

## EMPIRE AND POWER IMAGINATION IN FOOTBALL: A REVIEW ON OSMANLISPOR'S TWITTER SHARES

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### ABSTRACT

Osmanlıspor (Ottoman Football Club) based in Ankara and currently playing on the professional Turkish Super League, has earned a reputation thanks not only to the soccer it has performed but also to the ironic tweets shared by its Twitter account which have even been subjects of *CAPs*. This is due to the fact that its players are occasionally compared to the Ottoman soldiers and, matches, to battles, both of which are reminiscences of an emphasis on and yearning for the Ottoman Empire. Those Twitter shares can be regarded among projects which, with the growth and popularity of social networks based on the new media, aim to reach masses concurrently and swiftly. Thus in this study, which deals with social media, which is one of the current and effective channels in reaching the masses, the related shares were subjected to semiotic analysis. Hereby, how the empire and power imagination in the futbol was established and tried to be legitimated on Ottoman theme through social sharing platforms was discussed.

**Keywords:** Football, Osmanlıspor, Ottoman Empire, social media, Twitter.

## FUTBOLDA İMPARATORLUK VE GÜÇ TAHAYYÜLÜ: OSMANLISPOR'UN TWİTTER PAYLAŞIMLARI ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME

### ÖZ

Şuan Türkiye'de profesyonel ligde, Süper Lig'de mücadele eden ve Ankara merkezli bir futbol kulübü olan Osmanlıspor 2015 yılı içerisinde oynadığı futbol kadar, Twitter hesabından yapılan ironik paylaşımlar ile de adından söz ettirmiş, paylaşımlar *CAP*slere dâhi konu olmuştur. Çünkü Osmanlı İmparatorluğu vurgusu ve özleminin göze çarptığı paylaşımlarda, futbolcular yer yer Osmanlı askerine, maçlar ise cenge/savaşa benzetilmiştir. İlgili Twitter paylaşımları, yeni medya tabanlı sosyal ağların güçlenmesi ve popülerleşmesi ile birlikte kitlelere hızlı ve eş zamanlı olarak ulaşmayı hedefleyen projelerden sayılabilir. Bu yüzden kitlelere ulaşmada bugün güncel ve etkili mecralardan olan sosyal medyayı ele alan bu çalışmada, ilgili paylaşımlar göstergebilimsel analize tabi tutulmuştur. Böylelikle *Osmanlı* teması üzerinden futbolda imparatorluk ve güç tahayyülünün sosyal paylaşım platformları aracılığı ile nasıl kurulduğu ve meşrulaştırılmaya çalışıldığı ele alınmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Futbol, Osmanlıspor, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, sosyal medya, Twitter.

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## 1. Introduction

As a complex concept, the ideology does not only describe the opinions and ideas of the individuals. Ideologies are not thought systems that have specific principles and opinions, and that integrate with these principles and opinions, and are unchanging (Eagleton, 1991; Heywood, 2012: 97-98). The important representative of the British Cultural Studies, Stuart Hall, views the ideology as a field of struggle within the framework of meanings (Dagtas, 1999: 338). The ideology, used by Marx and Engels to describe the most abstract concepts independently filling an imaginary world of ideas with material life (Martin, 2015: 10), turns the relationships between people upside down just like a camera obscura. The cause seems like an effect, and the effect seems like a cause. Every interpretation (idealism) indicating that life is determined by consciousness, to Marx, is an ideology that functions like a camera obscura; because life is not determined by consciousness; on the contrary, consciousness is determined by life” (as cited from Ozyurt, 2014: 225). The fact that Marx and Engels claim in *The German Ideology* (2013) that people are misinformed about themselves and their world and that they need to get rid of the thoughts and dogmas of which they fall under the influence, is important. The structure and arguments of the capitalist system deceive people, and the consciousness formed this way is false. Hekman (2012: 33) claims that, through his ideas on the ideology, Marx’s purpose was to reveal the icons that prevented the light from reaching to the mind. Thus, Marx’s “false consciousness” statement seems like an expansion of the attitude of the Enlightenment rejecting prejudice and cultural-historical distortions. Today, it is claimed that totalitarian ideologies are becoming more widespread in the age we are living, and it continues to spread in many parts of the world (Lévi-Strauss, 2014: 14). Ideologies related to culture (Griffin, 2006) can affect things which are accepted to be true or false. Epistemologically, the ideology generally describes a particular understanding of the world. However, it should not be forgotten that these ideologies in this context are not just “the World-view” of a group, but principles that are forming the basis of these beliefs (Dijk, 1998: 8).

