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CONSTRUCTION OF ORIENTALIST DISCOURSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A STUDY ON USERS COMMENTS ON THE MAGNIFICENT CENTURY TV SERIES'S FACEBOOK PAGE

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ABSTRACT

Defined as the perception of the East through a "discourse" produced by Western cultural institutions, orientalism is a "system of imaginary ideologies". The orientalist discourse in Western media texts essentially includes the claim of the universality of Western value judgments. Unlike traditional media, social media is one of the most effective ideological tools of today which contents can reach large audiences in a short time. In order to understand how the orientalist discourse is constructed in social media, users comments of the Magnificent Century TV Series's Facebook page was taken as a sample in the study using discourse analysis. Since the construction of orientalist discourse on social media platforms depends on the content of media texts and user comments, it requires a two-way interpretation. For this reason, the study evaluated the limitations of orientalist discourse in user comments about the Series in the context of the content-target audience relationship on social media. As a result of the research, it was determined that users mostly developed a discourse that was compatible with the narrative in the Series, while sometimes they developed a controversial/dissident discourse by bringing a different interpretation to it.

Keywords: Orientalism, Social Media, Television Series, Magnificent Century

Jel Codes: L82, L86, M30, N30.

SOSYAL MEDYADA ORYANTALİST SÖYLEMİN İNŞASI: MUHTEŞEM YÜZYIL DİZİSİ'NİN FACEBOOK SAYFASINDAKİ KULLANICI YORUMLARI ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME

ÖZ

Doğu'nun Batılı kültürel kurumların ürettiği bir "söylem" aracılığıyla algılanması olarak tanımlanan oryantalizm bir "hayali ideolojiler sistemi"dir. Batılı medya metinlerindeki oryantalist söylem, esas olarak Batılı değer yargılarının evrenselliği iddiasını içerir. Geleneksel medyadan farklı olarak içeriklerin kısa zamanda geniş kitlelere ulaşabildiği sosyal medya günümüzün en etkili ideolojik aygıtlarından biridir. Oryantalist söylemin sosyal medyada nasıl inşa edildiğini anlayabilmek amacıyla söylem analizinin kullanıldığı çalışmada Muhteşem Yüzyıl dizisinin Facebook sayfasındaki kullanıcı yorumları örneklem olarak alınmıştır. Sosyal medyada oryantalist söylemin inşası medya metinlerinin içeriğine ve kullanıcı yorumlarına bağlı olduğundan iki yönlü bir yorumlama gerektirmektedir. Bu nedenle çalışmada dizi ile ilgili kullanıcı yorumlarındaki oryantalist söylemin sınırlılığı sosyal medyadaki içerik-hedef kitle ilişkisi bağlamında değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda kullanıcıların çoğunlukla dizideki anlatıyla uyumlu bir söylem geliştirirken bazen ona farklı bir yorum getirerek tartışmalı/muhalif bir söylem geliştirdikleri tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Oryantalizm, Sosyal Medya, Televizyon Dizileri, Muhteşem Yüzyıl

Jel Kodları: L82, L86, M30, N30.

489

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

CONSTRUCTION OF ORIENTALIST DISCOURSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A STUDY ON USERS
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HAKAN SAĞLAM, FİGEN YAVUZ

NUSBD

INTRODUCTION

After the Industrial Revolution, the West began to dominate the world by following an expansionist path in order to seize important raw materials and established a hegemonic relationship. In this context, orientalism can also be accepted as a tool of colonialism (Uluç, 2009: 179). Orientalism offers a critical perspective on how the West perceives and represents the East. This constitutes an important area of criticism for the development of cultural interactions and mutual understanding. Orientalism studies provide an depth inquiry into how cultural perceptions are shaped, how power dynamics operate, and what the social effects of these perceptions are.

According to Morley and Robins (2002), the intense relationship established with other cultures as a result of imperialist expansion has been one of the driving forces that defines the modern West. In its quest to conquer the world, the West has defined its own uniqueness by looking at the "Other", the "non-European". This division was set in place in the symbolic geography that pits the West against the East. The television screen, where the "Other" is represented for the West, operates on several different levels. If bringing the "Others" to the screen is to present them to the West as representations, their images are eliminated, and thus only certain images reach the West. At the same time, conceptually, the screen is not only a medium where images are projected by the West, but also a screen where fears, dreams, and desires regarding the East.

The media, which plays an active role in the reproduction of the dominant ideology, values and worldview through the discourses it produces and mediates, is one of the most effective ideological instruments on society. The media, which mediates the adoption of dominant discourses on a certain ideology, not only increased its power of influence on the masses, but also become much more complex, especially with the spread of social media.

On social media platforms, individuals exist not only as users but also as representatives. While the content created by individuals in new media develops within the framework of their own values, the flow of global information allows users to compare their values with other cultures. Reception theories suggest that comments made on social media are not only influenced by the visual and dramatic content of the series, but are also shaped by the cultural background and social context of the viewers. According to Hall (1999) messages transmitted from media centers with a certain ideology in mind can sometimes be interpreted in a preferred way, sometimes in a controversial and oppositional way.

Before globalization, the production of television series was limited to more national or local settings. Technological advances, economic pressure and liberalization policies have transformed this medium from a local to an international scale. The rise of social media and the globalization of television series are parallel developments in time. The fact that English has become the common language of social media all over the world has played a key role in promoting and discussing media texts internationally. The interactive nature of social media, which plays an important role in bringing TV series with national characteristics to global platforms, not only increases cultural interaction, but also provides important data in terms of understanding the perspectives of people from different cultures. Unlike traditional media, user comments on social media provide valuable data for social scientists who want to conduct research. In order to understand how the orientalist discourse is constructed in social media, users comments of the Magnificent Century TV Series's Facebook page was taken as a sample in the study using discourse analysis.

1. Conceptual Framework

1.1 Conceptual Framework of Orientalism and Debates on Orientalism

Etymology of "orient" and "occident" are originally based on the Latin words "oriens", meaning sunrise, and "occidens", meaning west of the sun. In this sense, orient and occident do not refer to a specific and fixed place, they are relative and dependent on the observer's stance (Sim, 1999: 328-329).

