

## Hedonism and Its Presentation in “*La Grande Bouffe*”

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### Abstract

In this article, the messages of Marco Ferreri, one of the genuine directors of European cinema, in the grotesque comedy style of *La Grande Bouffe* (The Big Feast, 1973), which is about four middle-aged hedonist men who know no limits in consumption, were examined in the context of philosophical criticism. In the film, in which the lack of boundaries in greed, decay and collapse at the class level is embodied with black humor in the context of radical hedonism criticism, an ethical understanding of pleasure-oriented human understanding is also implied by depicting the extremes of insatiability and consumption. The aim of this article is to show that a remarkable critique of a certain human understanding and lifestyle is made through the characters of the radical hedonist bourgeois male friends group that the film *La Grande Bouffe* focuses on. In this direction, *La Grande Bouffe* is examined through the concept of hedonism by making a descriptive film analysis with a qualitative approach.

*Key Words:* Hedonism, Radical hedonism, Greed, Consumption, Corruption, La Grande Bouffe

### Hedonizm ve “*Büyük Tıkınma*” Filminde Sunumu

#### Öz

Bu makalede, Avrupa sinemasının özgün yönetmenlerinden Marco Ferreri'nin, tüketimde sınır tanımayan, burjuva sınıfına mensup orta yaşlı hedonist dört erkeğin grotesk güldürü tarzındaki *La Grande Bouffe* (*Büyük Tıkınma*, 1973) filmine için iletiler felsefi eleřtiri bağlamında incelenmektedir. Açgözlülükte sınır tanımayışın, sınıfsal düzeyde çürüme ve çöküşün, radikal hedonizm eleřtirisini bağlamında kara mizahla somutlaştırıldığı filmde, doyumsuzluk ve tüketimle ilgili aşırılıklar tasvir edilerek, haz odaklı insan anlayışına dair etik bir anlayış da ima edilmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, *La Grande Bouffe* adlı filmin odağına aldığı radikal hedonist burjuva erkek arkadaş grubundan oluşan karakterler üzerinden, belli bir insan anlayışı ve yaşam tarzının dikkate değer eleřtirisinin nasıl yapıldığını betimlemektir. Bu doğrultuda nitel yaklaşımla, betimsel film analizi yapılarak *La Grande Bouffe*, hedonizm kavramı üzerinden incelenmektedir.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Hedonizm, Radikal hedonizm, Açgözlülük, Tüketim, Yozlaşma, Büyük tıkınma


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## Introduction

Gluttony and overconsumption are historically viewed as a tendency that was not welcomed by a significant part of humanity, as can be understood from the practices of abstinence and fasting, which are practiced in many belief systems to dull the self. In contrast, selfishness and consumption became almost a fundamental law in modern societies. The price of excessive hedonism for modern individuals who are constantly in pursuit of pleasure and knowing no limits in consumption is the emergence of various physiological and psychological problems.

People who try to give meaning to life from different angles can enter into various tendencies. One of these tendencies is pleasure-oriented consumption. The distinctive feature of hedonistic consumption is the demand for continuity of pleasure. A hedonist person is not satisfied with what he has and constantly pursues new pleasures that will satisfy him. As Nietzsche states in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* with the line "Yet all joy wants eternity" (2006, p. 184), pleasure demands deep eternity. The person who constantly pursues the object of desire reaches a temporary happiness by consuming what he has acquired, and then the cycle continues with the search for desire and consumption again. In this context, people who lead a pleasure-oriented life cannot get out of the cycle they are in and get tired of chasing desire. For those who are tired in the cycle of desire, pleasure and consumption, hedonism also becomes the basis of corruption.

Hedonism can fall into the domain of human experiences for different reasons. In some cases, pleasure gains meaning as a consolation for people against the meaninglessness of life. Some people may see pleasure as a peaceful and reassuring way out of collapse when faced with major disasters. For people who engage in this type of orientation, hedonism becomes meaningful as a doctrine that justifies their actions. When evaluated within this framework, Hedonism can be considered as a philosophy born out of hopelessness (Stroll, 1956, p. 25). In this context, people who have fallen into the grip of radical hedonism have to face decline as the prisoners of endless desires they attribute to meaninglessness. This situation deepens the dilemmas of those people who numb themselves by pursuing pleasure. In this respect, consumption developing with radical hedonism results in corruption and nihilism.

In this study, the concept of hedonism was examined in the context of philosophical criticism through Marco Ferreri's, one of the extraordinary directors of European cinema, the film *La Grande Bouffe*, which caused important debates in the period when it was shown. In this direction, it was aimed to examine the concept of hedonism in the field of ethical philosophy that finds the meaning of life in the axis of the relationship between cinema and philosophy and to discuss the concretization of radical hedonism with cinematic tools from the perspective of a genius director.

