of oppositions. However, Derrida dissociates from structuralism by seeing intertextual reading as obligatory and refusing approach of foundationalism and constituent subject. This makes him a poststructuralist.

There are not identical speakers and texts of language and authors who have deliberate plans and intentions in the thought of 'death of the subject'. Because of that, subject is a thing which is constructed, fictionalized and founded. According to poststructuralist approach, subject is a fiction and product of discourse (Işıklı, 2011:233). While Foucault, who is one of poststructuralist philosophers, makes genealogic analysis to remove the subject, Derrida destroys the subject with deconstructivist analysis.

In 'intertextuality' everything is the text and nothing exists outside the text. In poststructuralist thought, all texts can be crosschecked merely by other texts. The meaning of intertextuality can be expressed that texts postpone their meanings to other texts (Göksel, 2006: 364). Meaning depends on the context and it is unlimited in number potentially because each reader has own opinions in reference to missing contexts and uses them in various forms. This thought either challenges the idea of dominant author which claims production of certain messages or subjects it to deconstruction (Smith, 2001: 180). As it is seen, there is a reciprocal structure in intertextuality. Both creators and analyzers of the texts approach to texts in an intertextual manner. All texts open onto other ones and embodies another texts because they are not closed and ended (Göksel, 2006:365). Deconstructive analysis of Derrida begins with a contemporary question and analyze existing answers. Then, it studies with these answers as how they are produced by which discourses and how they are fictionalized by whom, and how they are created by which language games. This is merely possible by looking at other texts and analyzing them; in other words; studying in an intertextual manner (Ramond, 2011:58).

According to 'Rejection of Binary Oppositions' principle, language is divided categories like right-wrong, good-bad, black-white, male-female, up-down in itself. This division makes earlier term superior. The most important criticism of post structuralism is claimed that systems are not limited with two-pole like good-bad and there are different tones different from them. Also, poststructuralism is not interested in which term is superior and it approaches things ontologically (Kristeva and Derrida, 1999:168).

Foundationalism as an attempt to construct all ideas and principles on given principles does not need to show a justification apart from the knowledge. According to foundationalism the knowledge bases upon strong beliefs foundation and our knowledge of the external world bases upon these beliefs. Foundationalism opposition of poststructuralism expresses that it is not possible to find foundations for both knowledge and morality so meaning and value cannot be attributed to the life (Ryan, 2012:108-109). Foundationalism appropriates the first of these binary oppositions and holds the other responsible for the negative one. The foundation of good and bad is the one who describes them. By rejecting this structure, poststructuralism claims that questions about real, truth, reality, validity, transparency, explicity cannot be asked; if they are asked, answers could not be found.

The aim of this study is reading a film from Derrida perspective. By doing that it is aimed to make use of poststructuralist feminism approach. Deconstructive analysis method which was revealed by Derrida for analyzing binary oppositions which dominate Western philosophy and culture is guidance for aim of this study.

The concepts of logocentrism/phonocentrism, difference, inversion/dislocation (erasure/drawing) must be known to understand deeply deconstructive analysis method.

Derrida expresses that in order to understand concept oppositions, the concepts of logocentrism/phonocentrism must be understood. Because, according to him there is logocentrism and phonocentrism in the basis of Western philosophy which was criticized (Derrida, 1999:57). The discrimination between logos (word) and ecriture (script) is in the basis of current concept oppositions. This causes giving priority to logos against ecriture. Ecriture is seen as a cradle of mistakes and uncertainty. According to Derrida, phonocentrism make relation between language and reality wrong (Derrida, 2011: 10). Because logocentrism assumes that idea is in conscious independently from language and sees the language as a transfer tool for existing idea. However, Derrida claims that 'me' is a text which exists thanks to language and nothing exists outside the text (Moran, 2012: 201-202).

Another significant concept for Derrida is 'difference'. According to Derrida, ecriture is equal to difference which forms the meaning. As it is known, according to Saussure, language is the first and meaning follows language. Saussure conceptualized language as a system of differences. Derrida disagrees with this conceptualization and says that if this is accepted, we face with the system of signs which predates meaning (Timur, 2005:167). With this aim, Derrida conceptualize an open system instead of closed system concept of structuralism which is called difference by him and this concept includes both differences and postpone (Moran, 2012:201-202). It is enough to reveal instability of meaning that difference's postpone meaning can be understood in ecriture instead of talking. Because meaning is both different and postponed. According to Derrida difference as an expression of this instability weaken our beliefs that language is a stable meaning transfer medium among individuals because it is always in our discourse. According to Derrida, difference is to slip certainty through people's fingers when they think they caught (Sim, 2000:32).

