



MEDIA AND GLOBALIZATION

MEDYA VE KÜRESELLEŞME

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Abstract

Modernization, which emerged with the Industrialization period, accordingly brought about a social change. The changing of production relations with the help of the technological developments caused a need for an expanding market, more raw materials and more labor force. While this situation led to some countries to develop, it caused some others to be exploited.

The ending of colonialist facilities legally after the Second World War has brought a new colonialist process. This process is a type of exploitation which does not get involved in the territorial integrity of the underdeveloped or the developing countries.

Nowadays postmodernism's understanding of displacement, disintegration and turning into micro-formations and the globalization fact brought about a post-colonial act that is conceptualized as globalization.

The mass cultural products of the cultural industries of the developed countries are on purpose changing and disintegrating the cultural values of a country they reach through media, and causing a mental confusion as a result of the non-corresponding of the own cultural values of the individuals. As time goes by, the values by the foreign culture begin to change the individuals' own unique cultural values and replace them. Therefore, the feeling of social belonging starts to weaken and the society begins to create mutual-hate towards each other as well as the disintegration of the society by the different belongings such as religion, ethnicity, etc. deepen. This situation forms a basis for the developed countries to intervene, and such provides a justifiable reason for these countries to be exploited.

Key Words: Cultural Imperialism, Media, Cultural Identity, Globalization, Alienation.

Öz

Sanayileşme ile ortaya çıkan modernleşme, buna bağlı olarak toplumsal değişmeyi beraberinde getirmiştir. Teknolojik gelişmeyle birlikte üretim ilişkilerinin değişmesi, pazarın genişlemesine, üretim için daha fazla hammaddeye ve insan gücüne ihtiyaç yaratmıştır. Bu durum bazı ülkelerin gelişmesini sağlarken, diğer bazı ülkelerin sömürülmesine neden olmuştur.

İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında kolonyalist faaliyetlerin yasal anlamda sona erdirilmesiyle birlikte yeni kolonyalist süreç başlamıştır. Bu süreç, az gelişmiş ya da gelişmekte olan ülkelerin toprak bütünlüğüne dokunulmaksızın gerçekleştirilen bir koloncilik türüdür.

Günümüzde ise, postmodernizmin yerinden etme, parçalama, mikro oluşumlara dönüştürme anlayışı ve küreselleşme olgusu, küreyelleşme olarak kavramsallaştırılan postkolonyalist hareketi ortaya çıkarmıştır.

Gelişmiş ülkelerin kültür endüstrilerinin, kasıtlı bir amaç doğrultusunda ürettiği kitle kültürü ürünleri, medya üzerinden gittikleri ülkenin kültürel değerlerini bozmakta, yerinden etmekte, bireylerin kendi kültürel değerleriyle örtüşmemesi nedeniyle zihinsel karmaşa yaratmaktadır. Zamanla yabancı kültürden gelen değerler, bireylerin kendi öz kültürel değerlerini değiştirmeye ve onun yerini almaya başlamaktadır. Böylece toplumsal aidiyet duygusu zayıflamakta ve toplum birbirine düşmanca duygular beslemeye ve din, mezhep, etnik köken vb. farklı aidiyetlere göre ayrılmaktadır. Bu durum gelişmiş ülkelerin bu ülkelere müdahale etmesine zemin hazırlamakta, dolayısıyla sömürülmesine meşru bir gerekçe sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültürel Emperyalizm, Medya, Kültürel Kimlik, Küreselleşme, Yabancılaşma.

Introduction

When the history of mankind is examined, it is observed that communication has played an important role in the development of humankind. The invention of writing, invention of printing, and accordingly, the emergence of mass production, the fact that mass communication products became cheaper and spread to masses maintained the emergence and spreading of thinking and questioning people along with industry and concept of capitalist production. Gencay Şaylan states that capitalism is a new order that came into existence between the 16th and the 18th centuries in Western Europe. This social order covers new formations in all fields of life from economy to politics and from thought to science and technology. Şaylan asserts that the basic component that determines capitalism, which is used as an economic fact in daily language, is the fact that commodity production gradually became widespread and universal. In this sense, capitalism is also a process. Everything that is produced in this process, including human labor, is transformed into commodity, and takes its place in the market (Şaylan, 2003: 33). The focus of the employment deviated from farms to factories during the first two centuries of the Industrial Revolution. Robin Murray states that mass production of Fordism, led by Henry Ford, served as a source for other production systems. Fordism is based upon four fundamental principles. These are standardization of the products; mechanization of the tasks; use of assembly lines instead of fixed workbenches; and scientific management concept. This system was carried from sector to sector throughout the 20th century from processed food to furniture, clothing and even shipbuilding after the Second World War. These structurings and the culture that they brought are generally considered as an integral part of industrialization and modernization (Murray, 1995: 46-49).