## Purpose and Method

Cinema is an important field in which certain philosophical topics covered in written texts can be handled quite effectively in films. Films offer important opportunities for the concretization of philosophical concepts examined in written texts and for dealing with philosophical issues with a very deep perspective (Cox and Levine, 2018, p. 27). As an expression of a sense of reality, films demand aesthetic, ethical and epistemological evaluations from the audience. In this context, the examination of the problems presented in the films is inevitably linked to philosophical ideas (Andersen, 2014, p. 3). In the relationship between cinema and philosophy, which can be examined in different dimensions, it is impossible to consider the concepts of the narratives of some films outside the philosophical context (Kabadayı, 2014, p. 51). Philosophical research involves critically examining a subject that rose before, with a skeptical approach (Duncum, 2016, p. 10). In this context, in the film analysis made with a philosophical perspective, the basic philosophical messages in the content of the film are determined by evaluating the basic elements that make up the film.

Characters are thought as the basic elements for the film review. As Timothy Corrigan expressed that, "often, a discussion of film concentrates exclusively on what happens to the characters or how they change" (2015, p. 61). Accordingly, the research of the film within the framework of the concept of hedonism is carried out through character analysis, which has determinant functions in forming its meaning. In this framework, the analysis of the film is carried out within the framework of determined philosophical concepts. In this direction, firstly the concept of hedonism is explained within the framework of Cyrenaic and Epicurean approaches, and then the film *La Grande Bouffe* is analyzed with a qualitative approach in the context of the concept of hedonism.

Hedonism is an expression of an approach that sees the purpose and meaning of life in pleasure. The aim of this study is to analyze the film *La Grande Bouffe* (1973), in the context of the presentation of hedonism in cinema. Explicit references to hedonism in the narrative of the film, the embodying of the radical bourgeois hedonism of the themes and motifs in the film, and the aestheticization of the director with a grotesque style with tragic and funny elements are the reasons why the film was chosen as an example. The descriptive film analysis method, which is a qualitative analysis method, was used in the study. From this point of view, it was tried to determine to what extent the human images that are constructed in the film in line with the concepts of Cyrenaic hedonism and Epicurean pleasure, explained in the theoretical part of the study, are compatible and accordingly, the extent to which different hedonist approaches are used or not in the movie was tried to be revealed in the context of categories such as greed, dissatisfaction, overconsumption and corruption. In the article, it is aimed to contribute to the studies in the field by presenting a critical and original expression of the hedonistic understanding of life with cinematic elements in the context of the relationship between cinema and philosophy.

### **The Concept of Pleasure**

Pleasure, which is one of the essential qualities of emotion in terms of the state it is in, is the feeling of satisfaction arising from obtaining something desired. Pleasure, as opposed to pain, refers to liking, sensual or spiritual joy and taste. On the other hand, hedonism is a world view that finds the meaning of life as pleasure (Akarsu, 1998, p. 93). The first debates that pleasure may be the ultimate goal of human emerged in the heavily debated ethical and subjectivism atmosphere of the generation of Socrates and Sophists (Peters, 1967, p. 75). Theoretical defense of pleasure, like many schools of thought expressed systematically, is the work of ancient Greek philosophers. In this context, there are two important philosophers who played a role in the establishment of hedonism. Aristippus, the founder of the Cyrene School, is also regarded as the founder of hedonism. Another name associated with hedonism is Epicurus.

### **The Concept of Hedonism**

When we look at the history of thought, it is seen that there are various opinions about the highest purpose of human. "Hedonism maintains that pleasure is the guiding principle of human action, both factually and normatively" (Fromm, 2002, p. 174). Based on pleasure, hedonists position happiness as the highest goal of human. According to them, happiness becomes meaningful only as an expression of pleasure, enjoyment, joy and cheer. In this direction, a principle is created that everyone should perform actions that give pleasure to them. Although hedonists agree on this principle, they disagree about what gives people the most pleasure. In this direction, two different hedonist approaches draw attention. Aristippus (435-355 BC) of Cyrene represents the first of these approaches. Aristippus, raising sensual pleasures to the extent of the aim of human action, accepts pleasure as the defining sign of wisdom, without being under the control of pleasure and without being its captive. The second approach is theorized by Epicurus (342-271). According to Epicurus, moral and spiritual pleasures take precedence on the grounds that they are more permanent than bodily pleasures and more independent from external factors and conditions (Pieper, 2012, p. 225). Although happiness was accepted as an important goal for human beings in the ancient philosophy where such thoughts were developed, the pleasure understanding of Epicurus, which is a refined and expanded form of hedonism, was more widely accepted than the hedonist ethical understanding that reduces happiness to bodily pleasures. In Epicurus's approach to pleasure, it is emphasized that the goal of human moral actions is not limited to reaching pleasure, and moreover, the benefits and harms of pleasure are taken into account by considering the whole life of the human being. In this sense, turning to the permanent benefits of pleasure is considered the right approach to achieving happiness. In Epicurus's understanding of pleasure, severe pleasures are also the cause of severe pain, so turning to severe pleasures also carries the risk of suffering pain the same severity (Özlem, 2014, p. 61). Epicurus affirms that the goal of life is pleasure, but he emphasizes that pleasure should be moderate and selective. According to Epicurus, who is aware that some pleasures can cause much greater pain than the pleasure taken, the real pleasure consists of fearlessness and spirit calmness (Fromm, 2002, p. 174). In this direction, it is understood that the philosopher interprets the relationship of desire, pleasure and consumption in the axis of getting away from pain.