We are all self-aware, and while we have access to the contents of our minds; strangely enough, we do not have access to the minds of others (Churchlund, 2012:

22). Nevertheless, some common characteristics and belonging bring us closer to others, we want to belong or we are affiliated. “Affiliation” is the process by which governments create their own cultures from the resources and meta provided to them by the dominant system, and it is also important in popular culture. Since the resources are provided by those who govern them (Fiske, 2012: 27). The fact that media is used as a tool for the “manufacture of consent” is also important. In the process called the manufacture of consent by Lipmann, the propaganda, which becomes important, is realized through mass media (Herman and Chomsky, 2012: 66). At times, besides politics, we can encounter a propaganda in football, it can also nourish from an ideology, belonging and social structure. It is important to state that the relevant propaganda is within the scope of “white propaganda<sup>2</sup>” and realized through the use of some values and associations, and it is a means of reproduction. The fact that social media is also an effective and interactive communication medium today is important regarding the masses and accessibility. Thus, social media is a preferred platform for publicity and propaganda. As is explained below, some social media activities belonging to 2015 of Osmanlispor which is competing in the Super League in Turkey now, characterized its white propaganda activities by nourishing from the social structure, common past (Ottoman), values and political discourses. By using the power and empire represented by the Ottomans, the purpose of some social media posts of Osmanlispor was to “construct a collective consciousness” and “revive the Ottoman ideology” in a neo-romantic framework. Because sports is a “common denominator” in the world just as it is in a country (Altunbas, 2008: 95), and sports media has the power to influence society. Unsal and Ramazanoglu are also of the opinion that (2013: 44-45) sports media if needed, has the power to affect very large-scale masses of people as a means of effective propaganda and to guide them to specific goals. While sports media is a means for the development of a national culture and values, it can serve some purposes that are an adversary to these, such as weakening cultural identity or destroying national unity and solidarity. It is also important to add that, in the regimes of many countries around the world (Germany, Spain, Portugal etc.), sports

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<sup>2</sup> The goal of white propaganda is to provide credibility to the audience by providing accurate information through an open source, and white propaganda is ideological like the other types (Brunello, 2014: 175).

have been used as a means of political and national propaganda from the past to the present (Ince, 2016). The official participation of the Republic of Turkey - which had just come out of the War of Independence and was newly established - in the Olympics taken place in 1924 (Ozdemir, 2013: 717) was a display of national power. At this point, the importance attributed to sports such as wrestling, horse riding, javelin, throwing mace in the Ottoman period; to the “sponsorship” developing under the protection of the sultans and through various foundations (Celik, 2016); and accordingly, to the development of interpersonal communication are also very important.

Osmanlispor stands out with the Ottoman theme was established on June 29, 2014, in Ankara, the capital of Turkey. The football club competing in Turkey Super League is actually *Ankaraspor*, which was established on March 21, 1978. Ankaraspor, which was on the agenda with its debts for a period of time, took on the name 'Osmanlispor' in 2014. The fans of Osmanlispor, which plays matches in the Ottoman Stadium in Ankara, address to the stadium as *The Ottoman Castle* (<http://kimkurdu.com>, 09.24.2015). Shortly after the establishment of Osmanlispor, TFF (the name of the league was PTT 1<sup>st</sup> League when Osmanlispor made it to the Super League) 1. While competing in the league, the charts of the team were successful, and the team was also well known due to its playing style as well as its shares on social media. The alleged shares of the official Twitter account belonging to Osmanlispor were rather ironic and drew attention to the sympathy and longing towards the Ottoman Empire through the envisioning of the empire as a power. In fact, in the related shares and images, football players were associated with janissaries, and matches were associated with wars (battles). Moreover, the relevant social media account changed its username from "Osmanlispor FK" to "Futbol-u Âli Osmanlı" (The Great Ottoman Football).

