



THE REFLECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE OF OTTOMAN EMPIRE TO EVERYDAY LIFE AS A POPULAR CULTURE PRODUCT

*Zaliha İnci KARABACAK**

*A. Aslı SEZGİN***

ABSTRACT

In today's consumption society, many different products become popular in everyday life. When analysing popular culture in the frame of "everyday life" term, it can be seen that longing for the past in modern life influences everyday life. Ottoman Empire has influenced today's Turkish society in many different aspects. We have recently faced with that influence reflecting in various fields of everyday life. The magnificence that reflects to the everyday used objects, jewellerys, clothes, spaces etc. as an extension of the strength Ottoman Empire has, come into prominence as an important element used to affect these consumers. Information belonging especially to the rising period of Ottoman takes place in "best sellers" lists of many booksellers today. Another field, that takes attention as much as books about Ottoman Empire, is movie-television. After books, movies and serials that take place in our everyday life, space names can be given as an example to Ottoman Empire traces. These products and spaces in the appearance of cultural heritage of Ottoman are commoditized as popular culture products.

In this study, the reflection of Cultural heritage of Ottoman Empire to everyday life as a popular culture product is analysed with examples in the frame of Lefebvre's perspective to "everyday life".

Key Words: Everyday Life, Popular Culture, Cultural Heritage, Ottoman Empire, Leisure Time

OSMANLI KÜLTÜREL MİRASININ POPÜLER KÜLTÜR ÜRÜNÜ OLARAK GÜNDELİK HAYATA YANSIMASI

ÖZET

Günümüz tüketim toplumunda gündelik hayat içinde pek çok farklı ürün popülerleştirilmektedir. Popüler kültürü, "gündelik hayat" kavramı çerçevesinde incelerken, modern zamanda geçmişe duyulan özlemin gündelik hayatı etkisi altına aldığı görülmektedir. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, günümüz Türk toplumunu farklı pek çok açıdan etkisi altına almaktadır. Son dönemlerde bu etki gündelik hayatın farklı alanlarına yansiyarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Osmanlı

* Arş. Gör. Dr., Gazi Üniversitesi Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, El-mek: inci@hazi.edu.tr

** Uzman, Osmaniye Korkut Ata Üniversitesi, El-mek: aaslisezgin@gmail.com

İmparatorluğu'nun sahip olduğu gücün bir uzantısı olarak gündelik hayatta kullanılan eşyalara, takılara, giysilere, mekâna vb. unsurlara yansıyan ihtişam, bu tüketicileri etkilemek için kullanılan önemli bir öğe olarak ön plana çıkmaktadır. Osmanlı kültürel mirasının görünümü niteliğindeki bu ürünler ve mekânlar birer popüler kültür ürünü olarak metalaştırılmaktadır. Bu metalar Osmanlı kültürünün mirasçısı olan Türk toplumunda gündelik hayatın tüketim nesnelere haline gelmektedir. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun özellikle yükselme dönemine ait bilgileri bugün birçok kitapçının "çok satanlar" listesinde yer almaktadır. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nu konu alan kitaplar kadar dikkat çeken diğer bir alan ise sinema- televizyon alanı olmuştur. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun gücünü yansıtan tüketim ürünleri de temel ihtiyaçlardan ziyade, statü tayin eden ihtiyaçlar içinde değerlendirilmektedir. Kitaplar, sinema ve dizilerin ardından gündelik hayatımızda yerini alan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu izlerine mekân isimleri de örnek olarak verilebilir.

Bu çalışmada, Lefebvre'in "gündelik hayat"a bakış tarzı ekseninde Osmanlı kültürel mirasının popüler kültür ürünü olarak gündelik hayata yansımaları güncel örneklerle analiz edilmeye çalışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gündelik Hayat, Popüler Kültür, Kültürel Miras, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Boş Zaman

Popular Culture in Everyday Life

Everyday life, which is organized according to specified rules and behaviour patterns before modernity, seemed different in modern life. According to Lefebvre, modern everyday life reflects the longing to life styles of the past periods (Cantek 2005: 2). With everyday life concept, we mention about our routine or non-routine everyday life. So, analysing everyday life means to analyse and understand whole life. While doing this, an analysis can be carried out taking a part from everyday life (Erdoğan 2009). Also in this study, the reflection of Ottoman Empire and its culture, as an example of past period life style, in Turkey is analysed. Turkish culture, which contains the deep-rooted heritage of Ottoman Empire, also bears the traces of this heritage to everyday life. It shows its effect in many fields ranging from best-seller books, blockbuster films, high-rated serials, architecture, decoration, fashion in today's social life.