## Cyrenaic Hedonism

In Greek philosophy, the strongest advocates of hedonism in its original form emerged from the Cyrene School. The importance of this school in the history of thought is that it produced the first representatives of hedonistic ethical view (Cevizci, 2011, p. 122). "Aristippus, the first representative of hedonistic theory, believed the attainment of pleasure and the avoidance of pain to be the aim of life and the criterion of virtue. Pleasure to him is the pleasure of the moment" (Fromm, 2002, p. 174). Cyrenaic hedonism can best be understood as a theoretical defense of the Aristippus' pleasurable and recreational lifestyle. Later Cyrenaic philosophers applied radical hedonism differently because people wanted more than sensory pleasure in their lives (Long, 2001, p. 371). Radical hedonistic approaches developed in the Cyrene School circles came to life in different dimensions in the historical process. In different periods of history, the wealthy, Roman elites, some kings and nobles applied radical hedonism in various ways to make sense of their lives. In the case of radical hedonism, the purpose of life is determined as happiness in the context of the maximum pleasure that can be felt. In this context, radical hedonism includes the fulfillment of all desires or subjective needs of the individual (Fromm, 2008, p. 2). From this perspective, in radical hedonist approaches, it is seen that pleasure is approached in a holistic manner and pleasure is understood as a purpose rather than a tool for life.

Aristippus considers pleasurable things good and all painful things bad, and in this sense identifies pleasure with being good. According to Aristippus, one should be able to enjoy everything and strive for it. In the hedonist understanding of Aristippus, who positions pleasure as the basic goal of life, the sense of instant pleasure is important and living the moment is important. Epicurus theorizes the hedonist doctrine more spiritually. Both philosophers position pleasure as the main goal to be achieved, but Epicurus puts sensory pleasures to the second level by grounding the basis of happiness in a peaceful life away from pain. In this respect, Epicurus' understanding of pleasure differs from Aristippus' understanding of pleasure by keeping spiritual pleasures superior to sensory instant pleasures (Akarsu, 1998, p. 94). In this context, it is important not to confuse the hedonistic doctrine of Epicurus, which sees the purpose and source of happiness in pleasure, with the provocation of debauchery and a search for continuous satisfaction of desires (Leboeuf, 2014, p. 38). According to psychoanalyst Erich Fromm, Aristippus is the only philosopher who truly defends the idea of radical hedonism, arguing that the purpose of life is to achieve optimal satisfaction in bodily pleasures and that happiness is the sum of the pleasures experienced. According to the hedonist understanding in this direction, there is a connection between the existence of desire and the right to be satisfied, and pleasure must be realized as the purpose of life (2008, p.3). Pleasure is the highest good or the highest best pleasure, according to the representatives of the Cyrene School, which is shaped around the thoughts of Aristippus. At this point, the point that should be emphasized is that pleasure in Aristippus's hedonistic understanding expresses the pleasures of an active, lively and dynamic nature. In this respect, Aristippus's understanding of pleasure is not inaccurate, passive pleasures in the sense of the absence of pain. In the understanding of pleasure in question, sexuality and gluttony are affirmed at the highest level and the active realization of these pleasures in a sensual way is taken as the basis (Arslan, 2017, p. 141). In this context, in the understanding of hedonism represented by Aristippus and the Cyrene School, it is claimed that pleasure consists of only one type, but it is felt and experienced at different levels in terms of degree, severity and intensity. Aristippus, based on the psychic structure of human nature, determines the life which is important in terms of happiness as the pleasure that emerges in pleasant soft life (Özlem, 2014, p. 60). Accordingly, in the hedonistic approach of Aristippus, pleasure is accepted as the basic goal for happiness and it is important to obtain pleasure as much as possible.