The subjects of the study are understanding the ironic language used in these shares which caught the attention of social media users, and the envisioning of football as a power through the Ottoman Empire. The aim of the study is to present the longing and sympathy towards Ottoman empire created through football phenomenon by means of social media shares. Since the study examines the Twitter shares of

Osmanlispor, it is qualified to contribute to new media and studies on football and is highly subjective regarding its subject.

A total of 5 shares (with images), posted in 2015, belonging to Osmanlispor FK has been included in the scope of the study, which was chosen as a result of simple random sampling, also a semiotic analysis has been applied to the shares. The study is not only limited to the shares of Osmanlispor, the *CAPS* created by some accounts and targeting Osmanlispor have also been examined so as to back up the semiotic analysis within the scope of the study. The shares examined in the study, which were shared by Osmanlispor on Twitter, have been recorded in the electronic environment by the writer. In the theoretical part of the study, the Ottoman Empire has been mentioned from a historical perspective, the concept of social media has been explained, and the analogy focused approach between social media and football, which is the basis of the new media has been utilized.

## 2. The Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman State was founded in 1299 by Osman Gazi - the leader of the Kayi tribe - in the village of Sogut, and had grown rapidly and became a great empire within 200 years. Thanks to the successive triumphs of Osman Bey, the Ottoman Beylic had risen and all surrounding Turkic tribes desired to be tied to Osman Bey. After a while, Osman Bey had become the ruler of many Turkic tribes. The Ottoman had transformed from a border beylic to the most powerful state of the Islamic world, and the Ottoman Empire<sup>3</sup> was proclaimed in 1299. It is claimed that the two important values of the Ottoman Beylic during the foundation and rise periods were the religion of Islam and Central Asia Turkish, grandmother. The Ottoman Empire existed between 1299-1922 and was known for being a Turkish and Islamic state. The Ottoman State, which expanded its territory to Eastern Europe, Southwest Asia, and North Africa, became the world's most powerful empire in the 16th century and lived through a golden age. The Ottoman State, a great empire when it was a beylic and which was described by Palmer (2014) as "the state with nine lives", was characterized with being

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<sup>3</sup>In the historical records of Ming, the Ottoman state is referred to as "Lu Mi" and "Lu Mi Guo". "Lu Mi" is the pronunciation of Rumi in Chinese. "Lu Mi Guo" means 'Rumi Country', namely the Ottoman Country (Fidan, 2011: 281).

a living and constantly changing empire (Shaw, 1994; Inalcik, 2016a-2016b; Afyoncu, 2016; Koprulu, 2016; Cide, 2015: 106; Gibbons, 2017). The effects of the history of Turkish modernization, which started after the Ottoman Empire's period of stagnation, had been felt for a long time (Lewis, 2015; Mardin, 2004). In the 17th century, many unfavorable situations arose in the Ottoman Empire parallel to the industrialization process in the West, the agricultural economy had almost collapsed, and in the 18th century, it began to lose its lands; social deterioration and dissolution process gained momentum (Altuntek, 1992: 2-3; Karabulut, 2016: 49). However, the Westernization process had also begun (Papila, 2008: 117). The 19th century was a period when the Ottoman Empire's economic and financial integration with Europe took place rapidly (Anbar, 2009: 17), 19. In the Ottoman Empire, in order to prevent regression, reforms were made in many fields such as social, political, military, economic, cultural etc. Significant changes were made especially in the fields of press, literature, theater, social life, education, urban, human, family, education, population, military structure, foreign and cultural institutions, social and financial structure, production, transportation and commercial (Karabulut, 2016: 64). Ortaylı (1981: III) claims that the Ottoman Empire gradually formed a new relation in the second half of the 19th century. It was not a close connection that the Ottoman state formed regarding its balance politics; in fact, the state welcomed the influence of the Germans in the army and civil government. Tanzimat reform era is characterized by being a new orientation and new search period in the Ottoman state (Sencer, 1984: 46).

The participation of the Ottoman Empire, which had a unique social and bureaucratic structure in the 16th and 19th centuries during which the world economy had been articulated into capitalism, had been very different from the other countries' participation to the system; in the framework of the capitalist world system, the Ottoman turned into a state which acted according to the system's restrictions and rules (Biber, 2009: 27-42). In the 16th century, the first comprehensive census of information on the Ottoman population was also made; it was observed that it had risen in the relative century and reached 30-35 million. In the 17th and 18th centuries, periodic counts had decreased (Elibol, 2007: 135). The influence of the political atmosphere and separatist ideas in the 19th century was influential in the criticism of

the non-Muslim policies of the Ottoman Empire, which was a multi-ethnic empire and followed moderate policies regarding non-Muslim people (Gunes, 2015: 26). At this point, it is favorable to indicate that Protestant missionary activities had been carried out in the Ottoman Empire just as it was done in China in the 19th century (Tamur, 2006).