"Daily" concept associates everyday repeated, ordinary thing. Starting point of Lefebvre, who studied about everyday life sociology, is the necessity to analyse the thing regarded as "insignificant". Lefebvre considers the studies about this subject as critical studies since they will reveal the capitalist ideology which everyday life includes in its critical analyses (Cantek 2005: 2). Since in social relations everyday life symbolizes the dominance of the culture, belonging to the alienation conditions created by the existing order (popular culture-consumption culture), it is a subject needed to be approached critically (Doğan 2011: 95). Studies about popular culture show a critical point of view to many consumption products influencing everyday life.

In popular culture definitions taking place in various resources, close relationship of the concept with consumption comes into prominence. Another remarkable aspect of popular culture is that it grounds on continuous change. In capitalist order, this situation is expressed with the continuous change of popular culture products that are the subject of consumption.

Other popular things (artists, sportsmen, ideas, television programs etc. that are becoming popular) are used to create the popular (Erdoğan 1999: 22). Popular culture aims to identify the

Turkish Studies

observers with images and personality models it provides (Kellner 2001: 196). In popular culture productions, cultural values and traditions are reflected in new forms (Oktay 1995: 21). Many products reflecting Ottoman culture, traditions and values, which are the subjects of the study, are commoditized in everyday life. Everyday life is the name of a wide platform, which maintains the alienation of human rooted during capitalist commodity production process in the social reproduction process with the events it includes and impossible to be repeated (Doğan 2011: 92). Moreover, popular culture which can be expressed as the culture of everyday life provides to get rid of the negativity of the reality and produces artificial happiness (Oktay 1995: 23). Magnificence and strength of Ottoman palace life gives fake happiness to the consumers in their everyday life.

According to Erdoğan and Alemdar (2005: 152), popular culture, which is an utilization and consumption culture colonizing everyday life is described as a practice to create fake difference through popularization of fashion provided in fields like clothing, food, drink, jewellery, cosmetics, of identities produced periodically/seasonally by industries.

When we think culture as a consumption material in everyday life, “cultural consumption” means integration of commodity with desire and dream with feeling. In this integration, feelings like love, excitement are commoditized (Kirca 2001: 177).

The Traces of Ottoman Empire in Everyday life of 21st Century

In the following part of the study, popular culture products in our everyday life which became a consumption object within the frame of the cultural heritage of Ottoman Empire chosen as an example are analysed within the scope of Lefebvre’s everyday life theory.

In everyday life, products belonging to Ottoman Empire culture are welcomed with interest and consumed especially by women.

Ottoman Reflections in “Leisure Time”

Information belonging especially to the rising period of Ottoman takes place in “best sellers” lists of many booksellers today. Especially harem life, lives of sultans, sultan’s sons and concubines and unknown things in Ottoman Palaces are written by many native and foreign writers as important consumption materials. As an example to these, books such as “To Kill the Sultan” (Ahmet Ümit) in whose cover page Fatih Sultan Mehmet appears and which took place in best sellers of June 2012; “Harem” (Zülfü Livaneli) whose hero is a eunuch without virility in the 17th century; “Fatih Sultan Mehmet and His Period” (Franz Babinger) whose subject is Fatih, one of the most important sultans of Ottoman Empire and “Katre-i Matem”, “Love Between Two Mosques”, “The Shah and The Sultan” (İskender Pala) which deal with secret love stories of Ottoman Empire using a different style with historical facts can be shown.

Another field, that takes attention as much as books about Ottoman Empire, is movie-television. Most recent example to the cinema movies scripted and shot about this subject is “Conquest 1453” which came out with great budgets and magnificent advertising campaign. It is a stubborn fact that the conquest of Istanbul is a subject followed with interest in every era by almost everyone living in that society. Conquest 1453 movie made Turkish society, known with its sensitivity to history, watch it with a ticket enriching this subject with visuals. The film is the first movie that surpassed 5.000.000 – 6.000.000 audience limit in Turkey.

Examples with the same content such as “The Fall of Abdülhamit”, “The Last Ottoman: Knockout Ali”, “Istanbul Beneath My Wings”, “Harem Suare”, “Mahpeyker Kösem Sultan” can be specified.

Also television serials have reflected Ottoman Empire subject on the screen and put the channels on which they broadcasted, over the top in prime-time. These serials which use visual elements efficiently and actors/actresses of them have taken place in our daily lives as a popular icon. As the most impressive and recent examples of these serials “Magnificent Century” and “Once Upon A Time In Ottoman Empire: Rebellion” televised later can be shown.

Another important point needed to be expressed related to television serials is that since they are the products reaching to maximum audience/consumer, they mediate for such a market creation conveying Ottoman Empire and figures belonging to the Empire as consumption materials on the screen to the people from each category and age.