## Epicurean Hedonism

Epicurus advocates the view that what are morally good results from a moral act and he associates what is morally good with desires that are appropriate to nature. In this context, Epicurus argues that all living things run away from pain and pursue pleasure, therefore pain is bad and pleasure is good (Arslan, 2017, p. 144). Epicurus' ethical philosophy consists of preaching a moderate life that can be enjoyed. For Epicurus, the appropriate way of continuing life is a life that can be enjoyed but without the undesired troubles of life (Stroll, 1956, p. 22). For Epicurus, who describes the absence of pain as pleasure, static pleasure is superior to kinetic pleasure, and mental pleasure is preferred to bodily pleasure (Long, 2001, p. 371). Epicureanism is an improved form of the teaching that pleasure is the only good, but Epicurus's understanding of pleasure is not active pleasure, but passive pleasure, unlike Aristippus. In this respect, Epicurus's understanding of pleasure differs from the Cyrenaic approach by accepting the absence of pain

as pleasure. Epicurus takes pleasure as the measure of the good, but he is also aware that pleasure is often followed by great pain. For this reason, Epicurus states that the pleasures that can cause pain after experiencing should be avoided and emphasizes the importance of being moderate when it comes to pleasure (Arslan, 2017, p. 145). Epicurus's philosophy includes advices designed to give people the possibility not only to obtain pleasure but also to avoid pain. Epicurus distinguishes between pleasures accompanied by pain and pleasures not accompanied by pain, and describes the pleasures accompanied by pain as bad (Stroll, 1956, p. 22). In this sense, it is understood that Epicurus refuses to regard all kinds of pleasure as valuable and tries to separate qualified pleasures from others.

### **Ethical and Psychological Hedonism**

As a philosophical doctrine, hedonism has two forms: psychological and ethical. Psychological hedonism is a doctrine that argues that people only seek pleasure in their lives. According to this approach, all human activities are aimed at obtaining pleasure and avoiding pain. Ethical hedonism, on the other hand, is a view arguing that people not only seek pleasure, but that they should do so, because pleasure alone is good (Arslan, 2017, p. 145; Stroll, 1956, p. 23). Erich Fromm qualifies ethical hedonism as the first privilege granted to the principle of objectivity. According to Fromm, "in assuming that pleasure is good for man and that pain is bad, it provides a principle according to which desires are rated: only those desires whose fulfillment causes pleasure are valuable; others are not" (2002, p. 15). In this direction, it is seen that the thinkers, who developed psychological and ethical hedonism teachings, focused on pleasure in terms of achieving happiness for humanity, but they had different opinions about subjective and objective pleasures when it comes to the generally valid value criteria.

### **Marco Ferreri and His Sense of Cinema**

Considered one of the most iconoclastic directors of Italian cinema, Marco Ferreri (1928 -1997) began his cinema career with documentaries about current events in the early 1950s. Ferreri is among the European directors who made the most provocative films during his active time and who were effective in festivals. Ferreri, who reversed traditional values and gender roles, made films that were discussed with his provocative approach (Moliterno, 2009, p. 131-132). *La Grande Bouffe*, which focuses on the hedonistic consumption mentality and pleasure understanding of the bourgeoisie with its unique style, is known as the most important film that made the director famous. Marco Ferreri is a distinctive filmmaker who develops an individual expression in his films with a provocative social content in terms of form and content. Starting with his first films, Ferreri tried to add a sense of satire to the New Realist observation, ranging from rude comedy. Ferreri first touched on the relationships between men and women in the films he shot in Italy and produced films that argued that the bourgeois society trapped the individual in the concepts of family and marriage under the name of individual freedom. *La Grande Bouffe*, which won the "Critics Prize" at the Cannes Film Festival, which caused the audience's reaction, is the director's hardest and most provocative film (Teksoy, 2005, p. 846-848). In this context, Marco Ferreri took his place in the history of cinema with the films he produced with his unique style and iconoclastic understanding of cinema.

### ***La Grande Bouffe*, Story of the Film**

*La Grande Bouffe*, one of the masterpieces of Marco Ferreri, one of the extraordinary directors of European cinema, tells the story of four middle-aged men of the bourgeois class who gather in a villa for a big feast in which they will eat until they die. Four friends with different professions are members of the upper class. Ugo (Ugo Tognazzi) is a chef who owns a luxury restaurant. Marcello (Marcello Mastroianni), an incurable womanizer, works as a pilot in *Alitalia*. Michel (Michel Piccoli) is a sensitive television program producer. And Philippe (Philippe Noiret) is a respectable judge who lives with his nanny despite his advanced age. The four friends gather at Philippe's villa in Paris for a weekend program full of dissipation. The four friends buy a truckload of fine food and wine for their feast and go to the villa. Due to Marcello's inability to endure womanlessness, three prostitutes are invited to the villa, and a female teacher who takes her students around agrees to attend the feast. Strangely enough, the insistence of four greedy men, who are not happy and in pursuit of pleasure despite their good class positions, to eat until they die is portrayed with a dark sense of humor.