Nurçay Türkoğlu asserts that modernization is a concept which emphasizes society/societies are not in a static structure and which involves acceleration of historical development processes and reaching the levels of developed countries for developing countries as a concept that is studied with social and cultural change. When this condition is examined from the viewpoint of developed countries, it is a process that requires dealing with political, economic and cultural problems, which are caused by novelties of the age in the extent of their societies and other societies, and at the same time, coping with rapidly changing developments (Türkoğlu, 2004: 113-114).

Postmodernism emerges in capitalism in the period where the form of production changes. A transition from Fordism to Post-Fordism occurred in production during this period. Therefore, Fordism represents the modernization period whereas Post-Fordism represents the postmodern period. The focus of the employment shifts again with Post-Fordism. Stuart Hall states that the production deviated from chemical-based and electronic-based technologies to information-based technologies with the Second Industrial Revolution in which American, German and Japanese economies took leading position since the beginning of this century. Hall asserts that such change in production ended modernism that prevailed over cultural imagination from art to architecture in the first decade of the twentieth century, and laid the grounds for postmodernism in cultural terms (Hall, 1995: 107, 110-111).

On the other hand, Roland Robertson argues that globalization cannot be considered as a direct outcome of the modernization or equated with it, and he adds that the use of the word globalization gained wide prevalence after the second half of the 1980s. The concept of globalization refers to both the shrinking of the world and the strengthening of world consciousness as a whole. Processes and actions, which are referred today by the concept of globalization, have been going on for several centuries with some interruptions. However, the main focal point of globalization argument is on relatively close periods. When globalization is associated with the outer lines and nature of modernism, it explicitly refers to the recent changes (Robertson, 1999: 21-22, 24).

By reviewing the literature, this study will answer the question whether globalization is a process which was actualized as a natural outcome of economic, social and technological developments or a new version of imperialist powers' imposing their own values and systems.

Cultural Imperialism and Media

Jorge Larrain states that individuals' group connections and features like religion, race, class, ethnic origin, gender and nationality are shared in the formation of personal identities. These features provide convenience for individuals in characterizing the subject and the identity notion of the subject. The idea of cultural identity came out of here. In modern period, the concept of national identity had the most important effect on the formation of subjects. Cultural identity can be studied with two different viewpoints as essentialist and historical. According to essentialist perception, which is a closed and narrow one, cultural

identity is evaluated as a completed phenomenon and formed essence. However; according to essentialist perception, which is an open and comprehensive perception, cultural identity is regarded as a phenomenon which is produced; which constantly is in this production process; which is never entirely completed; and which is open to development and change. In terms of historical perception, cultural identity is an issue of existence as well as an issue of formation. It belongs to the past as well as to the future. It is not absolute and constant. Like everything that is historical, it undergoes change and transformation. There is a place, time, history or early cultures from which cultural identities come (Larrain, 1995: 212, 217, 222). Cengiz Güleç purports that cultural identity is the feeling of historical/cultural identity (we) which is jointly experienced by all the individuals living within the borders of a certain region under the rule of national state with the creation of national culture. To him, nationalization process or the formation national identity can be examined in two levels: first one is the birth of national state and the second one is the predominance of national ideology. National ideology creates a common “we” phenomenon for the society on one hand, and maintains a common worldview around this on the other hand. National state serves as the tool for national ideology to manifest itself (Güleç, 1992: 20). According to Jan Assmann, identity is the transition of a person’s perception of himself/herself, which was formed unconsciously, to consciousness. To him, 1. Culture is formed from outward to inward. Each individual emerges to the extent of his/her participation in the interaction and communication within the group to which he/she belong and to the extent of his/her embracing the group’s perception of him/her. 2. Collective identity does not exist except for the individuals who establish and carry “us”. It is the product of only individual knowledge and conscious. Social identity depends on the participation in collective knowledge and memory which are gained by social belonging consciousness, speaking a common language or using a common symbolic system. Here, words and sentences are not important in contrast to the indicators called collectively shared culture such as common traditions, dances, clothing, eating-drinking, etc. (Assmann, 2001: 130-131).

By studying the concept of globalization as cultural imperialism, John Tomlinson states that all discourses on cultural imperialism that we come across can be interpreted as the arrangement of the global power which is a feature of “new times” and they replaced the distribution of global power which is known as imperialism that defined the modern period which continued up to 1960s (Tomlinson, 2007: 252-253). On media imperialism which is

an opinion developed in terms of cultural imperialism, Güliz Uluç asserts that it is defined as a condition emerging with the fact that ownership, structure, distribution and content of mass media are under the influence and control of interest groups which are situated in other countries. Uniformity in culture, which is embraced in the cultural imperialism viewpoint, inevitably changes deep cultural effects, religion, language, administrative practices, educational system and value judgments (Uluç, 2003: 114, 116).