Above mentioned books, movies, television serials take place among consumption society’s activities to make use of their “spare time”. It is possible to reach the individual through different canals in living spaces of everyday life out of work and where consumption has widely increased. Spare time is out of control now and has become a requirement. Spare time industry which has become a great industry includes fields like performance arts, television, cinema based consumption, etc. (Aytaç 2004: 116–117). At that point, cultural products symbolizing a great empire in the past, has become objects about spare time in consumption society’s continuous everyday life today.

Today it is seen that people perform consumption activities not only for their basic needs. Since desires are insatiable and another desire appears after a satisfactory desire, consumption activity performed in spare time is also realized for the needs of these dissatisfied desires (Özcan 2007: 262).

Now, possessed tools take on the task of designating status, reflecting prestige rather than meeting physical needs. Consumption has gone far from usage value and has been degraded to indicator value any longer (Özcan 2007: 268). Consumption products reflecting the strength of Ottoman Empire are also evaluated within the needs designating status rather than basic needs.

In his “Everyday Life in the Modern World”, Lefebvre also mentioned about music conveying his comments related to the concepts about everyday life to the readers. According to Lefebvre, music is dynamism, flow, youth; yet based on repetition. Lost feelings and excitements reappear in music and via music and they revive (Lefebvre 2007: 30).

It is possible to find the traces belonging to Ottoman Empire also in today’s music. “The First Tears in the Hammam”, “The Love for Hürrem”, “For the Sultans' Sake”, “Mahidevran”, “First Dance in the Harem” (Can Atilla) are the works composed with Turkish musical instruments and used as a background music in many productions.

Passion of “Everyday Woman” for Ottoman Empire Products

According to Lefebvre, “everyday woman” tends to anger, joy, passion and action more; and she is closer to storms, sexual pleasures, ties between life and death, wealth (Lefebvre 2007: 28).

Among the products taking place in our everyday life belonging to Ottoman Era, especially textile products and cosmetics products designed with Harem and Ottoman Hammam elements for women consumers in cosmetics field take attention. These products also enable “everyday woman” to live the Ottoman Empire’s palace life.

The fashion, which according to Lefebvre, aims the diversifying and change of the objects and their fall into disuse (Lefebvre 2007: 181), caused the fashion belonging to Ottoman Empire to become one of the popular culture products consumed fast in everyday life.

Turkish Studies

In Ottoman era, especially clothes of palace women decorated with embroidery, handiwork, pearl and precious jewellery, elaborate jewelleries and accessories they used were the signs of the magnificence of the Empire (Dikmen ve Çetin 2012: 72). Today it is seen that clothes bearing Ottoman patterns and jewellery and accessories reflecting that era are widely released to the market under the name of different brands. Related brands release these products via collections prepared under the headings like “Ottoman” or various different headings reflecting Ottoman culture.

Products that reflect Ottoman fashion taking especially women’s attention in everyday life bore some kinds of cultural traces and strength in that era. It is seen that crescent symbol used in blazons of both West and East Europe, was used by Ottoman Empire after 1699 Karlofça Agreement to designate its borders. Since 18th century, many things having an Ottoman connection bear crescent (Çetintaş 2012: 58). Caftans used in Ottoman Empire bears symbolic meanings due to the patterns they have. For example, the sun and moon symbolizes the prophet and the sultan or the god and the sultan who is his representative. Tulip motif; When written according to Arabic alphabet, It can become the word “God” by replacing the letters. Pars spot and leopard line motifs used in thrones and sultans’ caftans symbolizes the strength (Görünür ve Ögel 2006: 65). It takes attention that sun, crescent, tulip symbols were intensely used in daily clothes, jewelleries and accessories that bore the traces of Ottoman culture.

When artworks since the ancient times are analysed, it is seen that some lines, animal (lion, tiger, bird and hunt) pictures and some flowers were used. When patterns on Ottoman fabrics are analysed, the same features are also found. Tiger line, leopard spot, rumî motif, hâtai motif, bird, deer pictures, sun, moon, star and china cloud motif, flower (tulip, carnation, rose, wild rose, hyacinth, colchicum, peony, jasmine, field bindweed, maypop, lily, peach and flos granati), fruit and tree motif take attention (Apak ve Gündüz ve Eray 1997:32-38). These figures used – in fields like stone, wood, ceramic, ornamentation sometimes-in Ottoman fabrics appear as the objects reflecting Ottoman Empire in fields like clothing, accessories, decorations, etc. today.

Traces of Ottoman Empire in Spaces of Everyday Life

Lefebvre, who analyses the space according to the social production processes rather than the things in the space, takes attention to that the space is produced socially. The space lived, perceived space and planned space are the concepts that Lefebvre uses in explanation of everyday life and space relationship (Avar 2009: 7).

Lefebvre’s lived, perceived and planned space corresponds to physical, mental and social spaces. Space is social; not stable, constant but variable. Space is produced with practical and theoretical flows that join it, can make sense or not and are perceived and directly experienced (Avar 2009: 8).