### **Analysis of *La Grande Bouffe***

The film is based on four friends', who gather in a villa to spend the weekend, decision to eat until they die. First, there is the impression that the four friends are getting together for a secret weekend entertainment that they will enjoy in an ordinary but intense way. The content of the initial decision is not disclosed. The decision taken in the course of the film becomes clear. A concrete reason for the decision taken by the four friends is not mentioned, but in the scenes in which the characters are introduced in the opening sequence of the film, it is perceived from their state and actions that they lead an unhappy and meaningless life despite their comfortable lives. In this sense, all four friends draw depleted portraits as much as they consume in their convenient and comfortable lives, and their pleasure making leads them to tiredness, to consume them to the end and start an adventure that will result in death.

#### **The Four Hedonists' Death Journey**

The first character to appear in the film is Ugo, the owner and chef of the restaurant "Le Biscuit A Soupe". Ugo, who draws an unhappy portrait starting from the scenes he is first seen, appears in one of the first scenes of the film while sharpening the knives he will use on the weekend and does not tell anyone about the feast he will attend. Ugo draws attention with his tired facial expression, slow movements and his unexcused appearance. The most distinctive feature of Ugo is its knowledge of food and its expertise in taste. The character who appears second in the film is Michel, a feminine television program producer. Michel draws attention with his elaborate clothing and hobbies such as piano and ballet. Another feature of this character is that he takes a distant stance towards women. The character who appears in the third place in the film is *Alitalia* pilot and woman hunter Marcello. Marcello is noted for his cool look and greed for sex. The character appearing in the fourth place is Philippe, who is lazy, sleepy and has a clumsy nature. Philippe, a middle-aged judge, lives with his nanny, Nicole, despite his advanced age. Nicole takes a very protective attitude towards Philippe and tries to prevent him from having relationships with other women. The first three in the group of friends are shown at work in their first appearance, but Philippe is shown sleeping in bed. In this context, Philippe's laziness is emphasized. All four characters never give information to their relatives about the features of their weekend program and where it will be. When the group of friends gathers at Philippe's villa, which he occasionally uses for his weekend programs, Philippe sends his veteran maid Hector out of the villa and specifically warns him not to give information to Nicole. The four male characters featured in the film are brought together at a common point with the corruption brought by their class position, pleasures and comfortable life they live. The director does not depict in depth the heroes he combines on the common ground of consumption and corruption, and does not attribute character to them.

#### **An Extraordinary Feast THAT Disgusts**

Four characters, who started to talk about various pleasures and sexual pleasures from the first moments they started to be seen together, are buried in their own worlds as if there was no other issue in the world. The group of four, starting to have fun on their own at the villa, competes with each other over eating. Evaluating the photographs of nude women at the dinner table, the group members decide to call three prostitutes home the next evening. The prostitutes are brought home and they are included in the feast. With the participation of women in the entertainment, sexual excesses are added to the gluttony in eating and drinking activities. The primary school teacher, who takes her students around in the morning hours of the next day in filmic time, gets permission to show the children the linden tree in the garden of the villa. Teacher Andrea, a young and plump woman, draws Philippe's and Ugo's attention. Andrea is invited to dinner. Later, Philippe is horrified by the idea that the teacher is in the same environment with prostitutes, but Andrea does not. At this point, a striking element in the film is that the female teacher Andrea does not fall short of four men in hedonism, and is portrayed as a much more voracious personality. This situation finds meaning when discussed with Ferreri's understanding of cinema about reversing gender roles. Indeed, Andrea overshadows the male protagonists with her appetite for gluttony and sexuality and has sexual relations with four men.

With the participation of prostitutes in the feast, the atmosphere becomes full of eroticism and the four friends reach the climax of pleasure and fun. Inspired by Andrea, who adapts to the atmosphere as soon as she arrives, Philippe proposes to her. With his demeanor and approach in the film, Philippe behaves more like a teenager than a grown-up middle-aged man. This situation leads Andrea to enchant Philip as a young and caring model of his nanny Nicole. Ugo, on the other hand, uses his talent in foods and eating, drinking and having fun continues uninterruptedly. Michel is the first to get sick during the

feast. Michel suffers from indigestion and his condition worsens as long as he eats. His friends, especially Marcello, try to help him. Having hobbies like ballet and playing the piano, Michel presents an absurd situation that contrasts with his elite habits with his indigestion and gas. Ferreri displays a brutal humorous approach by showing Michel, which he associates with aristocratic pleasures and art forms unique to the elites, in irreconcilable contradictions.

The course of the extraordinary events at the feast makes prostitutes and Andrea suspect of the situation. Prostitutes are suspicious of interesting events in their entertainment, then they are disgusted at what they see. The prostitutes with increasing disgust and suspicion decide to leave the villa. Meanwhile, Andrea makes the decision to watch the four men' extraordinary party to the end and go through the process with them. Andrea senses the purpose of the four men and decides to help them on their journey to death of pleasure. Beginning to grasp the nature of the entertainment she observes, Andrea competes with four male characters who organize a form of suicidal fun over pleasure-based consumption, greed, and sex. She gets along with four men and eats meals with great appetite. In the setting she incidentally enters, Andrea exhibits a conscious radical hedonist practice and enjoys the moment.