In addition to representation role of women sexuality in social, psychological and historical frame, it is diversified and reproduced thanks to metaphor concept of Derrida which made its mark on the century. Because in traditional manner, referred phenomenon of sexuality is damaged and known sexual descriptions give their place to simulations and metaphors of women as a sexual object. Rise of feminist art tries to damage traditional women concept and starts with rejection of produced women images. Because these images transform concept of women into an object which is consumed. In this sense, the aim of poststructuralist feminism is to eliminate the inequality of women and men; to cease the image bombardment; and to try giving women sensitivity prominence.

Conclusion

All films which are shot by Reha Erdem so far does not include any specific time and space. Additionally, all of them have a unique setting and take audience to these imaginary places. These places are not in maps. This situation is seen as different in Jin, but it is the same. Jin refers to a place on the map. Creatures, casualties, Kurdish guerrillas and Turkish soldiers of the war which continue to claim lives in Turkey are

framed. However, Erdem looks on the war without leaving his manner. This film was shot in Mersin, Mut and Kaz Dağları (Mountain Ida), but they do not refer to their real locations. In other words; in the film, these places represent Eastern Anatolia Mountains where guerilla camps are located. This is a struggle tale of a female Kurdish guerilla who is alone and tries to live self-sufficiently between earth and sky…



Scene 1: Jin Film

At the beginning of the film, the nature is seen accompanied with the music called as 'unveiled' by Hildur Guðnadóttir: trees, flowers, insects, animals, everything incident to the nature. The music called as 'unveiled' by Hildur Guðnadóttir is used in the film so it is also important at that point. In addition to lexical meaning of 'unveiled' word, there are different meanings like explaining, revealing, disillusionment and unveiling the mystery.

And then, bombs and guns start to explode immediately and damage everything saw. Branches of trees are broken, a lizard returns to his home, snake goes to its hole. In other words; at the beginning of the film, it is told that actual damage of this war is on nature.

The film starts with escaping Jin from an armed organization in the mountain[1] because of unknown cause. Jin has hard times all alone on the mountain by hiding herself from members of armed organization and law enforcers. Members of armed organization and law enforcers are the same for Jin. Binary opposition is broken in these scenes.

Animals give biggest solace and power to Jin because they also live under similar threats and take the same side. In the film, the given roles to animals by Reha Erdem are to protect Jin and share her sorrows and also they are witnesses of Jin's experiences. Such that, Jin is in solidarity with a deer and treat an injured donkey. Also, Jin makes a deal with wild bird that she gives its egg back. A lynx gives solace to Jin, she is stimulated by a snake, a horse tries to protect herself. The dualism of nature/culture loses its opposition at this point.

[1] In addition to the meaning of natural formation, mountain has secondary meaning. Terrorists are located in these places. So, mountain is a myth of terrorism.





Scene 2: Jin Film

She is respected from a shepherd because of being ‘an armed guerilla’. The shepherd shares his bread and asks him to ‘give his blessing’. When the same shepherd sees her in a civilian dress, he will try to get closer and make use of her femininity. Jin is the same Jin despite his changing dress. Differentiation occurs in approach towards Jin. Uniform gives its place to lace stocking. This frame is formed by masculine view and it refers to first breaking point. ‘Lace stocking’ and ‘masculine view’ are ‘the apparent’ of the text. However, ‘lace stocking’ is unknown for Jin. Because she doesn’t have any idea about the lace. She wears something for demilitarization uncaringly. Jin is ‘affirming woman’ of Derrida. What uniformed Jin live is what Jin who wears lace stocking live.

After short-timed conflict, Jin gets out of breath. While she pants for air, at the same time a lizard breathe. This is an awesome metaphor in terms of Jin’s struggle to survive like other animals in the mountain.

She leaves the mountain by getting civilian clothes from a home. Jin steals a geography book in addition to clothes and foods by creeping in a home. She spells “where I do live” sentence in cave of asylum is quite meaningful. Where Jin lives is decided by others..

She is harassed by male personnel of a bus company office when she is 17. This harassment is verbal that “if your money is not enough, we try different ways”. Jin prefers to work in a plantation and in this work women earn 25 Turkish Liras and men earn 35 Turkish Liras per a day. Jin pulls weights with men workers to get travelling money erewhile. One of the workers who is seen as brother by Jin, sets his eyes on her and soon he sidles up to her by saying “I loved you” and harass her. Harassment is leading role in Jin’s tale. Harassment starts with shepherd and continues with in bus company office, plantation and police station. All harassers are Kurdish. Only truck driver approaches her in a different manner and he shares his chocolate with Jin. He is Turkish. This is another braking point of the film. Binary oppositions which were refused by Derrida is also supported with this narrative. Erdem tries to break Turkish/Kurdish opposition at that point.



