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GLOBAL CULTURE AND THE REPRESENTATION OF OTHERHOOD IN A POPULAR TURKISH TELEVISION DRAMA

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Motherhood can be accepted both as individual experience and as social institution. It also shows enormous variation in style across different cultures. This article explores representation of motherhood in popular Turkish television dramas by view of global culture. How does motherhood represent and how does this representation evaluate global culture? Motherhood is represented in a range of fictional media genres, including television dramas and films. Therefore, motherhood and mothers are reproducing continuously in media. Each of these reproductions is surrounded by different cultural aspects. The study examines the conflict of global culture and local culture on the representation of motherhood.

Keywords: Motherhood, Audience, Representation.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore the representations of motherhood which is formed by culture in Turkish television dramas. The motherhood is a concept that has been extremely important to investigate for researchers who focus on women's studies. Mother are almost represented in the domestic, rather than the public or integrated domestic-public up to now. However, at the the turn of the twenty-first century, many motherhood ideologies cope with obtaining for ascendancy (Johston, Swanson 2003:1). Although there are a number of motherhood researches, the social organization of gender and the reproduction of mothering (Chodorow 1978), cultural expectations (Dally 1982; Rich 1976), relatively little research has been done about media in constructing motherhod ideologies (Keller 1994).

In most societies the motherhood is accepted as primary duty of women, it can be thought that this primary duty or women's prolific attribute is to perpetuate women's passive situation. As Mari Boor Tonn notes, motherhood since Victorian times has been a institution constructed to control the female sex (Quot. Hayden 2003).

Motherhood is constructed historically and socially variable practices of nurturing and caring for children. Motherhood is constructed by women and men in specific historical conditions, organized by gender and consistent with prevailing cultural beliefs about gender (Glenn 1994:3). Feminist scholars have researched effects of motherhoods' ideologies sustaining patriarchy (Rothman 1994).

Mothers are classificated in many types like employed mothers and at-home mothers, bad and good mother. Employed mothers are tired, busy and guilty due to having not enough time to take care of their children. In contrast, at-home mothers devote their all times to their children and attached to their children (Johnston, Swanson 2003). Many researchers define that traditional mothers do not work outside the home regardless of cultural distinctions because patriarchal ideology of mothering denies women identities and selfhood outside of motherhood (Keller 1994; Glenn 1994). Traditional mother model is defined by hierarchial system and responsibilities tailored to woman in society. According to Ann Kaplan (1992), popular culture images of mothers in the 1980's present women as career-oriented, or as mothers, but seldom as both. Female sexuality and work are still constructed as antithetical to motherhood. There are many studies about the portrayal of women in the western media, there are also enough critical studies done on how women are depicted in media in Turkey. This study aims to reveal effect of global culture in motherhood's representations. In addition to traditional values, do motherhood's representations include global values?

Chodorow point out that women as mothers are pivotal actors in the sphere of social reproduction. As Engels and Marxist feminists, Levi-Strauss and feminist anthropologists, Parsons and family theorists define this sphere women's primary social location. "Women's mothering reinforces and perpetuates women's relative powerlessness"(Chadorow 1978:31). Chodorow says that although motherhood is women's primary duty or responsibility, many features of this responsibility change. Child care and child-rearing practices and the relations between women's child care and othr responsibilities change in response to changes in the organization of production. Women's role is an historical product (Chadorow 1978:32). Women always devoted time and attention to their children, but it was not until the Industrial Revolution that motherhood was depicted as a full-time job. "The very notion of motherhood as an occupation is a radical modern invention" (Risman 2008).

I think that this study is fruitful in order to present an intracultural perspective. In most societies the motherhood is accepted as primary duty of women, it can be thought that this primary duty or women's prolific attribute is to perpetuate women's passive situation because many scholars inform that motherhood is a social and historical structure. The practice of mothering is constructed by women and men in specific historical circumstances, organized by gender and consistent with prevailing cultural beliefs about gender. Culture tells us what it means to be a mother, what behaviors and attitudes are appropriate for mothers and how motherhood should shape relationships and self-identity. Television dramas have enourmous popularity among the other television programs in Turkey. Thus, they enable us to conduct a research in an area that provides easy access to a larger sampling opportunities.