In terms of cultural studies, orientalism is somewhat ambiguous. The most notable contemporary usage is attributed to Edward Said, whose book "Orientalism" marked the

beginning of the debates. The objectification of the East, constitutes the main approach of orientalism. The East, which is standardized is detached from its own reality and given a representative identity. The basis of orientalism, which can be dealt with as a scientific field of study, an ideology or a form of discourse, is based on the "us-them" dualism in the most general terms.

According to Malek, although traditional orientalism was established by the Council of Vienna in 1245, the real impetus for oriental studies in terms of the Arab world and the Far East comes from the colonial period which roughly corresponding to the middle and second half of the 19th century (Demirer, 2003). In the 19th century, orientalism inherits existing prejudices from the past and gives them a modern, scientific and secular form and understanding. The East ceases to be a place and becomes an imperialist political field on which research is conducted (Çırakman, 2002: 191).

Turner (1994) states that ''the geography'' that is carefully emphasized in the orientalist studies of Westerners and is constantly called ''East'' is mostly the Middle Eastern countries. Edward Said states that the idea of the West essentially gains meaning by being opposed to Islam and the Arab world. Another orientalist, Maxime Rodinson, reduces Islam to ideology. He says that Islam is original because it has an ideological form. According to Rodinson, the Arabs needed a state and an ideology in order to be successful in their struggle against the Byzantine and Persian Empires. Islam emerged as a result of such a need. Stating that the value of Islam is determined by the contribution it makes to the Arab identity, Rodinson argues that Islam has a static and dependent nature. Von Grunebaum also voices a similar view. Grunebaum states that Islam is static, that it interprets itself in this way, and that this can be understood from its inability to easily adapt to the world. He argues that Muslims perceive change as a bad situation and interpret development as a regression, in other words, as a return to the original state of Islam (Pruett, 1989: 66-68).

According to Said, the East was established as a group of values, not according to the realities of the age, and this is a perfect example of the textual and schematic attitude. Orientalism is the distribution of geopolitical consciousness into aesthetics, economics, sociology, history and philology texts. It is processed and refined with tools such as research-based discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape description and sociological description more than just a basic geographical distinction. In his work published in 1978, Said transformed orientalism, which is the name of an academic discipline, into a concept which own unique powers with a political and ideological content. Said deals with orientalism through a discourse analysis and uses different methodological choices. By using Marxist ideological tradition he interacts the West's efforts to establish military, ideological, political, sociological, imaginary and scientific domination over the East with concepts such as power, hegemony, discourse and text (Eren, 2013).

The East-West dichotomy is inevitably a naming process. It can be thought that the distinction is based on a subjective basis and serves the material and spiritual needs of the West. At this point, the West was curious about those who were unlike itself and alienated the East (Mahçupyan, 1998: 42). Accordingly, the West claims that none of the good characteristics are found in the East, on the contrary, all the bad characteristics that it does not have are accumulated in the East. Orientalist discourse attributes characteristics such as emotionality, irrationality, ugliness, lust, and barbarism to the East, in contrast to the qualities such as rationality, progressiveness, scientificity, virtuousness, aesthetics, and democracy that the West is assumed to have (Bulut, 2004: 13).

Said evaluates orientalism under two headings, explicitly and implicitly (Kalmar, 2012: 45). The fact that implicit orientalism is static ensures that it has a certain style and consistency. Aggressive approaches towards the East are softened and hidden with certain expressions. These expressions mostly contain cliché approaches. It has a sexist structure and masculine perspective because it turns the East into a fantasy area. There is a mythical power that the salvation of the miserable East lies in the West. The savior-saved distinction also causes an emotional approach towards the East. However, despite the exoticness and strangeness of the East, its obscurity also turns it into an attractive enemy (Balcı, 2013: 54-60). While discussing

491

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

the problems created by implicit orientalism, it is seen that fantasy and desire, as unconscious processes, play a fundamental role. If we refer to the relationship between the colonizer and the exploited in the context of colonialism as an economic, political and cultural phenomenon, a similar unconscious process can be mentioned. Of course, the relationship between the colonizer and the exploited cannot be reduced to just psychological or individual motivations. This relationship, which can be understood by referring to a historically specific structure and a collective process, can be explained by a series of discursive effects, including orientalist fantasies (Yeğenoğlu, 1998: 2).

The East, defined as the other, actually has multiple layers, and in each layer, orientalist discourses woven with different images are encountered. Chow (1995) discusses how self-orientalism uses the West's orientalist images to shape its own representations of the East, and states that this process contributes to Eastern societies constructing their own otherness. Self-orientalism is the process by which Eastern societies internalize the identity of the "other" in the eyes of the West, in accordance with the orientalist discourses of the West, and shape their own cultural identities according to Western stereotypes. The Easterner, who tries to define himself as the "other" by approving the reality of the West's transmissions about the East, confirms all the positive or negative stereotypes. In short, the Easterner tends to convey views about the East from a Western perspective, like a Westerner. The fact that the East reproduces these images to confirm the generalized and stereotypical judgments of the West shows how the East has adopted these discourses and made them part of its own identity.

Safa (2023) states that there are many Eastern geographies, and that there are different Easts belonging to Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. The East and the West need to be restructured and evaluated by breaking them into pieces through an epistemological and ontological distinction. Bakic-Hayden (2014) has opened the West's approach to Eastern Europe and the East beyond academic discussion. While the West is accepted as the superior, advanced and representative of the modern world compared to the East, it is seen that the perception of the East as backward, primitive and aggressive is being discussed again. There are Easts that are continuous and stratified within each other. Bakic-Hayden (2014) reorders the discourse of the Balkans and India according to Western Europe. Eastern Europe is generally associated with "backwardness", the Balkans with "violence", India with "idealism" or "mysticism".

Lewis (2007) criticizes Edward Said's work "Orientalism". According to Lewis, Said's East is the Middle East. In other words, he means the Arab world. Said detaches Arab studies from their context. He shapes the history and geography of orientalism in his own way. According to Lewis, two different civilizations can exist at the same time in human history. In a world where countries with similar power are present, people from different civilizations learn to live together. In cases where a great civilization is militarily superior to a weak civilization, the cultural balance is disrupted. The defeated civilization tends to imitate the lifestyle and behavior patterns of the dominant civilization. In such an environment, some thinkers of the dominant civilization may tend to research the culture of the defeated civilization. Lewis emphasizes that research into Europe's colonies until recent times should be evaluated from this perspective. Therefore, the colonial state is not limited to military, political and economic aspects, but also spreads to the intellectual and cultural sphere (Nyang and Rabbo, 1989: 203-204).