### Fatal Satisfaction

Marcello is the first to die in the group of four. Unabated by his insatiable desire for lust, Marcello begins to have sex with Andrea, even though he knows that Philippe will be upset. Marcello gets sick with the effects of his overeating food, and later he has difficulty in having sex with Andrea. Marcello refuses to acknowledge the impotence caused by overeating, and is exposed to nauseating odors when the plumbing bursts in the toilet he entered in anger. With the infiltration of sewage water, heavy odors dominate the villa. Marcello, frustrated by impotence and the water flowing from the sewer, decides to leave the villa, emphasizing that the thought of dying by eating is absurd. During the blizzard in the night, Marcello decides to leave the house in his beloved old *Bugatti* brand vehicle that he repaired with great pleasure. In the morning, his friends see Marcello frozen dead in the driver's seat. Michel is shocked by the incident, while Ugo and Philippe are cool. Philippe states that the illegal burial of the body has a severe punishment, so Marcello's body is placed in the freezer adjacent to the kitchen.

As the remaining of the team insisting on hedonistic suicide sit in the kitchen and continue to eat, Marcello appears in the freezer, where he is kept frozen. After Marcello, it is Michel's turn to die. Having a severe indigestion problem, Michel tries to do the dance moves he likes very much, but he has a lot of difficulty and then goes to the piano. As Michel is trying to play the piano in standing position, farting, crammed with food. Michel, rushing to the balcony for a dear life, dies there. Ferreri aestheticizes Michel's death with cruel humor. Michel, an elite bourgeois who plays ballet and plays classical music by taking the piano at every opportunity with his elegant and elaborate clothing, dies from the gas in his guts. After farting at the piano for a long time, Michel runs to the terrace and falls down there and his pants change color from dirt. His friends put Michel next to Marcello in the freezer.

On the journey to death, the third name is Ugo. Ugo carefully prepares a food made of liver paste and a dome-shaped cake. Philippe and Andrea lose their appetite and do not want to eat. Ugo says he will eat all the food by himself and begins to ingurgitate in front of the bodies of his friends. Ugo, who insists on eating until he dies, does not stop eating despite the discouragements of Andrea and Philippe. Convinced that Ugo will not withdraw from his decision, Philippe and Andrea help him eat by laying him on the kitchen table. Andrea masturbates Ugo until he dies, and Ugo, who has an orgasm, dies. Again in this scene, Ferreri shows his cruel humor and spots the death of Ugo, a prisoner of pleasure, with pleasure. Andrea states that Ugo's place is in the kitchen, so his body must be left on the kitchen table, and Ugo is left there.

Philippe, who is a diabetic, does not want to betray his friends and decides to accelerate his death journey. Philippe does not act within the limits of a balanced and peaceful sense of pleasure for the sake of instant pleasure that will lead him to severe pain. Before dying, Philippe talks to the dog he calls Ugo and waits for his turn to die in deep sorrow. Sitting on the bench under the linden tree, Philippe dies shivering in Andrea's arms after eating the breast-shaped cake. While Philippe is about to die on the bench, a new meat delivery is made to the villa. Andrea wants the meat to be left in the garden, because Marcello's and Michel's bodies are in the freezer inside and Ugo's body is in the kitchen. The deliverers leave the pork and beef on the trees and randomly in different parts of the garden. The film ends with an increasing number of dogs chasing poultry in the garden and being alone with meats.

## A Grotesque Critique of Hedonism

As can be understood from the depiction of the plot of the film and the depiction of the characters in the plot, Ferreri made a brutal critique of a certain lifestyle with a grotesque narrative structure in *La Grande Bouffe*. Telling a mysterious event in a festive atmosphere and combining tragic and funny elements, the director criticized radical hedonism in the extraordinary fictional atmosphere he created, without falling into the banality of being didactic. Epicurus' warning that severe pleasures cause severe pain is embodied in the events in the villa. Within this framework, one of the findings reached in the context of radical hedonism in the film is that a life understanding that aims at immoderate pleasure will lead to decadency in human life. In this context, hedonistic approaches aiming at dynamic and instantaneous pleasures, including the radical hedonistic phase that develops on the axis of Cyrene School, are implied on the one hand to collapse the individual, and on the other hand, individuals who are captive of such pleasures will degenerate. This situation is embodied by the degeneration of moral values of four men, who have no concern except for consumption and pleasure, and an unhuman last life, embodied by the barking of dogs before they die.

## Conclusion and Evaluation

In *La Grande Bouffe*, the director witnessed the period in which he lived and criticized a life understanding rooted in Ancient Greek philosophy. In the film, it is seen that the hedonist understanding, which can be described as an extreme version of the Cyrenaic pleasure understanding, is adapted to the criticism of certain sections of modern society. Realizing the degeneration of individuals who use their economic resources for an egoistic and hedonistic life with an extraordinary style and grotesque approach, Ferreri not only criticizes a lifestyle in the film, but also criticizes the modern hedonistic consumer society.