Scene 3: Jin Film

Jin is caught in the bus and she is taken to a mountain patrol. In here, an injured companion of her says to her “kill me”. She has to kill her companion hearth-breakingly. Otherwise, the testimony of the terrorist is taken and this might be beneficial for soldiers. Another case is that a man who acts as Kurdish interpreter in the patrol harasses Jin. Then, Jin finds an injured Turkish soldier after conflict and disentangles him from guerrillas and takes him to the cave and treat him, eat his fill. In these stages, the director takes a stand against dualisms which creates structure. At the same time, these scenes can be read as a reference to Derrida’s concept of ‘difference’. Meaning is postponed continuously. Also, injured soldier says that “I wish we will be meeting again” and this can be evaluated as a peace desire for future.

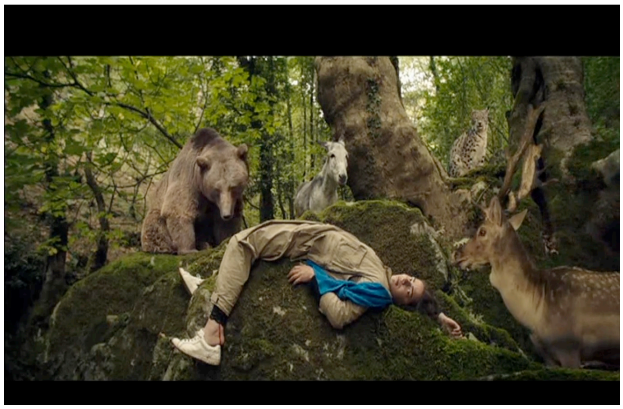


Scene 4: Jin Film

Jin returns to both mountain and her solitude with a great eagerness and a big disappointment. Shortly, ‘she tries, but she is not successful’. She takes up her arms again. She crosses an injured donkey’s path. After dressing its wound, she unleashes the donkey and sets its free. She gets stuck in felled trees, fragmentized animals under bombs and arms. Her rebellion becomes desperation thanks to explosions, bombs and arms.

Fabulous narration which is reinforced with the saying of ‘reality is a big shame’ by Reha Erdem is aroused in Jin with the story of ‘Little Red Riding Hood’. Standing hazards on the ‘outside’ arising from leaving ‘the area’ where she belongs are over while her injured body looks on audience.

Reha Erdem states that “when I shoot this film, sometimes, I lost my sleep and I got bored…” Jin’s story culminates in a gory final…Soldiers ambush Jin who is only 17. Her child body falls out of a tree. Her relatives are huddled around her dead body. They are very green trees, a lynx, a donkey, a bear and a deer.



Scene 5: Jin Film

Jin squeezes into her ‘women’ and ‘Kurdish’ identities and she represents the damage of the war on both nature and people clearly. She mentions being a ‘human’ without touching on ethnic identities and equalize ‘humanity’ with ‘deconstruction’.

Jin is fictioned as a ‘woman’ character in the ‘life’ and it is possible to recept beyond secondary position of woman in patriarchal culture. The matter is organizing the meanings by mining the meanings within the text. In this context, ‘risk matter’ is the thing which Erdem desires for himself and he interested in this most. Ultimately, the focus of this film is a Kurdish guerilla who is against both state and organization. In the last instance, making the resistance of Jin tragic is also a risk. Because the film does not answer the question of “What is the natural life envision positioned against struggle of Jin?” and line is not drawn for audience in company with ‘ironically seriousness game’. Jin is embraced by ‘stagger’ drive during the film. This starting point is supported with this embracement and refers to her hungers, weakness and power. Also, ‘borders’ postpone their ‘meanings’ for both Jin and audience.

Jin enables feminist reading by criticizing binary oppositions and handling the issue from the point of woman. Also, it is tried to determine critical points of the film by describing constructed ‘language games’ and created ‘narrative structures’. Attention is paid to what the film do not say instead of what it says; and ‘hope’ and ‘hopelessness’ are traced on the path of differentiation between ‘real’ and ‘reality’. The ‘meaning’ of Jin comes from a letter with a mark which is named as ‘hat’ in Turkish grammar: in Kurdish language the meaning of Jin is ‘life’ and Jin is ‘woman’. So, this is an ‘introduction’ to ‘postponed’ ‘life’ of Jin without seducing accompanied with her ‘red headgear’ and deep eyes.

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