In the implementations of developed countries towards underdeveloped or developing countries, it has become a problem to understand where the line of modernization and cultural imperialism begins and ends respectively. Nurçay Türkoğlu asserts that when the tendency of a certain administration or community to maintain economic, political, religious and demographical domination over communities with different origins is presented as a universal improvement project like “modernization”, it can be embraced by both those who dominate and those who are dominated. Türkoğlu says that definition of “cultural imperialism” depends on some variables. These are historical variables (transition from empires to republics), geographical variables (colonialism and independence wars) and instrumental variables (military, strategic and technological). Türkoğlu states that if cultural imperialism is accepted as the importation of daily use products of cultural values, which are forcibly imposed on dependent communities, along with the forms of behaviors required by these products, news, commercials, fashion, educational systems, administrative systems can be devious cultural dependence mechanisms and it will not be possible to escape from those mechanisms since global networks will completely encircle people. Today, colonization of time has been added to the colonization of geographical areas with ground sources and underground sources in previous times. Production of projects by computer technologies, internet networks and satellites show that not only today but also future is planned to be taken under control (Türkoğlu, 2004: 195,198-199). Hıfzı Topuz purports that although developing countries are subject to a dense information flow from abroad today, this incoming information does not contain knowledge, and in contrast, it only contains propaganda. The development of the industry of developed countries which economically extend to other countries is especially directly related with the development of communication industry and the spreading of this industry to the world. In this regard, the United States constitutes a typical example. Topuz says that American business circles, which extend to foreign markets, start shifting their investments to these countries when

they find raw materials, cheap labor, tolerant governments and tax deductions in foreign countries (Topuz, 1984: 4, 6).

Globalization and Alienation

Serge Latouche states that the third world countries, which gained their independence with the end of the colonialism after the Second World War, are not free in real terms and they are dependent on the West due to the new tools of the West which are based on symbolic powers, science, technique, economy and their development values that they gained in the historical process. To him, the superiority of Europe comes from its activity in the form of organization that mobilizes technique from military discipline to propaganda for maintaining dominance. Western system is perceived as a whole. Scientific worldview, technical engineering and religious ceremonies are part of this entirety. Third world countries were obliged to identify themselves with the West and embrace its values and lifestyles in order not to become a slave of the West. The West disorganized the economic structures of all regions by reaching the farthest points in their colonization activities. All communities participated in the global division of labor by being affected from the operation of the world market. Market demands, competitive environment, open violence, development of communication technologies and establishment of global communication network caused production and consumption models to disappear and a single world market, which unifies the entire world, to prevail. Western lifestyle affected the cultural texture of the third world countries and created a market by news, series, films, books, music and similar cultural products that are evaluated with the viewpoint of the West (Latouche, 1993: 30-35). The fact that the products, which do not accord with the cultural texture, are featured in the media with over-commercialization, mass production, uniform production and artificial production of cultural products by global companies creates a negative effect on the new generation and on the mass having a low educational level. Mass culture, which has become a form of expression in the media for the postmodern period since the 1980s, is iconological and based on identification and owning. It is a utopian model which is integrated with justice in a fable-like optimism and in which the good guys will always win and the bad guys will be punished. Truth is categorical and contextual in the media culture. It requires presuppositions that contain all specified definitions of culture. It was envisaged, premeditated and studied regarding whom and how it will affect. It changed into an entirely different structure than the existent truth which maintains invariance by gaining continuance