After books, movies and serials that take place in our everyday life, space names can be given as an example to Ottoman Empire traces. The famous names of Ottoman Empire also appear in many places as a cafeteria, restaurant today.

“Mihrimah Sultan Cafeteria” plays jazz-blues in İstanbul Beyoğlu, “Kanuni Otağ Cafe” in Büyükçekmece, “Hürrem Sultan Cafe” in Hagia Sophia are some of the examples of this spaces.

It takes attention that the number of the modern housings, buildings, cafes, restaurants using Ottoman heritage features has risen in city structure of everyday life. These kinds of structures gaining popularity especially in the last period provide to the people, who lives in these

spaces and spend time there, an opportunity to be a part of the magnificence reflecting the gorgeous life of an Empire like Ottoman.

Result

In today's Turkish society where the traces of Ottoman cultural heritage influenced the everyday life with various popular culture products, it is seen that consumers are under the spell of fake pleasures. The magnificence that reflects to the everyday used objects, jewelleryes, clothes, spaces etc. as an extension of the strength Ottoman Empire has, come into prominence as an important element used to affect these consumers. These products and spaces in the appearance of cultural heritage of Ottoman are commoditized as popular culture products. These commodities have become consumption objects of everyday life in Turkish society that is the inheritor of Ottoman culture. In the process which serves to the continuousness of capitalist order, cultural products are re-placed in individuals' life as consumption objects via popular culture expressed as the culture of everyday life. The reflection of cultural heritage of Ottoman Empire to everyday life of Turkish society as popular culture products serves as an example to that process.

REFERENCES

- APAK Melek Sevüktekin, GÜNDÜZ Filiz Onat, ERAY Fatma Öztürk (1997). **Osmanlı Dönemi Kadın Giyimleri**, Ankara: Is Bank Publications
- AVAR Arslan, A. (2009). Lefebvre'in Üçlü –Algılanan, Tasarlanan, Yaşanan Mekân-Diyalektiği, **Dosya**, number 17, Ankara, s.8–16.
- AYTAÇ Ömer (2004). “Kapitalizm ve Hegemonya İlişkileri Bağlamında Boş Zaman”, **Cumhuriyet University Social Sciences Journal**, vol. 28, s. 115–138.
- CANTEK Levent (2005). *Gündelik Yaşam ve Basın Basında Gündelik Yaşama Yansıyan Tartışmalar*, **Ankara University Social Sciences Institute Doctorate Thesis**
- ÇETİNTAŞ Burak (2012). “Türk Kültürünün Batı'daki İzleri: Osmanlı Modası Avrupa'yı Fethetmişti”, **NTV History**, Number: 40, s.52-58.
- DOĞAN Ali Ekber (2011). Mekân Üretimi ve Gündelik Hayatın Birikim ve Emek Süreçleriyle İlişisine Kayseri'den Bakmak. **Praksis**, Number: 16, s.91–122.
- DİKMEN Melek ÇETİN Kamile (2012). “Klâsik Türk Şiirinde Kadın Takı ve Aksesuarları” **bilig**, Number:61, s. 71-98.
- ERDOĞAN İrfan (1999). “Popüler Kültür: Kültür Alanında Egemenlik ve Mücadele”. **Popüler Kültür ve İktidar**, der. Nazife Güngör, Ankara:Vadi Publications.
- ERDOĞAN İrfan, ALEMDAR Korkmaz (2005). **Popüler Kültür ve İletişim**. Ankara: ERK Publications.
- ERDOĞAN İrfan (2009). “Televizyon Reklamlarında Gündelik Hayatın Temsili: Seks ve Çikolata”, **Bilim ve Ütopya**, number: 179.
- GÖRÜNÜR Lale, ÖGEL Semra (2006). “Osmanlı Kaftanları İle Entarilerinin Farkları ve Kullanılışları”, **itüdergisi/b Social Sciences**, Volume:3, Number:1, s.59–68.
- KELLNER Douglas (2001). “Popüler Kültür ve Postmodern Kimliklerin İnşası.” çev. Gülcan Seçkin, **Doğu Batı**, Number:15, s.187–219.

-
- KIRCA Süheyla (2001). “Medya Ürünlerinin Küresel Yayılımı, Yerelleştirilmesi: Ulusaşırı Kimliklerin Yaratılması”, **Doğu Batı**, number:15, s.173–183.
- LEFEBVRE Henri (2007). **Modern Dünyada Gündelik Hayat.**, İstanbul: Metis Publications.
- OKTAY Ahmet (1995). **Türkiye’de Popüler Kültür**, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Publications.
- ÖZCAN Burcu (2007). Postmodernizmin Tüketim İmajları., **Fırat University Social Sciences Magazine**, number:1, s. 261–273.