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EKATERINE LOMIA

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TÜKETİM KÜLTÜRÜNÜN SİNEMA VE MEKAN BAĞLAMINDA İNCELENMESİ: 'ÖRNEK AİLE' FİLM ANALİZİ

EXAMINATION OF CONSUMPTION CULTURE IN CONTEXT OF CINEMA AND SPACE: 'THE JONESES' FILM ANALYSIS

Arş. Gör. Zeynep YILDIZ
Konya Teknik Üniversitesi
0000-0001-7724-5215

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Hayriye Elif Uslugil
Konya Teknik Üniversitesi
0000-0001-7923-2784

ÖZET

İnsanların temel gereksinimlerini karşılamak için gerçekleştirdiği eylemler bütününe alışveriş denmektedir. 19. Yy Endüstri Devrimi ile alışveriş eylemi değişmiş, alışveriş sosyal ve sembolik değere sahip, aynı zamanda haz alınan bir serbest zaman aktivitesine dönüşmüştür. Alışveriş kavramı değişerek, tüketim kavramı ortaya çıkmıştır. Modern toplumların gelişimi ile tüketim kültürü de yaygınlaşmaya başlamıştır.

Tüketim kültürünün etkisiyle 20.yy'da ortaya yeni bir toplum yapısı ortaya çıkmıştır: tüketim toplumu. Tüketim toplumunun en belirgin özelliği var olabilmek için nesnelere sahip olmasıdır. Tüketim toplumu tüketim anına ve tüketme eylemine kanalize edilmektedir. Ancak toplum bu sürecin bilincine varamamaktadır.

Mimarlık ve sinema da tüketim kültüründen etkilenen iki disiplindir. Sinema ve mimarlığın en büyük ortaklığı mekan üzerinedir. Tüketim kültürü; sinematografik mekanı ve mimarlığın ürünü gerçek mekanı da etkilemektedir.

Bu çalışma da tüketim kültürünün mekan, toplum ve ilişkiler üzerindeki etkileri 'Örnek Aile (2009)' filmi üzerinden analiz edilmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında tüketim kültürünün toplum üzerindeki baskısı, insanları ve mekanları tek tipleştirme sorunları tartışılmıştır. Tüketim kültürünün kapitalizm dayatması ile topluma ve mekana verdiği zararlar, film örneklemini üzerinden eleştirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tüketim kültürü, tüketim toplumu, tüketim mekanı.

ABSTRACT

The whole of the actions that people take to meet their basic needs is called shopping. With the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century, the act of shopping changed, and shopping turned into a leisure time activity with social and symbolic value and at the same time enjoyed. The concept of shopping has changed and the concept of consumption has emerged. With the development of modern societies, consumption culture has also started to become widespread.

Under the influence of the consumption culture, a new social structure emerged in the 20th century: the consumer society. The most distinctive feature of the consumer society is that it

destroys objects in order to exist. The consumption society is channeled to the moment of consumption and the act of consuming. However, society is not aware of this process.

Architecture and cinema are two disciplines influenced by consumption culture. The greatest partnership of cinema and architecture is on space. Consumption culture; The cinematographic space and the product of architecture also affect the real space.

In this study, the effects of consumption culture on space, society and relations were analyzed through the movie " The Joneses (2009)". Within the scope of the study, the pressure of the consumption culture on the society and the problems of standardizing people and places were discussed. The consumer culture's imposition of capitalism and the damages it causes to society and space have been criticized through the film sample.

Keywords: Consumption culture, consumer society, consumption space.

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans have to shop in order to survive. In the early ages, the member of the producing society obtained the goods that he could not produce by barter. This method, which became inadequate over time, left its place to a common system such as money. Shopping, which is basically an action to meet the needs, has gained different meanings over time. The effort to create an identity with the symbols of the products that serve the individual's existence, socialize, belong to any class or buy himself, has moved the act of shopping far from its original meaning and lost its meaning in the consumption ideology, which is perhaps one of the basic dynamics of 21st century life. In this sense, the answer to the question of what is the need has also changed, and the circumstances that make the purchase action compulsory have changed.

The first community, hunter-gatherers, had no developed trade and no money. They made everything they needed from scratch. They shared the goods and services they produced with the community at their own request. Similarly, trade relations continued in a voluntary economic system in the Agricultural Revolution. Developments such as the increasing population over time, the development and classification of society, the development of cities and the rise of administrations, and the facilitation of transportation have created a new environment for experts. This new environment has raised the problem of how to manage exchanges among product producing experts.