In this direction, the film, that tells about four friends closing in a villa at the weekend, eating and drinking, making love with prostitutes and eating until they crack, sheds light on the never-ending greed, the endless ambition to possess and the gluttony with a different perspective. This situation not only criticizes the extremism in eating and drinking, but also criticizes the sexual extremes that individuals fall into in modern society. The film can also be viewed as a criticism of a class who is partially conscious of the trauma caused by their corruption but who feels that their degeneration may end by dying. In this context, it seems possible to say that the modern bourgeoisie is positioned as a class that cannot be reformed with its current mentality.

As a result, it is seen that the understanding of pleasure developed around the Cyrene School is criticized by depicting it concretely in the film, not the measured pleasure understanding that Epicurus draws its frame. In this direction, it is seen that the decadency experienced by individuals who are captive of active and instantaneous pleasures is criticized in a distance and ruthlessly. Knitted with inexhaustible desires, insatiable greed and endless cramping, the film is aesthetized in a tragic and comic style, and refers to the terrible gulf between social classes. In this sense, a distant but striking criticism is made against the ruling classes, who know no boundaries in consumption in a world where a significant part of people struggle with hunger. In this sense, Ferreri made a genuine critique of the real world with an absurd and grotesque narrative, and presented a successful example of a cinematically different style.

## Ethical Declaration

In the writing process of the study titled "*A Study on La Grande Bouffe in the Context of Hedonism*", there were followed the scientific, ethical and the citation rules; was not made any falsification on the collected data and this study was not sent to any other academic media for evaluation. Since the document is examined in this study, there is no requirement for an ethics committee decision.

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## TÜRKÇE GENİŐ ÖZET

Bu makale; Avrupa sinemasının sıradıŐı yönetmenlerinden Marco Ferreri'nin *La Grande Bouffe* (Büyük Tıkınma, 1973), adlı filminde radikal hedonist insanların yaşam tarzlarına getirdiđi eleřtirel yaklaŐımı ve yönetmenin özgün sinema anlayıŐını felsefi eleřtiri bağlamında incelemek amacıyla tasarlanmıŐtır. Bu dođrultuda yaşamın anlamını hazda bulan etik felsefesi alanına iliŐkin hedonizm kavramının, sinema - felsefe iliŐkisi ekseninde incelenmesi ve özgün bir yönetmenin perspektifinden radikal hedonizmin sinematik araçlarla somutlaŐtırılmasının tartıŐılması amaçlanmıŐtır.

Hazzı temel alan hedonistler mutluluđu insanın en yüce eređi olarak konumlandırırlar, onlara göre, mutluluk, sadece hazzın, zevkin, sevincin ve neşenin ifadesi olarak anlam kazanır. Bu bağlamda hedonizmin kuramsal olarak geliŐmesinde rol oynayan iki önemli filozof bulunmaktadır. Bu filozoflardan Kyrene Okulu'nun kurucusu olan Aristippos, hedonizmin kurucusu olarak da kabul edilmektedir. Hedonizmle birlikte anılan diđer isim ise Epikuros'tur.

Aristippos'un hedonistik yaklaŐımında haz bedensel hazlara indirgenir ve mutluluk için temel erek olarak kabul edilen hazların olabildiđince fazla elde edilmesi önem taŐır. Epikuros'un felsefesinde ise haz, yararlı ve zararlı olma temelinde ya da yüksek hazlar ve bayađı hazlar olarak ayrılmaktadır. Bu anlamda Epikuros her türlü hazzı deđerli görmeyi reddeder ve nitelikli hazları diđerlerinden ayırmaya çalıŐır.

Avrupa sinemasının sıradıŐı yönetmenlerinden Marco Ferreri'yi üne kavuŐturan *La Grande Bouffe*, hafta sonunu geçirmek için bir villada toplanan dört arkadaŐın ölüncüye kadar yemek konusunda aldıkları kararı uygulamaları üzerine kuruludur. İlkin dört arkadaŐın sıradan ancak yođun biçimde haz alacakları gizli bir hafta sonu eđlencesi için bir araya geldikleri izlenimi oluŐturulur. Filmin akıŐı içinde dört arkadaŐın aldıkları kararın somut bir gerekçesi dillendirilmez ancak filmin açılıŐ sekansında kahramanların tanıtılmaya baŐlandığı sahnelerde konforlu yaşamlarına rađmen mutsuz ve anlamsız bir yaşam sürdürdükleri hal ve hareketlerinden sezilir. Bu anlamda dört arkadaŐ rahat ve konforlu yaşamlarında hayatı tükettikleri oranda tükenmiŐ olan birer portre çizerler. Bu nedenle haz peŐinde koŐmaktan tükenen dörtlü arkadaŐ grubu, kendilerini yorgun düşüren hazları yine sonuna kadar tüketerek ölümlerine sonuçlanacak bir maceraya giriŐirler.