Since motherhood is accepted as primary duty of women, the all other works which are done by women are evaluated according to their motherhoods. The motherhood is merely what women take as center while arranging the their other works, in most society. Women are usually represented with their lifes dedicated and depended on their children in media. There are very little mother having a job and their jobs are define as works that don't negatively affect their motherhoods like jobs which do not spread until late hours or holiday days and have not the business trip. It has been being this for a long time. Motherhood which defines woman identify has been presenting as what it is the most important attribute. In these years 21. century started, with the world and country conditions which change very fast, has women who want to tailor new role themselves brought about some changes in motherhood roles? Recent years, many motherhood representations which are in outside traditional motherhood models, and provide me to think an opportunity about this question.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1. Has the representations of the motherhood converted in Turkish television dramas lately?
RQ2. How does the audience define the concept of the motherhood? How is mother approved of audience?

METHODOLOGY

The author's goal in this study is to analyse both text and the audience, thus, refraining herself from possible criticism that might occur anaylzing either. As the audience studied reception and reader-response theories have made clear that the text and the reader are interdependent, mutually conceived and joint constructors of meaning. Qualitative research methods will be used to analyze the text and the audience in this study.

Firstly, the text is analyzed and it revealed representations of motherhood. Secondly, interviews with the audience are conducted. The perceptions of the audience are measured with in-depth interview technique. Seven female audiences and five male audiences participated this research. This study intends to bring about a cultural analysis from two angles by investigating from both text and audience.

This study is an intracultural research which aims to bring about a cultural analysis. The interviews have been chosen from different socio-economic levels of the society. These interviews were done after I watched the dramas with interviewees. Financial income, education level, gender and occupation were primarily taken into consideration in the selection of the interviewees. I interviewed with sixteen female and eight male audience. Each interview took 40 and 45 minutes. Four television dramas which had the most audience and were broadcasted in prime time were choosen by interviewing with audience. It was asked for audience: which drama or dramas have outstanding themes about the motherhood. Firstly, an interview was done before main interviews. So audience made a decision which dramas will be studied. In this context, four dramas, broadcasted in 2005-2010 term, were selected, called *"Binbir Gece", "Çocuklar Duymasın", "Melekler Korusun", "Aşk-ı Memn-u", "Avrupa Yakası"*. These dramas appeal both the most numerous audience and having different mother portraits.

MOTHERHOOD'S REPRESENTATIONS AND AUDIENCE

"Binbir Gece" is one of the dramas having utmost audience in Turkish television. At Binbir Gece, Şehrazat is a mother whose son has a terminal illness and also her husband is dead. She need much money for her son's cure, however she has not got any money. In this situation there is a thing you are able to do. And so she goes to her husband's father, they are very rich, but they do not want to meet with Şehrazat, even the father send away Şehrazat, in spite of her begging. Şehrazat is desperate, and she could not know what she does. Eventually she decides to talk with her boss, Onur. Onur is a stunner and rich man. He has a big building corporation in which Şehrazat is architect. Şehrazat wants Onur to give a lot of money for her son, however Onur is surprised her request. He says that this amount is too big to lend.Şehrazat is in big trouble and have to find big money. Onur says to be able to give the money, if Şehrazat is with Onur only one night. Şehrazat have to accept this offer to save her son's life. She accepts this suffering.