This new problem has led to the finding of a common economic value like your money. Money itself is a paper or metal item that has no tangible value. What makes it valuable is the management system it belongs to. In this sense, money; it is a concrete and non-technological mental revolution, an abstract and psychological construct (Harari, 2016).

The Scientific Revolution, as stated earlier, is based on the idea of progress. Over time, this principle was adapted to the economy: The industrial revolution also reshaped capitalism.

With the Industrial Revolution, the production speed increased and technology developed rapidly. In this way, the product variety has expanded by increasing the production speed and capacity. The first step in industrialization started with Taylorism. This process was followed by fordism, the assembly line system produced by Henry Ford in 1914. With this understanding of production, craftsman's labor has left its place to machine power. Thus, speed and labor savings were achieved in production. With mass production, the 'alienation' situation defined by Marx has emerged. With industrialization, the producer has moved away from the product

he has produced and has become the consumer who buys it in order to have it (Bocock, 1997). With mass production, which is the result of industrialization, the need for labor has decreased, production time has been reduced and free time has been provided for workers to consume their own products (Harvey, 1997). With the decrease in the interest in standard products, the fordism system has left its place to postfordism. Product variety increased through computers in the Postfordist system. The postfordist system is basically a culture and production system based on the fordist system, but more developed and spread over a wide area (Harvey, 1997).

The number of products increased with mass production. Supply exceeded demand at the production date. A consumer group was needed to melt this increasing stock of products. A new motto has been imposed on society to ensure that every product produced by industry is purchased, whether it is needed or not: consumerism. Shopping and consumption are two fundamentally similar concepts. However, while shopping evokes a need-based action and positive expressions, consumption is a pleasure-based concept that evokes negative expressions.

2. CONSUMPTION CULTURE AND CONSUMPTION SOCIETY

The concept of shopping, which initially aimed to compare price, need and quality, has turned into a leisure activity over time. It has gained a meaning that consumers create identity through products, determine the social meanings and social status of products, and socialize with other people (Gruen, 1973). P. Falk and C. Campbell also stated that the concept of shopping is a desire to have a social experience rather than an action where needs are met (Falk and Campbell, 1997). Today, the act of shopping has turned into a form of behavior that brings people together, socializes and provides a communication environment, beyond being a need-based exchange of goods (Miller, 1998). Consumption, one of the new behavioral forms of the postmodern society, is a communication tool that establishes a bond between individuals and between the individual and the urban environment (Miles & Paddison, 1998).

According to Beddington, the act of shopping has become a routine of daily life as an act of leisure and relaxation (Beddington, 1991). Bocock also states that consumption includes people's desires related to identity problems. Consumption; It can be defined as a multi-component phenomenon with its economic, social, psychological and cultural aspects (Bocock, 1997). According to Baudrillard, consumption today; It is not the material value of objects, but the consumption of the signs and symbols they contain. Baudrillard defines consumption as a system of indicators systematized by rules and codes rather than the acquisition of basic needs through products (Baudrillard, 1997). According to definitions, consumption has gained new meanings and functions over time, moving away from its traditional meaning of meeting needs. Although it always preserves its traditional meaning, it has also started to carry symbolic meanings with modernism.

In the modern era, the symbolic value of consumption is increasing, living standards are rising, and the consumption culture, which has turned into an indicator of power and happiness, reveals a new 'life style' in which daily life is aestheticized (Featherstone, 2013). In this new lifestyle, consumption culture is seen as a means by which individuals socialize, join social groups or reveal their social differences (Warde, 1991). The individual who socializes with the consumption culture also creates his individual identity by imitating the habits of the class he wishes to belong to or by using the symbolic meanings of the consumption commodity. The act of consumption, which socializes the individual, also turns into a tool that distinguishes him from others.

Baudrillard says that consumption objects are a communication tool used for socialization (Baudrillard, 1997). In support of this, Bourdieu states that the consumed objects are symbolic elements and reflect the social position of the individuals. In modern society, the consumer consumes the social meanings that he points out, ignoring the primary purpose of the objects. Thus, consumption turns into an activity in which the individual manifests himself and gains a place in society (Orçan, 2004).

Consumption has spread to society as an imposition of the postmodern age. Until the concept of consumption spread, frugality was at the forefront. Throughout history, most people had difficulty in accessing food and lived in poverty, so frugality was the most important criterion. According to the general judgment, good people did not waste food and used their belongings for a long time. In the capitalist understanding, on the other hand, this situation is disparaged and consumerism emerges as an understanding that is praised and affirmed (Harari, 2018).