The Ottoman Empire represented an embracing and tolerant empire in the framework of its borders, power, or potency. During the Ottoman period, great importance was also attributed to sports. Along with its power and its boundaries that it had expanded, a multi-ethnic empire, the Ottoman Empire, describes the past of established modern Turkey. While the success level of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey is being debated, people cherish the memory of the Ottomans as their ancestors, and the Ottoman Empire is remembered for its tolerance, glorious history and traditions. Thus, the Ottoman Empire means a great deal to people living in Turkey today. It can be seen that the Ottoman Empire was an empire standing out with its power and might for the Osmanlisor fans selected as the sample/study group in this study. "Meaning" here, of course, is the work of ideology as a connotation of the connotation.

### **3. Social Media and Sports Communication: An Ottoman Epiphany**

The internet today is a concept that guides many practices and is debated whether it is social or how social it is. Therefore, it is required to develop a social theory approach in order to explain the mentioned concept and the social media, which is another concept inside the concept of the internet. Parallel to the development of communication technologies, the internet is one of the essential parts of daily life today. Social media, which develops and evolves alongside the internet, comprises of three social knowledge processes. These are cognition, communication, and collaboration. Social media is user-oriented and includes new media environments (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) that point to a unity through mass content sharing (Trottier and Fuchs, 2014; Blanchard, 2011; Falls and Deckers, 2012). Social media should be seen primarily as contents published on these platforms, not as a platform on which people write things. These contents vary depending on the region. It would not be just to define social media based on a ground or in a manner. Because social

media is not just a communication medium today, but a communication tool, a form of media, a public space (Miller et al., 2016). In the organizational context, social media can be used as a marketing and public relations tool (Leonardi et al., 2013: 2), and even as a propaganda channel.

According to Asur and Huberman (2010), social media boomed as an online discourse category. People can create and share content with social media. Social networks such as Facebook, MySpace, Digg, and Twitter are prominent due to their easy-to-use, fast and limitless access features and are also pioneers for the change/evolution of social discourse. Social media is interpreted as a "collective wisdom" in some approaches. These approaches emphasize the positive aspects of social media such as bringing masses together on specific platforms and for specific purposes. It seems that social media will be a social tool for communication (Bowie, 2012). Because communicative processes constantly bring about change and innovation. A common argument is that, due to today's new media, traditional journalism has lost its appeal, and even today, we single-mindedly approach the New York Times as "old media".

Social media environments such as blogs, Twitter and Facebook are parts of the web expansion wave that began at the beginning of the 2000s and have taken a great space in daily life (Healy, 2017). In fact, 65% of adults in the United States use social networking sites which have increased by about ten times in the last decade (Perrin, 2015).

Social media environments are also important spaces regarding the football phenomenon. Like fans, football clubs also use social media by way of official accounts or fan groups, especially before derbies. Users can communicate with football players on social media. Therefore, social media is an effective and a necessary medium for sports communication. Because "sports communication" stretches from the communication between the athletes to the process of connection with clubs and fans, and enables people to communicate on a mass scale. Sports communication also includes the traditional media such as television, newspapers, and magazines. Relations established by means of various public relations tools such as

press conferences, press announcements, and press releases are also within the scope of sports communication (Yildirim, 2017: 113; Cetin, 2014).

At the same time, sports have the power to bring many people together. With this feature, it has created a great impact on social life and has become a popular concept. The “social power” that sports have is the basis of its transformation into a big industry. In fact, the world’s biggest companies have noticed this power many years ago and they used sports for marketing (Yoon ve Choi, 2005: as cited from 191, Altunbas, 2007: 93). Unlike the traditional marketing and sponsorship, the sports marketing includes integration (Altunbas, 2007: 94). Utilizing sports marketing provides a cost-benefit advantage to companies in terms of recycling. With less expenditure, it is possible to achieve an effect that will not be forgotten for many years (Altunbas, 2007: 99-100).