Orientalist studies changed form after World War II when the USA took an active role in the new world order. According to the clash of civilizations thesis brought to the agenda by Bernard Lewis and popularized by Samuel Huntington, conflicts in the post-Cold War world will be culturally rather than ideologically. Therefore, political conflicts will also be experienced between societies belonging to different civilizations. This understanding, which reformulates the world according to conflict theses, also brings with it discussions. Orientalism, which emerged with religious reflexes, takes on different forms in the process.

Although Orientalism is thought of as a Western-centered understanding of the East, there are countries that are called the West and Eastern geographies that are created and dominated by countries outside the West. This creation is based on the relationship between power and knowledge. In this relationship order, the power that creates an other for itself can obtain the knowledge of the other in political, economic or cultural terms in this way.

492

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

CONSTRUCTION OF ORIENTALIST DISCOURSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A STUDY ON USERS
COMMENTS ON THE MAGNIFICENT CENTURY TV SERIES'S FACEBOOK PAGE
HAKAN SAĞLAM, FİGEN YAVUZ

NUSBD

1.2. Orientalist Representations in the Traditional and Social Media

The media creates a social map that determines the boundaries of society and decides who "We" and "The other" will be. The media presents some images for the outside world and eliminates some of the images to create meaning schemes in the mind. Since reality is served by narrating in the media, the reality of the media and the way it is represented needs to be questioned. The media allows viewers and readers to create their own symbolic realities.

Ethnocentric and racist representations in mass media, literature and cinema have perpetuated dominant images of the "other" in academic discourses for centuries. In addition to exotic difference, derogatory discourses that emphasize the intellectual, moral and biological inferiority of the "other" have also had an impact on society and led to the formation of widely shared social representations. The continuity of this socio-cultural tradition of negative images of the "other" partly explains the persistence of dominant stereotypes in contemporary discourse, including media and cinema.

The language of academic literature and newspapers created out of it, a kind of monster, a titan who wanted to fight with the West (Arsan, 2007: 48). According to Said (2020) official media is full of negative images of Islam and most contemporary representations of Islam are designed to show how inferior Islam is to the West. There have been several serious recent assessments of stereotypes of Islam in the media, policy journals, and academia. One of these is by Zachary Karabell. Karabell argues that since the end of the Cold War, there has been an overemphasis on "fundamentalist" Islam. Karabell points out that the respected, popular ABC news program 20/20 devoted several episodes to Islam as a jihadist religion that would lead people to become warriors of God, and that Frontline funded an investigation into the outreach of "Muslim terrorists" around the world. In addition to creating a combination of hostility and reductionism in all of these misrepresentations, there is exaggeration of Muslim extremists in the Muslim World. This Islamic coverage seen in universities, government, and media are all interconnected, and it appears to be more widespread, more credible, and more influential than any other news braids or commentary. The success of these news braids can be explained by the political influence of the people and institutions that produce them, rather than the accuracy and precision of the news.

After World War II, America's global dominance in every field had an impact in the cultural field. Hollywood uses most famous stars in films produced in an orientalist style, and in these films, Hollywood stars fight against Arabs and defeat them. The binary oppositions between the Westerner and the Easterner appear in the cinema and in this cinematic representations the Easterner is morally inferior. For example while the Westerner is governed by democracy, the Oriental is governed by autocracy because it is identified with tribal culture. With all these, it is seen once again that the Westerner defines what about himself not being an Oriental.

Although the films vary in terms of their subjects, they all depict the East as a geography full of mystical, exotic and surprises where anything can happen at any moment. For example David Lean's film Lawrence of Arabia has the theme of an ancient desert, because in the orientalist context, the East is identical with the desert. The identification of the East with the desert is both a myth and an ideological practice of "othering". The depiction of the East as communities consisting of radical groups and military leaders constantly fighting for power over unimportant things aims to mask the visibility of the life that flows in the East. With this approach, the orientalist understanding sends the message "there is no life here" to the mind of the audience. Where there is no life, there is no politics. For this reason, a relatively objective political drama specific to the East is generally not produced. In Hollywood's perspective, the East has been presented as the place of tribal wars in the past; this area considered a pre-political area at the same time (Ay, 2015: 158).

Caricatures and illustrations are also used in the reproduction of the orientalist and self-orientalist mentality. The caricatures published on Twitter by Charlie Hebdo Magazine between 2009 and 2018 portrayed Muslims as with headscarves, stubble, and black skin based on Islamophobia in the orientalist discourse. In the research conducted on the magazine's Instagram account, it was determined that Eastern Muslim women were produced with the

493

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

representation of ugly, unhappy, veiled and outdated Muslim women (Şimşek, Ebeköy and Adıgüzel, 2025: 363-364).

In the 21st century, which is described as the age of information and technology, advances in information technologies are reorganizing social, economic and cultural life through interpersonal communication (Öztürk and Talas, 2015: 102). According to Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2007) "social media" is a collection of internet-based systems where participants communicate with other users in a system that is open to the public or semi-open, subject to certain restrictions, can create personal access lists and follow posts through the connections they have established. Social media includes different areas or types such as social networking platforms, blogs, wikipedias, podcasts, forums, virtual game environments and microblogs (Eldeniz, 2010: 27).

It can be seen that research on the construction of orientalism on social media in Turkey focuses on self-orientalism. Karabela (2022) investigated self-orientalism on social media in Turkey in his master thesis and examined the posts of Twitter and Instagram users in response to economic, political, religious, cultural, educational, technical and legal events that took place in 2019. Karabela (2022) stated that 21.2% of every 100 posts shared on social media contained self-orientalist discourses, and that users who producing self-orientalist opinion about the West was superior to Turkey.