While the concepts of production and thrift were at the forefront until the end of the 19th century, consumption was prioritized in the 20th century. The production society has given its place to the consumption society, and the work ethic has left its place to the aesthetics of consumption (Bauman, 1999). It has been argued that consumption is the main source of production in the postmodern period and should be considered together (Odabaşı, 2004).

The biggest supporter of consumption is capitalist policies. Capitalism aims to shorten the recovery time of money in order to increase consumption. For this reason, while increasing the turnover number of money, the turnover time is shortened. This can only be achieved by reducing the product changeover period in consumption. For this purpose, disposable products and ideas have emerged. Disposable ideas, which are the teachings of capitalism, affect not only products, but also values, knowledge and experiences (Toffler, 2011).

20. The members of the developing consumer society destroy objects in order to exist and preserve their existence. Consumption of values rather than functions of objects is in the plan. Consumption according to the consumer society; It is the set of actions between the time of production and destruction (Baudrillard, 1997). The satisfaction and satisfaction of the consumer society depends on this desire to destroy. In the consumer society, consumers are provided with fast and practical access to products. However, society does is not conscious of it. Consumers focus on the act of consuming and the moment of consumption. Bauman defines this aspect of consumer society as follows: "For consumers, being on the move, searching, not finding, or rather not finding it yet, is not a morbid condition, but a promise of happiness; maybe it is happiness itself." (Bauman, 1999). The promise of happiness, which is meant by this definition, is the most prominent indicator of the postmodern consumer society (Baudrillard, 1997).

3. ANALYSIS OF CONSUMPTION CULTURE THROUGH THE MOVIE 'THE JONESES'

Architecture and cinema are two disciplines influenced by consumption culture. The greatest partnership of cinema and architecture is on space. Consumption culture; The cinematographic space and the product of architecture also affect the real space. In this study, the movie "The Joneses (2009)", which is a criticism of consumption culture, is discussed. The plot of the movie is as follows; In the movie, 4 personnel working in a secret marketing firm establish a fake family by using their mother, father and child identities. This family moves to a wealthy suburban town. Their houses, vehicles, clothes, every item they use is a sales product and they are trying to market them in a secret way. The townspeople emulate this family and buy the

same items they use to live like them. Over time, this family becomes so effective on the town that all the townspeople begin to resemble them.

The movie begins with the scene of a house in a suburban town. The suburb indicates high socioeconomic status. It also represents the ideal life. In addition, this family-owned house is the largest. Thus, the wealth of the newly arrived family is also represented (Figure 1).



Figure 1: suburban house

The family is ghost marketing. Each individual introduces the products it uses to the consumer group close to its, but they do not do so openly. They praise the products they use during social relations. Thus, they increase their sales by discreetly advertising the products (Figure 2).



Figure 2: examples of ghost marketing

Social and symbolic consumption is emphasized in the film. The company manager uses an important expression when warning the salesperson. He says to her, 'you are here to sell a lifestyle, an attitude'. The important thing here is not to sell products, but to market the social and symbolic values of those products (Figure 3).



Figure 3: social and symbolic consumption discourse

The standardization of consumption culture is also represented in the movie. In the first scene, the saleswoman, the mother of the house, puts on a new running outfit. The town women who see this buy the same clothes. Thus, people become the same through consumption. However, individuals are moving away from each other (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Chain effect

The pressure of consumer culture on society is represented in the film. It is said that more consumption brings more happiness. However, at the end of the movie, a consumer character commits suicide. He is constantly shopping in order to be happy. However, he becomes financially bankrupt and his house is foreclosed, and eventually he becomes depressed and kills himself (Figure 5). This event is the film's critique of consumer culture.



Figure 5: The end of an individual belonging to the consumer society

3. CONCLUSION

The sample family film shows the consumer society to the audience. The places chosen in the film are the spaces of idealized postmodern society. The spaces contain sterile, luxurious, high-level economic images. The urban space is also quite organized and spacious. The objects used are reflected to the society as an identifier. Not the material value of the object, but the brand and meaning value it contains are consumed. postmodern consumption culture imposes the same products on society. However, despite this, the members of the society feel special and alone. Individuals who move away from each other through consumption, on the other hand, become the same. capitalism shapes society through consumption. Individuals of all ages and economic classes are affected by the consumption culture and are included in this wheel. In the consumer society, individuals imitate and consume more in order to exist. Consumption is a means of existence and happiness. However, as seen in the movie, unconscious consumption and pressure push the society into depression and pessimism.

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