Besides in traditional media tools, sports communication is also developing and becoming a reality in the new media-based platform. Osmanlispor, which was chosen as a sample in this study, also uses social media as an ideological tool in the context of sports communication; and while doing so, it nourishes from the Ottoman Empire’s past. Osmanlispor using the effect of social media makes an ideological propaganda with their Ottoman themed posts and wants to revive the Ottoman dream. Because society sees the Ottoman as an ancestor and knows it on the basis of tolerance and power. The endeavor of depicting Osmanlispor like it is as strong as the Ottoman Empire takes reference from the past of the Ottoman Empire and the great and a powerful empire perception in the mind of the society.

#### **4. Ideological Function of Ottomans Today**

Before talking about the ideological function of the Ottomans today, we should talk about the politics of “Ottomanism”, which was attempted to be implemented in the Ottoman politics and represents the holistic perspective of the Ottoman Empire on its subjects. Since the role of the relative politics is great, in that it helped the Ottoman Empire to become a largely inclusive and tolerant empire. The politics of Ottomanism was based on the principle of equal citizenship; and, through Ottomanism, the aim was to transform the state structure, which had the religion in its base, into a multi-faith

and multilingual modern structure. Also, in this way, ethnic identity was made into an element of national identity (Karpas, 2011: 8-9). The Ottomanism meant the creation of an Ottoman nation. According to Akcura (2011: 9), the main purposes of Ottomanism, which was not based on high desires, were to “give the same political rights and attribute the same duties to the Muslim and non-Muslim citizens living in the Ottoman state; thus, to make everything between them equal; to give full freedom of thought and religion; by utilizing equality and freedom, to mix them together in spite of the religion and lineage disputes between the citizens and to represent them; to create a new Ottoman nation combined with the common land like the American nation in the United States of America; and as a result of all these difficult operations, to maintain “the Ottoman Empire” (Devler-i Aliyye-i Osmaniye) as it was, namely, with its original borders” (Akcura, 2011: 9).

Instead of being influenced by lineage and race on the basis of nationalism in Europe as in the French Revolution, the idea of creating an Ottoman nation emerging in the Sultan Mahmud II period was influenced by freedom based on conscience. This is the basis of the claim that the politics of Ottomanism was based on equality and freedom. Following the suffering of Napoleon and the French Empire in 1870-1871, the Ottomanism lost its only support and the way of Islamism was put forward after the Ottomanism had failed as a form of politics (Akcura, 2011: 10-16).

Today, although it is not the politics of Ottomanism, there is an attempt to revive some elements of the Ottoman Empire through ideological reproduction. The Ottoman Empire, which represents power and tolerance, superiority, and mostly, success for the society and which should be embraced, is being fictionalized as “belonging”. In fact, the history - which is said to be closely related to politics, ideology, narration, and theory by Burke - is narrated ideologically to the society through the Ottoman Empire. One of those executing this is Osmanlispor. Sports are a phenomenon that brings people together. Osmanlispor also has been creating some of its social media posts by using the Ottoman Empire as a common denominator, and is making an ideological call using both the effective power of social media and common past and values, and invites its supporters to the Ottoman belonging. Because ideology is a social phenomenon that can nourish from different sources. In this context, the

Ottoman belonging nourishes from the society's past, values, and associations and is being a means for the neo-romantic revival. Osmanlispor includes its supporters to an ideological reproduction with its posts adorned with the Ottoman Empire themes, it fictionalizes itself as a strong Ottoman successor and its rivals as "others" who are not as strong as itself.

## 5. Osmanlispor on Social Media

Osmanlispor is actively using Twitter, one of the active social media environments, and their shares in 2015 kept the world of sports and social media busy for a time. In fact, it has been observed that football competitions were associated with battles/wars by the use of an ironic language, in some of the related shares. Football players were almost warriors, and soldiers. This irony is not so obvious when the team wins the match.

Janissaries as a power element in the Ottoman Empire were also mentioned in the shares (Visual 1 & Visual 2). These shares received more likes than *retweets*.