In their research examining the comments on YouTube travel channels's videos made by users Kılıç, Kaya and Saç (2024) found that comments had the potential to be carriers of the self-orientalist view. Determining that users draw attention to the positive aspects of the West shown in the videos and compare Turkey with the countries in the videos; Kılıç, Kaya, and Saç (2024) found that Western countries were being idealized and users tended to evaluate their own countries negatively. Kılıç, Kaya and Saç (2024) argued that increasing in the sense of admiration of Western countries and stereotypes about Western countries can be reinforced through self-orientalist comments in the videos. They underlined that since the algorithms of social media platforms prioritize what is in demand, a self-orientalist comments would be seen by more people, it can lead to the spread of self-orientalist attitudes.

Çankal (2021) investigated self-orientalist discourses on the Turkovac vaccine on social media. She found that users tended to accept the claim that the East's vaccine against the epidemic is not important because users thought that the pioneer of scientific developments is West and the East would not or will not have the capacity to follow modern scientific developments as much as the West. Çankal (2021) stated that it is possible to evaluate these discourses as concrete indicators of orientalism's construction of an image of the East as backward in science and deprived of the ability to improve itself.

In her study titled "East within East: Representation of Syrian identity on Twitter as a form of self-orientalism", Sarıbek (2021) reached the following conclusions: The anti-refugee tweets of users are put into circulation and they deepen the holistic perspective of the dominant discourse. This situation makes the process of othering which can be called self-orientalism stable and permanent. When the whole research is evaluated, in only 16% of the tweets shared Syrian refugees were represented as individuals instead of representing as a victim or a threat. Features such as "oppression", "backwardness", "dehumanization", "economic threat" have become features identified with the concept of refugees. Syrians who are seen as representatives of nothingness in digital discourse, are rarely represented at an individual level (Sarıbek, 2021: 141).

2. Purpose, Sample, Method and Limitations of the Research

Social networks is defined as an environment where the user identifies himself on the internet from different cultural backgrounds in different parts of the world, and where users express their feelings and thoughts through virtual symbols. Social media has eliminated borders and increased people's interaction in every field including TV productions. Social media is being rapidly adopted as it enables people to dialogue with each others and make their voices heard to larger audiences. The study aims to contribute to the literature from the perspective of the social media users, by approaching the construction of the orientalist discourse in the

494

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

Magnificent Century TV Series, which attracted great attention and caused discussions in the context of orientalism when it was broadcast.

Magnificent Century, a Turkish historical drama and historical fiction television series, broadcast its first episode on January 5, 2011 and concluded with its 139th episode broadcast on June 11, 2014. The plot of the Series is built around Suleiman the Magnificent and Hurrem Sultan, who left her mark on the history of the Ottoman Empire. The Series begins with Suleiman, who was still a prince, ascending to the throne upon the death of his father, Yavuz Sultan Selim, and falling in love with Hurrem Sultan, who was brought to the harem as a concubine. Valide Sultan, Pargalı İbrahim Pasha and Prince Mustafa's mother, Mahidevran Sultan, become the biggest obstacle to the power game that Hurrem Sultan started for revenge. Suleiman the Magnificent, torn between his love and his state, and Hurrem Sultan, who entered into a power struggle for her sons, were reflected on the screens (Wikipedia, 2024).

Trying to understand how orientalist discourse is constructed in user comments on social media, the final episode of the Magnificent Century TV Series, which was broadcasted with English subtitles on its Facebook page on April 9, 2020, was taken as a sample in the study.

The research sought answers to the following questions:

Are there any orientalist discourses in the user comments about the Series? If so, what is the intensity of these discourses? How and by whom are orientalist discourses constructed?

Qualitative research method was preferred to find answers to these research questions. Content analysis and critical discourse analysis were used as research techniques. The study focuses on critical discourse analysis and focuses on the community to which the sentences produced by speakers are directed. The purpose of using critical discourse analysis is to determine the social ideologies reflected in the discourse of the selected media texts (those who produce the media texts) or the dialogues.

Critical discourse analysis is based on Van Djik's theory. According to Van Djik (2001), power dynamics are an important part of critical analysis. Power, which is considered a central concept in critical studies, is seen as the social power of organizations or groups. If members of society or groups can exert pressure on other groups by controlling their actions and thoughts, whether more or less, they are considered to have power. Van Djik, who focuses on society, discourse and cognition, defines "context" as subjective reflections related to the characteristics of the participants. The bridge that establishes the relationship between social structures and discourse is the context model. It controls individuals' meaning of the social environment and their discourse production. Context models do not only focus on individuals, but also include the reflections of other participants. It is very important for participants to understand each other or to make sense of their actions. Social context is an effective method to analyze which social groups the text is related to and what characteristics these groups have. In addition, thanks to social context analysis, while the social structure and norms in which the text was produced are examined, information is also obtained about the values, beliefs and cultural structure of the society.

The first of the basic limitations of the study is that there are few similar topics that have been previously addressed in the literature on the subject. Since studies addressing orientalism on social media in Turkey are mostly based on self-orientalism, the lack of studies directly related to the research topic does not make it possible to compare the data with previous studies. The second limitation of the study is based on the necessity of narrowing the sample to include only one episode of the series. The intensive reader comments developed for the episodes of the examined Series required the consideration of a single episode due to the scope.

3. Findings

The final episode of the Magnificent Century TV Series, which published with English subtitles on the its Facebook page on April 9, 2020 was taken as a sample in the study and user comments were categorized according to their content and subjected to discourse analysis.

CONSTRUCTION OF ORIENTALIST DISCOURSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A STUDY ON USERS
COMMENTS ON THE MAGNIFICENT CENTURY TV SERIES'S FACEBOOK PAGE
HAKAN SAĞLAM, FİGEN YAVUZ

NUSBD

Edward Said's theory on orientalism were taken as reference in both content and discourse analysis.

3.1. Content Analysis Findings

In order to determine the weight of the categories in the study, the data were reduced to numbers first and the percentage rates of the numerical data were calculated. Then, in the study where the comments made about the sample section were categorized with a coding system, the weight of the discourses that can be evaluated within the framework of orientalism among all comments were tried to be determined.

Table 1: The General Characteristics of the Comments on the Sample Episode That Can Be Evaluated Within the Framework of Orientalism

Comments That Can Not Be Evaluated Within the Framework of Orientalism		Comments That Can Be Evaluated Within the Framework of Orientalism	
Number	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**
421	89	53	11

When the sample section was examined, 474 user comments containing evaluations about the Series were detected, and it was seen that 53 of them could be analyzed within the framework of theories on orientalism. Therefore, in the sample, user comments that can be analyzed within the framework of orientalism constitute 11% of the total.