This behaviour can be evaluated as a devotion. Is not motherhood sacred? Mothers are usually represented with their lifes dedicated and depended on their children in media, anyway

society expects this behaviour from mothers. Must mother do everything for her children? In depth-interviewees;

"Motherhood is a sacred duty, but Şehrazat must not treat the way. Traditional motherhood is not that" (Female, 32)

"This is not real, any mother does not behave like Şehrazat."(Male, 38)

"There are no ethics values, Şehrazat is a beautiful woman, and Onur is a good-looking and rich man, therefore Şehrazat seems like a devotion mother. At future how will she explain this to her son?"(Female, 42)

"Şehrazat is desperate, but it is not easy to do this even if your son will survive" (Female, 36)

Even if Şehrazat make a great devotion as a mother for her son, it is not possible to be a mother approved of audience. Honesty is one of the signs of sacred motherhood in Turkish society. Audience never approves a mother being with a man against payment. Thus, this mother representation does not belong to Turkish society. Dramas which elobarate with motifs taken foreign dramas, and are produced with global concerns, strengthen acquaintance of audience to global culture.

"Çocuklar Duymasın" is to depict a nuclear family, Meltem is mother of the family. She is a working mother. Her husband, Haluk, is a traditional and conservative man. He does not allow many things his children want to make, however Meltem thinks that children can make what they want. Meltem does not confine them as their father. Meltem allows them to make decision about them.

His son, Havuç, wants to move away home. He says to live with two friends. But Haluk absolutely objected to his request, in spite of that Meltem approves of her son, because he is university student and can take over responsibility to live alone. She believes in her son to encourage, so he will able to be an individual with self confident.

Actually, in Turkish society to live alone is not common. Girls can only leave from home after getting married and boys after finding a job. As we say, this behaviour is not common, but American and European media products caused to become familiar with leaving from home after getting married and finding a job. Meltem represents a mother having global values more than a traditional mother.

"Meltem is an understanding mother, actually she has to be understanding. Everything is changing fast. No longer things we give are enough for my children, therefore we must give more than our own values." (Female, 32)

"Meltem treats correctly, otherwise her children run away from her." (Female, 40)

"Our children face to a bombarding attaching them to global world. Global products, movie, drama, other media represent many different stereotypes for our children. Hollywood film, American and European serials affect our children and these characters are role-models for our children and also for us." (Male, 36)

Melek has a daughter called İpek. Melek and her daughter, İpek, move to big metropol from a country city, since İpek will start to university. İpek's father had passed away before many years, to be alone in a big city is afraid of Melek. She thinks İpek not to follow her advice in this big

city. This fear forces him to suppress her daughter. In the beginning, Melek Hanım is extremely traditional mother. Indeed, from first episode to last episode Melek Hanım does not change these traditional attitudes and behaviours. However, her and her mother strict behaviours are getting bored İpek. Eventually, some day grandmother wants to bring a doctor for virginity control. This is an explosion time. Anymore Melek has to support her daughter against what her mother wants to do. In the week and months that watched this serial, Melek is seen as a mother being so hard, difficult and full of traditional features. After the explosion, Melek is represented as more understanding mother. Melek has not some values from global culture. However, her supporting to İpek can be an indicator to be able to adopt some values of global culture. If I mention the other representation about Melek, I will depict relationship of İpek's boyfriend. İpek is pregnant, but she has not got married yet. That is carefully hidden from Melek, but eventually Melek learns this. In all the representations, even though Melek is a traditional mother, the circumstances she faces to, has not traditional culture and values. Before getting married, being a pregnant is not common in our local culture, and also is not approved of the society.

> *"Melek strictly depends on her values, customs, but conditions sometimes forces him out of her values, because even if she o yerel kalıplarda biri de olsa, kızından dolayı yerel olmayan global kalıpları kabul etmek zorunda kalır" (Female, 48)*

> *"Melek is a devoted mother, she does not accept to get married long time. According to our values, this " (Male, 46)*

> *"Being a pregnant without getting married does not suit to our values, we watch this in American serials" (Female, 38)*