Visual 1. & Visual 2. Shares dated August 27, 2015 and October 24, 2015

Some phenomenon and themes such as the Anatolian Seljuk State and some Ottoman eras were emphasized in some of the Twitter shares in 2015, that belong to the official account. The emphasis on these themes and the sympathy/longing towards the Ottoman Empire can be seen in some of the following shares that belong to Osmanlispor (Visual 3 & Visual 4). These shares also received more likes than *retweets*.



Visual 3. A Post dated August 15, 2015



Visual 4. A Post with the Theme of Anatolian Seljuk State

### 5.1. A Semiotic Analysis of the Twitter Shares of Osmanlispor

In this part of the study, some ironic images shared by the official account of Osmanlispor have been evaluated with the method of semiotic analysis.

Ferdinand de Saussure, a pioneer in the study of semiotics, defines semiotics as a discipline. According to Saussure sign, which is perhaps the most important element of semiotics, is a compound: the sign is made up of a signifier (a sound or image) and a signified (an object related to the sound or image). Unlike Saussure, Barthes highlights the importance of connotation and he focuses on connotation, while the emphasis on the denotative meaning is more dominant in Saussure's approach. Peirce lists the components of semiotics as representament (sign), interpretant and ground. Semiotics, which involves the examination of signs and symbols, helps to reveal the hidden meanings in texts (Barthes, 1986; Chapman et al., 2004; Engle, 2008: 5-6; Hronsky, 1998; Martins Melo et al., 2017:250; Yan and Ming, 2015: 59).

In the study, the themes and meanings of some shares by the official account of Osmanlıspor in 2015, were aimed to be revealed in the light of Saussure and Barthes' approaches (importance of connotation, denotative meaning). The relevant methods have been chosen in order to reveal the hidden meanings of the shares. The analysis utilized Aslan and Demirel's (2017) study.



Image 1. "Before the battle between Osmanlıspor and Fenerbahçe, we met the managers of Fenerbahçe at the dinner"

The linguistic message of the image above is as, "Before the battle between Osmanlıspor and Fenerbahçe, we met the managers of Fenerbahçe at the dinner". The denotation of the image is that Osmanlıspor and Fenerbahçe managers met before the match, and had dinner along with treats. The connotation is that Osmanlıspor welcomed the managers of Fenerbahçe, and showed hospitality with its attendants and treats. The metalanguage is that since Osmanlıspor was the one who welcomed Fenerbahçe Sports Club, they were the wealthy and rich ones. Ideologically, it is signified that Osmanlıspor is also powerful just like the Ottoman Empire.

Table 1. Analysis of the Image 1

SIGN-II (Secondary System) Mythical Level/Mitification		Signified of Secondary System		REFERENCE SYSTEM (IDEOLOGICAL PROCESS)
SIGN-I (Primary System) = Signifier of Secondary System				
Signifier	Signified	Denotation	Connotation	
The Ottoman Rulers Host Attendants Guests Table Food Plate, Dish, Pot	Osmanlıspor FK (Twitter Account)	Hospitality Conversation Catering Culture	Superiority Governance Wealth Power	



Futbolcularımızın yeni sezona hazır ve dinç girebilmesi için masörlerimiz yoğun çaba sarf etmektedir.

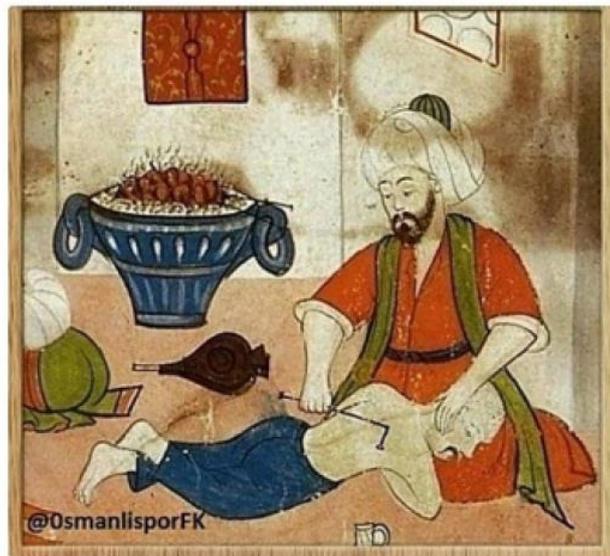


Image 2. "Our masseurs work intensively so that our football players can be vigorous and ready for the new season"

The linguistic message of the Image 2 is, "Our masseurs work intensively so that our football players can be vigorous and ready for the new season". As the denotation, it can be understood that a masseur has given a massage to a man. The connotation is that the mentioned man is a football player in Osmanlıspor. The club is

doing its best to keep its football players fit and vigorous. The metalanguage of the image is that Osmanlıspor is making intense and strong preparations. Ideologically, it is signified that Osmanlıspor is determined, ambitious, and eager for success, just like the Ottoman Empire.