3.2. Discourse Analysis Findings

In the research, which aims to reveal the ideological and semantic structure of the discourse by examining the sentence and word structures of the comments, the discourse relationship and contextual structure of the comments with each other are also revealed in accordance with the critical discourse analysis method.

Judicial sampling method was applied in selecting the comments to be applied to discourse analysis. In this method, the sample is divided into clusters in accordance with the researcher's purpose and the texts that are thought to be most suitable for the research are selected from these clusters for analysis (Şahin, 2011: 125).

The categorization of the findings as "negation and devaluation", "degradation and distortion" and "romanticization" includes the evaluation of reader comments based on Edward Said's theory on orientalism. If Said's assumptions are summarized, there are systematic differences between the West and the East: The West is defined as rational, progressive and developed while the East is irrational, static and passive. The Easterner, who is associated with ruthlessness, is labeled as a barbarian who needs to be controlled because he is scary. The Easterner, represented as a character who likes to show off, both hates and admires the West. The Easterner, who is described as an indicator of helplessness, is also depicted as a lustful person: The Easterner, whose individuality has not developed, cannot act with his logic because he is under the control of his emotions.

3.2.1. Discourses Containing Negation and Devaluation

Twenty of the user comments (38% of the total comments) that could be associated with orientalism were evaluated under the negation-devaluation category. Comments in this category, it is seen that users display a derogatory and judgmental attitude towards the characters in the Series, especially Sultan Suleiman, with expressions that can sometimes be considered as hate speech.

Table 2: Discourses Containing Negation and Devaluation

User name	Comments
Evniki Xandrea	There's a time for everything... Even rulers, kings and empires must come to an end. What I don't get is why have a harem with hundreds of concubines, the power struggle, the schemes, dozens of sons born to a dynasty only to have the heir commit fratricide.
Manpreet Kaur	From my point of view Suleiman wasn't successful as he led the end of his empire. He wasn't able to handle his anger. Its only entertainment not good history.
Elakshi Singhh	The end of Suleiman they are showing.. Disrespect but.. He was actually a great warrior

496

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

	of his time.. Though no one can be untouched with the politics cruel decisions.
Samita Mishra	Love or possession? How sultan could be such blind to believe only on one woman and destroy his own family?
Bastie Chow	I conclude that only power have a Sultan no love for woman. For Sultan Suleiman woman is only a puppet. Sad to you Sultan Suleiman.
Erkan Ocakcı	Destiny showed Sultan Suleiman to kill your child because of Russian wicked wife. God, doesn't put you heaven in the afterlife. You are a drunken emperor. You must burn in hell.
Eileen Demirarslan	Its strange how they can wrap, slavery, plundering and pillage, death up in a white suit, and bring it into a fantasy that is enjoyable.
Samita Mishra	Blood thirsty dynasties and rulers. Killing their own sons and brothers. Such satanik people.
Pola Lam	Welcome to hell cruel Sultan Sulaiman.
Meraluna Guzon	Selim is greedy. They kill his brother and his 4 sons without mercy.
Ijaz Ijaz	Sultan Suleiman destroyed the future of Ottoman when killed Prince Mustafa.
Baharul Islam Shah	Hate Suleiman because he is bad king the Ottoman Empire.
Bally Singh	It would have been nice to know how the glorious Ottoman Empire ended. Nothing is permanent. The Turkish grandeur of the empire entered India by the mughals.
Ash Chan	The start of the decline of the Ottoman Empire. Selim is useless and his cunning wife will now rule.
Umme Hani Mukta	He was unjust to his family, his first wife. In Islam one can remarry if he can treat equally all his wives. But he was biased.. Hate this..
Sarah Tayag	Selim! How dare you... Killer! Shame on you! Wait for your karma... Later your sons and traitor will kill you.
Sarah Tayag	Selim will die crazy without wine.
Sarah Tayag	This series showed how blood to blood lost for the throne.
Rajeswari Kumaresan	I hate Selim so badly he is wicked and a looser.
Tulika Roy Sarkar	What a pity. After such a strong ruler such a malicious person like Selim would sit on a throne. Disgusting Ottaman Empire the whole dynasty people. Really a great misfortune full of traitors and a witch like Selim and Nurbano.

As seen in Table-2, the person who is the target of the commentators' derogatory and judgmental statements towards the members of the dynasty in the Series is Sultan Suleiman. Commentators who describe the sultan who ordered the murder of his own son for the sake of political conflicts as ruthless and they sometimes develop a derogatory discourse towards the Ottoman State in the person of the Sultan, with expressions that amount to hatred. For example, the statements of the user named ''Samita Mishra'' towards the members of the Ottoman dynasty such as ''Blood thirsty dynasties and rulers. Killing their own sons and brothers. Such satanic people.'' present a repetition of the ''barbarian easterner'' cliché of orientalism, and again, the users named ''Evniki Xandrea'' and ''Eileen Demirarslan'' accuse the Ottoman dynasty of plunder and cruelty, and using slaves of war in the harem for their pleasures. Other characters targeted by user comments, apart from Sultan Suleiman, are Sultan Selim and Hurrem Sultan. These commentators, who make derogatory remarks towards Sultan Selim and Hurrem Sultan, who are held responsible for the murder of Prince Mustafa, they also identify the Ottoman Dynasty with cruelty and state that people were unjustly killed for political gains. When European history is examined carefully, much more brutal versions of the institutional dynastic massacres carried out by the Ottomans (such as the Byzantines) are frequently encountered. Therefore, the negation of a phenomenon that developed according to the conditions of that period by associating it with the cruelty of an Eastern dynasty, bears traces of the reductionist view of the orientalist perspective.

3.2.2. Discourses Containing Degradation and Distortion

Sixteen of the user comments (30% of the total comments) that could be associated with orientalism were evaluated under the category of degradation and distortion. In the comments in this category, users display a degradation attitude by considering the narrative of the Series within the framework of a historical interpretation of cruelty. Again, some commentators claim that there is Christmas celebrating as a holiday in the Series is a distorting approach based on orientalist clichés that feed from the West-East opposition.