Birarada görülmeye baŐladıkları ilk anlardan itibaren, çeŐitli zevkler ve cinsel hazlar üzerine konuŐmaya baŐlayan dört kahraman, dünyada baŐka mesele yokmuŐ gibi kendi dünyalarının içine gömülürler. Filmde dikkat çeken bir unsur da kadın öđretmen Andrea'nın hedonizm, konusunda dört erkekten geri kalmaması dahası onlardan çok daha obur bir kiŐilik olarak çizilmesidir. Bu durum Ferreri'nin cinsiyet rollerini tersine çevirme konusundaki sinema anlayıŐıyla birlikte ele alındığında anlam bulur. Nitekim filmin ilerlemesiyle Andrea oburluk ve cinsellik konusundaki iŐtahıyla erkek kahramanları gölgede bırakır ve dört erkekle cinsel iliŐkiye girer.

Ziyafet sürecinde ilk rahatsızlanan Michel olur. Michel hazımsızlık sorunu yaŐar ve yedikçe durumu kötüleŐir. Bale yapmak ve piyano çalmak gibi hobileri olan Michel, hazımsızlıđı ve gaz çıkarmasıyla elit alışkanlıklarıyla zıtlık oluŐturan absürt bir durum sergiler. Ferreri, elitlere özgü aristokratik zevkler ve sanat formlarıyla iliŐkilendirdiđi Michel'i uzlaŐmaz çeliŐikler içinde göstererek acımasız bir mizahi yaklaŐım sergiler.

Şölen sürecinde ilk ölen Marcello olur. Sinirleri gerilen Marcello, kar fırtınası sırasında, çok sevdiği ve büyük bir zevkle tamir ettiği eski *Bugatti* marka araçla evden çıkmaya karar verir. Sabah saatlerinde arkadaşları Marcello'yu sürücü koltuğunda donarak ölmüş vaziyette görürler. Hedonistik intihar konusunda ısrar eden ekipten arta kalanlar mutfakta oturup yemek yemeye devam ederler. Marcello'nun ardından ölüm sırası Michel'e gelir. Ağır hazımsızlık sorunu yaşayan Michel ayakta piyano çalarken bağırsakları çatlar ve ölür. Ferreri, Michel'in ölümünü acımasız bir mizahla estetize eder. Şık ve özenli giyimiyle dikkat çeken, bale yapan ve her fırsatta piyano başına geçerek klasik müzik eserleri çalan elit kültüre mensup bir burjuva olan Michel bağırsaklarındaki gaz sıkışmasından ölür. Ölüm yolculuğunda üçüncü isim Ugo olur. Ölünceye kadar yemek yemekte ısrar eden Ugo'nun kararından caymayacağına kani olan Andrea, Ugo ölene kadar ona mastürbasyon yapar. Ugo orgazm eşliğinde ölür. Bu sahnede yine Ferreri acımasız mizahını konuşturur ve haz tutsağı olan Ugo'nun ölümünü hazla noktalar. Arkadaşlarına ihanet etmek istemeyen Philippe ölmeden önce Ugo adını verdiği köpekle konuşur ve derin bir hüznün içinde ölmek için sırasını bekler. İhlamur ağacının altındaki bankta oturan Philippe kadın memesi şeklindeki pastanın bir kısmını yedikten sonra titreyerek Andrea'nın kollarında can verir.

Marco Ferreri, *La Grande Bouffe*'de yaşadığı döneme tanıklık ederek, kökleri Antik Yunan felsefesine dayanan bir yaşam anlayışının eleştirisini gerçekleştirmiştir. Bu doğrultuda *La Grande Bouffe*'de Kireneci haz anlayışının bir versiyonu olarak nitelendirilebilecek radikal hedonist anlayış çerçevesinde, modern toplumun belirli kesimlerinin eleştirilmesine uyarlandığı görülmektedir. Filmde Epikuros'un çerçevesini çizdiği ölçülü haz anlayışının değil, Kirene Okulu etrafında gelişen haz anlayışının somut biçimde tasvir edilerek eleştirildiği görülmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, aktif ve anlık hazların tutsağı olan bireylerin yaşadığı dekadansın mesafeli ve acımasız biçimde eleştirildiği görülmektedir. Tükenmeyen arzular, doymak bilmez açgözlülük ve bitmek bilmeyen tıkınmayla örülen film, trajik ve komik bir tarzla estetize edilerek, toplumsal sınıflar arasındaki korkunç uçurma da gönderme yapmaktadır. Ferreri absürt ve grotesk bir anlatımla reel dünyanın sahici bir eleştirisini gerçekleştirerek sinematik anlamda farklı bir tarzın başarılı bir örneğini sunmuştur.