Table 2. Analysis of the Image 2

SIGN-II (Secondary System) Mythical Level/Mitification				REFERENCE SYSTEM (IDEOLOGICAL PROCESS)
SIGN-I (Primary System) = Signifier of Secondary System		Signified of Secondary System		
Signifier	Signified	Denotation	Connotation	
Masseur Man	Osmanlıspor FK (Twitter Account)	Massage Care	Power, Vigor, Fitness Football player	



Taraftarlarımız Türk Telekom Arena  
Stadı'na giriş yapmaya başladı.  
#İmparatorluğumuzunMaçıVar



Image 3. "Our fans started to enter the Turk Telekom Arena"

The linguistic message of the Image 3 is, "Our fans started to enter the Turk Telekom Arena". The denotation of the image is that the fans of Osmanlıspor came to their opponent's stadium for the match against Galatasaray. Because the Turk Telekom

Arena (Turk Telekom Stadium)<sup>4</sup> is the stadium in which Galatasaray Sports Club plays its home matches. The connotations are that Osmanlispor fans are united and in solidarity, and they are devoted to the team. The metalanguage is that the entrance of the Osmanlispor fans was in the form of a celebration, and the emphasis on the crowd. Ideologically, it is signified that Osmanlispor is also majestic and superior to others just like the Ottoman Empire.

Table 3. Analysis of the Image 3

SIGN-II (Secondary System) Mythical Level/Mitification				REFERENCE SYSTEM (IDEOLOGICAL PROCESS)
SIGN-I (Primary System) = Signifier of Secondary System		Signified of Secondary System		
Signifier	Signified	Denotation	Connotation	
Rulers Soldiers (People, Men) Palace	Osmanlispor FK (Twitter Account)	Galatasaray Match	Unity Devotion	



Image 4. "We welcomed the managers of Fenerbahce before the match"

<sup>4</sup> After he criticized that the stadiums were called "arena", President Recep Tayyip Erdogan changed the name of Galatasaray Spor Kulubu Turk Telekom Arena to "Ali Sami Yen Spor Kompleksi Turk Telekom Stadyumu" (<https://tr.sputniknews.com>, 05.26.2017; 05.27.2017).

The linguistic message of the fourth image is, "We welcomed the managers of Fenerbahce before the match". The denotations are the conversation between the managers of Osmanlispor and Fenerbahce and the hospitality of Osmanlispor. The connotation is that Osmanlispor welcomed Fenerbahce Sports Club. The metalanguage of the image is that Osmanlispor is more powerful and superior than Fenerbahce Sports Club. Ideologically, it is signified that Osmanlispor is powerful and superior to other football clubs just like the Ottoman Empire.

Table 4. Analysis of the Image 4

SIGN-II (Secondary System) Mythical Level/Mitification				REFERENCE SYSTEM (IDEOLOGICAL PROCESS)
SIGN-I (Primary System) = Signifier of Secondary System		Signified of Secondary System		
Signifier	Signified	Denotation	Connotation	
The Ottoman Rulers (Host) Officials Guests Book, Paper, Document	Osmanlispor FK (Twitter Account)	Conversation Entertainment (Hospitality)	Power Superiority	



Image 5. "Our fans started to enter the stadium for the battle against Besiktas"

The linguistic message of the last image is, "Our fans started to enter the stadium for the battle against Besiktas". The denotations of the image are the emphasis on Besiktas - Osmanlispor football match and that there are too many fans. The connotations are that the fans are in unity, solidarity and an order, and they are very enthusiastic. The metalanguage is the emphasis that the entrance of the fans is in the form of solemnity, a celebration. Ideologically, it is signified that Osmanlispor is also majestic and superior to others just like the Ottoman Empire.