497

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

Table 3: Discourses Containing Degradation and Distortion

User name	Comments
Lasib Lfm	After watching this historical series from episode 1 to 139, indeed, it's a survival of the fittest, to kill or to be killed.
Samantha Faith Aniano	They have to be cruel, kill each other just to gain power but in the end even you have everything you will die unhappy.
Chandra Sarkar Pakhi	This drama itself is a lesson of morality of human body, once a ferocious sultan at his last days needed stick to walk.
Marichu Crawford	Sad ending of his life as a the Great Ruler of the World, he came to this world empty, lived a lavish life style with the vast wealth and power, big palaces, and all the greatness in his blessed life, he left them all behind and returned to earth empty!
Kolli Vishnupriya Harish	Realised the fact that they just need some space for the grave, we come with nothing and we take nothing after death, in between politics, money, power, lust, ego, which made survival so hard for each one and they lived in fear with no peace.
DrAngela Wilson	It is typical human tragedy. Regardless glory, success, we suffer along human experience, then die painful. Our lifelong effort ends in vain.
Anita Mohammad Tamin	What a cruelty world! Is this what really happened those days?
Claire Alisha Altamirano	People were evil way before this periode and are still evil nowadays. Sad but true.
Anu Jose	The king was Muslim. Did Muslim celebrate christmas. Did they believe in Christ?
Sherry Reddy	How come muslims celebrate Christmas. Could anyone explain?
Nor-aya Blaim Dampas	Muslims in the past are celebrating Christmas?
Lucrezia Gallina	The Muslims celebrate Christmas?
Borhan Uddin	False subtitle or history. Muslims don't say Merry Christmas. They were saying Ramadan Mubarak.
Muhaini Mmj	Why they celebrating christmas? They're muslim rite? So much confusion in this story.
Rubia Lising	Can anyone explaine why do they celebrate Christmas?
Rahin Uddin Khan	It is a Islamic history.

As seen in Table-3, although the commentators' attitude towards the narrative in the Series is related to the comments on the cruelty of the Ottoman dynasty, which is discussed in the first category, in this category they not resort to derogatory expressions but inference moral values by establishing a connection with today's world. The fact that the narrative in the Series is seen as a struggle for survival in the statements of the user named ''Lasib Lfm'', or as a lesson for humanity, as seen in the comments of the users named ''Chandra Sarkar Pakhi'' and ''DrAngela Wilson'', presents an example of a reductionist orientalism hidden under a moral perspective. Addressing the political reality of centuries ago which shaped around historical figures with today's value judgments not only presents an anachronism, but also includes an indirect interpretation of orientalist clichés. Again, the fact that the user named ''Rahin Uddin Khan'' evaluates the narrative in the Series only with the comment ''Islamic history'' presents another example of indirect orientalism as a reductionist approach. The fact that seven users commented that there is Christmas celebrating in the Series is an orientalist discourse that repeats the cliché of ''the East imitating the West''. It is a historical fact that it was not possible to celebrate Christian holidays in the Ottoman Empire, which was an Islamic state. However, from an orientalist perspective, the "East", whether it wants to be Westernized or not, has to carry its own existential contradictions as an "other": Although The East is the West's rival, as an object it cannot be evaluated as a historical figure separate from the West. The East not only imitates the values of the West, but also it dependent on the West while creating itself.

3.3.3. Discourses Containing Romanticization

Seventeen of the user comments (32% of the total comments) that could be associated with orientalism were evaluated under the category of romanticization. In the comments in this category, users romanticize the narrative in the Series by reducing it to the love between Sultan Suleiman and Hurrem Sultan. This approach is compatible with the orientalist framework that the Series builds on, in that it weaves its main narrative around the love between Hurrem Sultan and Sultan Suleiman.

498

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

CONSTRUCTION OF ORIENTALIST DISCOURSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A STUDY ON USERS
COMMENTS ON THE MAGNIFICENT CENTURY TV SERIES'S FACEBOOK PAGE
HAKAN SAĞLAM, FİGEN YAVUZ

NUSBD

Tablo 4: Discourses Containing Romanticization

User name	Comments
Lasib Lfm	I enjoyed most when Suleiman write a poem to Hurrem. Great and amazing love story of Hurrem and Suleiman.
Liz Croft	It covered many things about life stages, human emotional drive and falling in love with the love story of Hurrem & Suleiman.
Maria Ann	It showed lots from faithfulness, loyalty, respect, peace, justice, revenge, selfishness, lust but the greatest among it is the Love of Hurrem and Sultan.
Nasseem Dewangree	It is real historical story? I love to watch Hurrem and Suleiman. I like their love. It is amazing and non stop watching.
Talerms Zeev Ventures	I felt all the mixed emotions and sadness at the very end. I love it the part of the slave become queen no matter what. Love conquers all...
Muzafeer Ümit	If you ask me what part of the series that I love the most when the slave and Sultan they fall inlove to each other.
Barnali Baisakhi	It enriched my knowledge, I was entertained and loved the strength of Sultan Suleiman and admired the beauty and martness of Sultana Hurrem.
Precious Gem	Every poem of Suleiman from the beginning till the end is so heart warming and fills the heart deeply with love. Every episode is heart touching and heart melting.
Nayana Makwana	A beautiful story such a great love story of Suleiman and my favourite Hurrem.
Dee Paul	Watching such an emotional experience. Totally gave me an understanding that I truly appreciate. Truly love this show!,
Dindit Din	I been watching the entire serial such a beautiful story. The background sounds is very nice their costums and every jewellery are very nice and beautiful.
Dali Alibegishvili	I cried so much watching this episode. The series are truly magnificent! Hurrem and Suleiman Sultan the best scenic couple ever!
Vanz R. Arriesgado	It showed lots from faithfulness, loyalty, respect, peace, justice, revenge, selfishness, lust but the greatest among it is the love of Hurrem and Sultan.
Jane Messi	The green eyes of Suleiman and his eyebrows could convey a lot of emotions - anger, love, fear, revenge and compassion. Also Hurrem's eyes could speak volumes. The costumes were beautifully executed. In real life Suleiman must have really loved Hurrem because history showed that he had only one wife which is unheard of at that time. It's a love story as timeless as time.
Molly Azalli	This is a very emotional and sadden episode. Hurrem is the heart of King Suleman. What an epic of love story.
Guia Capangyarihan Thompson	Very beautiful love story of power, love and life of Suleiman and Hurrem Sultan.
Sarah Tayag	I love the most was the mutual love of Sulieman to Hurrem that they can feel one another.