in the conscious of the media individual with the discord between the presented truth and the existent truth and the fact that framed form of the truth gradually replaced the truth (Kahraman 2002: 191-193). Halil Nalçaoğlu states that media increases its influence on the individual/society by gradually extending its sphere of influence and penetrating into almost every field and moment of human life. Today, media, especially television, has been transformed into a tool for power that reproduces, shapes, manages, controls and even judges and executes (Nalçaoğlu, 2003: 44). On this matter, Herbert Schiller says that media which operates according to the commercial rules is an industry which is dependent on the ads for its income (Schiller, 1993: 40). Accordingly, media serves to provide support for the economic elites, government and other elites who hold the power/authority in order to protect their private interests. Although it is said that the media is independent and undertakes the responsibility to announce what is going on in the world according to democratic doctrine, it is against the nature of the job to claim that the choices of media executives in relation with the news are based on unbiased and objective criteria (Chomsky and Herman, 1999: 9-20). Robert W. McChesney states that the system, which politically, socially and economically dominates the age we are in, is a structuring that incorporates globalization, global countries that combine market and production throughout the world, trade that is based on the product and service, capital flow, circulation of money and financial resources. He asserts that decision making processes, which belong to society, are isolated from the society and operated under the authority of the market. Thus, global capitalism develops with the support of global media and communication. The USA and the global companies which it establishes are dominant powers in the global media and communication sector (McChesney, 2003: 7-9). Consequently, although Western countries, which embrace free market and free flow doctrine, claim that global communication flow will contribute to modernization and development, it is observed that the current condition has progressed completely different from what has been claimed. According to Uluç, if cultural imperialism refers to the consumption of the cultural products, which are produced by a certain cultural group, by another cultural group, this is called cultural imperialism since this application creates a different type of colonialism which makes South American countries and the third world countries indebted to and dependent on the old imperial powers (Uluç, 2003: 105, 111). Therefore this condition indicates that there are social, political and economic effects because there is unilaterality in the relation and intergroup inequality. Thus, the dependency, which is existent in terms of economy and politics among

the countries, develops by being supported by cultural imperialism. Modernization and less development take the form of a reproducing structure by feeding each other with interaction. For instance, since the third world countries have to buy mass media and their content, they continue being dependent and under influence in economic and cultural terms. Latouche states that the trade between two cultures must be balanced in the intercultural connection that is emerged by globalization; otherwise, the unilateral introduction of Western values like science, technique, economy, development and dominating nature will be the basis of deculturalization (Latouche, 1993: 73).

On this matter, Sadi Özdemir argues that globalization was put forward to extend and develop the relations among countries; to solve the polarizations based on ideological differences; to better understand different social cultures, beliefs and expectations, but in practice, it was understood that it meant Americanization/Westernization with all its components from economic model to cultural identity and religious extent. Among the formation of the judgments that put negativities on globalization are political, economic, social and cultural extents. Media is the place where these are discussed, transferred and spread. According to Özdemir, the USA/West continues its superiority in the production of media content and in world's conventional weapon market. It is observed that despite the integration claims which are set forth by globalization, it serves the purpose of the disintegration of the world, and particularly, disintegration of the countries which are composed of different ethnic groups, and causes the emergence of small states. Since globalization embraces an approach towards enforcing American/Western values and a cultural uniformity, it creates reaction in the countries having a different cultural identity and brings along ethnic, religious and cultural separations (Özdemir, 1998: 18). Therefore, globalization, which is presented as the further integration of the world in political, economic, social and cultural areas where distance lost its meaning, is a development that shows a dialectic feature and contains opposite tendencies. Global capital develops by hanging on to the market into which it will enter with the cooperation of economic elites via local capitals. (Uluç, 2003: 174, 211-212). Thus, global capital takes root in the local market by incorporating local capitals over time. Accordingly, it appropriates the local and the original; produces it in mass and markets it to the global market.

Conclusion

Globalization is the spreading of capitalism in global terms. Markets have been taken under the monopolies of the global capitals with globalization. Cultural homogenization is tried to be created over the world via globalization. Culture is popularized as having American origins; it becomes artificial and inert by bringing uniformity in every known field. This condition particularly brings negative effects on the third world countries. That is because these countries, which do not participate in the production and which consume things just for the fact that those are presented on the cheap, undergo firstly cultural imperialism and then economic imperialism. Multicultural companies hold on to local cultures, popularize their original cultural values, and add these values to their markets. Thus, globalization is a different application of imperialism in this regard.

In the globalization process, to become same with the other requires uniformity, alienation with oneself and one's own culture. When one's own values are offered to the service of global market, they become artificial, uniform and lose their originality. Therefore, culture industry creates cultural obesity by bombarding masses with consumption-oriented, emptied, artificial cultural products, and further creates masses who do not think and question; who do not show their democratic reactions; and who are easily controlled.

Moreover, these products, which are produced on the cheap and offered to the world market by the global capital, negatively affect the production of the third world countries, and these countries not only serve to the global capital as cheap labor due to the fact that production is shifted to these countries but also their energy and natural resources are used by these countries along with the fact that they become the market of the global capital. Additionally, their water, soil and natural resources of life undergo various damages as a result of the environmental population. On the other hand, global capital transfers the profit, which it gains from there, to its country.

Consequently; regarding the concept of globalization, although it can be stated that it is a process that emerges as the natural outcome of economic, social and technological developments, it can be ultimately put forward that it serves the purpose of imperialist powers' enforcing their values and systems.

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