Table 5. Analysis of the Image 5

<b>SIGN-II (Secondary System) Mythical Level/Mitification</b>				<b>REFERENCE SYSTEM (IDEOLOGICAL PROCESS)</b>
<b>SIGN-I (Primary System) = Signifier of Secondary System</b>		<b>Signified of Secondary System</b>		
<b>Signifier</b>	<b>Signified</b>	Denotation	Connotation	
Fans Soldiers (People, Men) Palace	Osmanlispor FK (Twitter Account)	Crowd Solemnity	Unity Devotion Enthusiasm Order	

Regarding the Osmanlispor's shares with themes of the Ottoman and empire, CAPS were also designed and shared. Two of the related CAPS<sup>5</sup> are as follows (Visual 5 & Visual 6):

<sup>5</sup>Although CAPS is a term used for recording events in the form of an image or a video (<https://www.sabah.com.tr>, 03.12.2017), today CAPS generally describe funny images.



Visual 5. CAPS related to Osmanlıspor



Visual 6. CAPS related to Osmanlıspor

## Conclusion and Evaluation

With developing communication technologies, it is clear that popular social media environments take up a great space in daily life. Like many other areas, football is also an important, effective and up-to-date forum for social media environments. Perhaps due to this, like many football clubs and fan groups, the Osmanlıspor club also uses its official Twitter account effectively and meets with the fans quickly and interactively. However, social media is also a white propaganda channel for the field of football as it is for many other fields. Thus, football clubs also carry out propaganda activities; and proceeds to leadership, and power propaganda. Osmanlıspor made leadership propaganda with some of the shares it posted with its official Twitter account in 2015, the main arguments of the relevant propaganda were the Ottoman empire and envisioning of power; the longing and sympathy towards the Ottoman empire were prominent in the shares.

The Ottomanism adopted in today's Turkish society as a sub-ideology, and it was aimed to be revived through Osmanlıspor's Twitter posts. It may also be in the name of reviving national values. Through the ideological reproduction, the Ottoman Empire is depicted as belonging, common history and past by being nourished from the idea of Ottomanism. The reoccurring up of the Ottomans, through Osmanlıspor may also be in order to keep individuals out of the current agenda and hide real power relations. This creates "false consciousness". In this context, Osmanlıspor's description of football as a janissary, matches as a battle can be explained by "irrationality".

The longing and sympathy towards the Ottomans were prominent in some Twitter shares of Osmanlıspor in 2015 regarding janissaries, the glorious Ottoman wars, and longing for the Ottoman traditions. In fact, matches were associated with wars, football players were associated with soldiers and janissaries in the shares examined within the scope of the study. The matches were also depicted as a celebration, a solemnity. However, in some of the images and shares, the attention was drawn to the Anatolian Seljuk State, hospitality in the Ottoman empire, wealth and richness, order and organization. Because it is known that the Ottoman Empire is known for becoming a great empire in a short time, for its military achievements, victories, as well as being tolerant to its subjects and its universal point of view. In

fact, the rights and authorities the Ottoman State gave to the non-Muslim people in accordance with the charge system in the Islamic law, continued until the Tanzimat reform era. In the Sultan Mahmud II period in which “Ottomanism” was adopted, the sultan said, “I distinguish the Muslim of my subjects in the mosque, and the Christian in the church. There is no other difference between them. I love them equally and I am fair to all, and they are all my true children” (as cited from Konan, 2015: 185) this sentence can also be interpreted as a sign of tolerance. Nevertheless, there are some approaches claiming that this attitude resulted in the European states oppressing the Ottoman government by claiming that they were protecting the non-muslim citizens.

Consequently, as a result of the study, it can be said that Osmanlispor was longing for and feeling sympathy towards the Ottoman Empire considering the shares it shared on its Twitter account in 2015. It would not be wrong to state that the Osmanlispor club aimed to appeal to its fans collectively by using images coded with envisioning of the empire and power and tried to praise the Ottoman era.

The examined images and shares belonging to Osmanlispor were widely discussed in social media, *CAPS* were designed to mock the mentioned shares and images of Osmanlispor. In these *CAPS*, the managers of Osmanlispor and football players were depicted wearing traditional clothing and war accessories as in the Osmanlispor shares, the relevant shares of Osmanlispor were cited critically by ironic shares and comedy.

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