As seen in Table-4, commentators interpret the narrative in the Series in the context of the great love between Sultan Suleiman and Hurrem Sultan and place it in an emotional framework. For example, the user named ''Jane Messi'' glorifies the love of the two historical characters with the following statements: ''The green eyes of Suleiman and his eyebrows could convey a lot of emotions - anger, love, fear, revenge and compassion. Also Hurrem's eyes could speak volumes. The costumes were beautifully executed. In real life Suleiman must have really loved Hurrem because history showed that he had only one wife which is unheard of at that time. It's a love story as timeless as time.'' In the romantic equation between them in the Series; Sultan Suleiman represents emotions as an Eastern subject, while the Western subject is Hurrem Sultan, who representing reason and gets everything she wants. Hurrem Sultan's influence on the Sultan in the Series is actually a subconscious expression of the superiority of the West over the East, in terms of being portrayed as the winning side in the struggle for power. Considering that Sultan Suleiman's love for Hurrem Sultan is treated as a weakness in the process leading up to the murdering of Prince Mustafa in the Series, it is seen that commentators who exalted the love between Sultan Suleiman and Hurrem Sultan meeting the orientalist line of the Series. In the Series the clothing and accessories of the female characters, especially Hurrem Sultan are one of the most appreciated issues in the user comments. Considering its period, this must be evaluated an orientalist indicator because of having Western feature rather than Eastern. Because here again, while the model is the West, it is the East that tries to resemble the West.

499

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

CONSTRUCTION OF ORIENTALIST DISCOURSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A STUDY ON USERS
COMMENTS ON THE MAGNIFICENT CENTURY TV SERIES'S FACEBOOK PAGE
HAKAN SAĞLAM, FİGEN YAVUZ

NUSBD

CONCLUSION

The study of the East as a cultural system has been dominated for centuries by the perspectives and conclusions of Western social scientists. This perspective, which clearly separates the East from the West, is constructed on the basis of the oppositions. Edward Said elaborated in his studies that there is an otherization that extends to hate speech in the representation of the East especially about Islam in Western media. Numerous studies have been conducted on the orientalist discourse in the representation of the East in every area of Western media, from news programs to television series and cinema.

Providing important data, social media has become a research area for many scientists in recent years. The discourse construction in social media contains structural differences from traditional media. In order to understand how the orientalist discourse is constructed in social media, users comments of the final episode of the Magnificent Century TV Series's Facebook page was taken as a sample in the study. As a result of the research, it was seen that the users mostly repeated the narrative of the Series, but sometimes they brought a new interpretation to it.

The Magnificent Century TV Series, which attracted great attention and discussion both in Turkey and abroad during its broadcast period, contains many orientalist indicators according to some social scientists. According to them, the Series is far from reflecting historical reality, the narrative in the Series is romanticized by focusing on the love between Sultan Suleiman and Hurrem Sultan, and reflects Sultan Suleiman as a figure who is guided by Hurrem Sultan's influence. The Series has also been criticized for having an orientalism that is based on Western clothing norms, with the choice of clothing and accessories of women, especially Hurrem Sultan, having no relevance to the period in which they lived. Apart from the legitimacy of the criticisms, the Series also contains many indicators that are compatible with the official historical narrative in terms of depicting the magnificence of the Ottoman Empire in the person of Sultan Suleiman. This fact is also seen in the comments of social media users, as examined within the scope of the research. Users express sympathy for the characters in the Series, especially Sultan Suleiman and Hurrem Sultan, and express that they are impressed by the magnificence of the Ottoman Empire. Besides very few of the users in the sample are Turks, the fiction and acting in the Series are highly appreciated by users from almost every region of the world.

53 of the 474 user comments (11% of the total number of comments) subjected to discourse analysis were examined under three categories within the framework of orientalism in the study. The first category, where a negation and devaluation efforts are seen, often embodied in the personalities of the characters in the Series, especially Sultan Suleiman. Extending to hate speech against the Ottoman Empire, constitutes 38% of the comments discussed within the framework of orientalism in this category. In 30% of the user comments that constitute the second category, the narrative in the Series is evaluated with reductionist clichés both as a historical indicator of humanity suffering and through the Christianity-Islam antinomy. In 32% of the user comments that constitute the third category, it is seen that the narrative in the Series is evaluated in the context of the love between Sultan Suleiman and Hurrem Sultan. In this category the clothing of the female characters, especially Hurrem Sultan is praised, too.

The fact that the orientalist discourse in the user comments about the Series does not dominate the general feature of the discourse should be evaluated in the context of the cause-effect relationship. The Series' portrayal of the Ottoman Empire through impressive acting and visuals created a positive perception among viewers. This perception, which draws the boundaries of the orientalist discourse, also shows the limits of the representation of orientalism at the social level. Although Sultan Suleiman is portrayed in the Series as a figure influenced by Hurrem Sultan and the relationship between the two is woven with a romantic narrative, contrary to some user comments, there is no attempt to create a negative image of the Ottoman Empire. While Sultan Suleiman is portrayed in the Series not as a cruel figure, but as a character who stands out with his weaknesses under the influence of his wife and Hurrem Sultan is portrayed as a strong character who gets everything she wants. Although Turkish commentators generally blame Hurrem Sultan for the death of Prince Mustafa, non-Turks blame Sultan Suleiman. This situation is a clear indication of how effective the quality of the sample is in the construction of

500

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

the discourse towards the characters of the Series. The fact that the sample quality is largely effective in the construction of discourse towards the characters of the Series becomes meaningful when evaluated in the context of Hall's theory of reception. It is seen that users sometimes interpreted the messages in media texts in a preferred way, and sometimes in a controversial and oppositional way in the study.

Since the construction of orientalist discourse on social media platforms depends on the quality of both media texts and user comments, it requires a two-way interpretation. User comments containing orientalist discourse can be developed for a media text that does not contain orientalist discourse, and vice versa. The presence of some elements containing self-orientalism in the Magnificent Century TV Series makes it debatable to label the production as orientalist. As seen within the scope of the research, the limited orientalist discourses of the users showed that it cannot be generalized that the Series is evaluated by the users from an orientalist perspective. In the research, there are examples where the orientalist discourse developed in user comments is integrated with hate speech, especially towards historical characters. Although the hate speech in connection with orientalism in traditional media and cinema is mostly constructed indirectly, stands out the directness of the hate speech of user comments on social media.