Aşk-ı Memnu is one of the most popular television serials. In this serial, mother, Firdevs, has two daughters. One of them is Bihter whose husband, Adnan, is very wealthy man. Her other daughter has a rich husband, too. Firdevs Hanım represents as a well kept and stylish woman. Firstly, she wants to get married Bihter's husband, Adnan, but she realizes that Adnan thinks Bihter to get married. Thus, Firdevs Hanım vehemently opposes to her daughter's marriage with Adnan. Bihter is ambitious and one who does not love her mother, since her mother deceives her father. She accepts Adnan's proposal of marriage, so her mother will be angry. Firdevs Hanım deals with her benefits rather than their daughters' benefits. Only one thing she loves is money. Therefore, she is so remote from a devoted and traditional mother portrait. Actually Firdevs Hanım is to behave from time to time like a traditional mother, pays traditional values a lot of importance. However her common view can be described as global. Global is involving the entire earth, the other means in this study, it is not local or traditional values. When we look at television and serials, we can see some behaviours, discourses not belonging any culture. The products are embellished with many combining cultures accompanying local cultures.

> *"Firdevs Hanım firstly thinks herself, her thoughts and desires about her daughters are for her benefits, too."(Female, 43)*

> *"Firdevs Hanım is powerful woman and mother, as far as I see, she deeply affects her daughters. She is not devoted mother, passionate mother. She is not like traditional with her aspect. " (Female, 38)*

"I think that Firdevs Hanım splits out our values due to financial benefits, so she depicts more global portrait. Values are not, benefits are important for her." (Male, 35)

"Avrupa Yakası" is one of very popular sitcom. İffet is a mother with two childrens. One of them, Aslı, is contemporary, educated in New York, stylish young girl. Other one, Volkan, is traditional, non-educated from university, working in father's business. İffet tries to be a bridge between her children, she is a mother sometimes having traditional values, sometimes global values. Since Aslı was in New York to study in university and so she has been in New York for a long time. She seems to have some global culture values with her clothings, behaviours and thoughts. Although Aslı obeys the rules of her home, her mother sometimes behaves in according to Aslı's request. Therefore, İffet plays a role with full of global values.

"I think that İffet is a mother having both traditional and global values. Indeed, she has more widely culture like multicultural, she is not traditional " (Male 45)

"İffet is understanding mother, and also İffet has more global values than Aslı. If she does not behave like a mother having global values, Aslı does not treat however she want."(Female 53)

CONCLUSION

One of the current study's questions is whether the representations of the motherhood has been converting in Turkish television dramas lately. The study revealed that motherhood's representations has been converting increasingly. It is watched that local identities and meanings have exchanged global identities and meanings. In television dramas, motherhood represents with global cultural values in addition to local cultural values. Even if audiences still have a traditional values in evaluating concept of motherhood, they embrace a mother's representation with global values. Audience would like to watch a mother's representation with traditional values, but they do not watch a conservative mother.

"Globalisation has been an increasingly significant concept within cultural and media studies over the last decade. In essence, the concept refers to the historical development of global processes and structures emerging in the idea of the social world as 'one place' or what MacLuhan called 'the global village'" (Casey, B., Casey, N., Calvert B., French, L., Lewis, J., 2002, 81). In this process, cultural agents and actors interact and negotiate with global forms, culture blends Western and Turkish values to create its own, in these serials, as watched that mother and motherhood are frequently represented as elaborating representations with local and global values. One of the rules of globalization is to blend with local and one coming from out. For instance; Mc Donalds is global brand, however it needs to have some local features in new places or countries, so that society could adopt it. In this study, Meltem's son, Havuç, wants to move away home. This behaviour is not common in Turkish culture, we watch this representation in Western dramas or in television dramas trying to create global values. However, this global value is in Turkish dramas. In media, especially in television, conditions of globalisation are these; global content, global perception, global ownership, global market (Timisi 2005, 79). As global content provides to represent global values and forms, it also enables the media products to enter global markets, like Mc Donalds' example.

There are two points that we have to evaluate converted representations; it is important that media products represent characters having global values, so that these products could find foreign markets. The other side, global media products acquaint different cultures, therefore these different forms affect audience and producers watching these media products, in other words the global characters of these products are role model for audience.

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