As a result of the reseach, it was seen that the discourse constructed in social media depends on two factors: The first is the discursive quality of the media text, and the second is the socio-cultural background that affects the discourse of the users. While users develop a discourse that is compatible with the discourse in media texts, they sometimes reconstructing the discourse with a controversial and oppositional approach, only becomes meaningful evaluated in the context of the source/target audience interactivity of social media.

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501

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

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502

İstanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Year/Yıl 2025, Vol./Cilt 13 Issue/Sayı 1, 489-504.

CONSTRUCTION OF ORIENTALIST DISCOURSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A STUDY ON USERS
COMMENTS ON THE MAGNIFICENT CENTURY TV SERIES'S FACEBOOK PAGE
HAKAN SAĞLAM, FİGEN YAVUZ

NUSBD

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

SOSYAL MEDYADA ORYANTALİST SÖYLEMİN İNŞASI: MUHTEŞEM YÜZYIL DİZİSİ'NİN FACEBOOK SAYFASINDAKİ KULLANICI YORUMLARI ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME

Giriş ve Çalışmanın Amacı: Batı medyasında Doğu'nun ve özellikle İslamın temsilinde nefret söylemine kadar uzanan bir ötekileştirmenin hâkim olduğunu Edward Said çalışmalarında ayrıntılı olarak işlemiştir. Haber programlarından televizyon dizilerine, reklamlardan sinemaya kadar Batı medyasının her alanında beliren oryantalist söyleme ilişkin çok sayıda araştırma yapılmıştır. Sosyal medyadaki oryantalist söylemin nasıl inşa edildiğinin anlaşılmaya çalışıldığı çalışmada Muhteşem Yüzyıl Dizisi'ne ilişkin kullanıcı yorumları incelenerek literatüre izler kitle perspektifinden katkı sağlanması hedeflenmektedir.

Kavramsal/kuramsal çerçeve: Toplumsal gerçekliği belirli bir ideolojiye dayandıran egemen söylemlerin benimsenmesine aracılık eden medya, özellikle sosyal medyanın yaygınlaşmasıyla birlikte çok daha karmaşık bir hal almıştır. Gelişmiş teknik olanaklarla zenginleştirilen ve ülkelerin kültürel tanıtımında önemli bir yere sahip olan televizyon dizileri de sosyal medyanın olanaklarından olabildiğince yararlanarak küreselleşmekte ve geniş kitlelere ulaşmaktadır. Geleneksel medyadan farklı olarak kullanıcı etkileşimine açık olan sosyal medyadaki izleyici yorumları, oryantalizmle ilgili araştırma yapmak isteyen sosyal bilimciler için de değerli veriler sunmaktadır.

Yöntem ve Bulgular: Araştırma sorularına yanıt bulmak için nitel araştırma yöntemi tercih edilmiştir. Araştırmada içerik analizi ve eleştirel söylem analizi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada, oryantalist söylemin sosyal medyada nasıl inşa edildiğini anlamak amacıyla Muhteşem Yüzyıl dizisinin Facebook sayfasındaki final bölümüne dair 474 adet kullanıcı yorumu örneklem olarak alınarak incelemeye tabi tutulmuştur. Söylem analizine tabi tutulan yorumların 53'ü (toplam yorum sayısının %11'inin) oryantalizm çerçevesinde üç kategori altında incelenmiştir. Çoğu zaman Sultan Süleyman başta olmak üzere dizideki karakterlerin kişiliğinde somutlaşarak Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na yönelik nefret söylemine uzanan bir olumsuzlama ve değersizleştirme çabasının görüldüğü ilk kategori, oryantalizme ilişkin ele alınan yorumların %38'ini oluşturmaktadır. İkinci kategoriyi oluşturan kullanıcı yorumlarının %30'unda dizideki anlatı hem insanlığın acılarının tarihsel bir göstergesi olarak hem de Hıristiyan-İslam karşıtlığı üzerinden indirgemeci klişelerle değerlendirilmektedir. Üçüncü kategoriyi oluşturan kullanıcı yorumlarının %32'sinde ise dizideki anlatı romantikleştirerek Sultan Süleyman ve Hürrem Sultan arasındaki aşk bağlamında değerlendirilmektedir. Diziye yönelik kullanıcı yorumlarındaki oryantalist söylemin, söylemin genel niteliğine baskın olmaması, sebep-sonuç ilişkisi bağlamında ele alınmalıdır. Dizinin Osmanlı Devleti'nin ihtişamını etkileyici oyunculuklar ve görsellikle ele alması izler kitle üzerinde olumlu algısal etki yaratmıştır. Oryantalist söylemin sınırlarını çizen bu algı, oryantalizmin toplumsal düzeydeki temsilinin sınırlarını da göstermiştir. Dizi karakterlerine yönelik söylemin inşasında örneklem niteliğinin belirleyiciliği ise Hall'un alımlama teorisi bağlamında değerlendirildiğinde anlam kazanmaktadır. Kullanıcılar burada iletileri kimi zaman tercih edilen şekilde alımlarken kimi zaman tartışmalı ve muhalif bir şekilde alımlamaktadır.

Sonuç ve Öneriler: Sosyal medya platformlarında oryantalist söylemin inşası hem medya metinlerinin hem de kullanıcı yorumlarının niteliğine bağlı olduğundan çift yönlü bir değerlendirme gerektirmektedir. Oryantalist söylem içermeyen bir medya metni için oryantalist söylem içeren kullanıcı yorumları geliştirilebildiği gibi tersi de mümkündür. Muhteşem Yüzyıl dizisinde self-oryantalizm içeren bazı öğelerin bulunması yapımın oryantalist olarak etiketlenmesini tartışılır kılar. Zira araştırma kapsamında görüldüğü üzere kullanıcılara ait sınırlı oryantalist söylemler, dizinin kullanıcılar tarafından oryantalist bir bakış açısıyla değerlendirildiği genellemesinin yapılamayacağını gösterir. Araştırmada kullanıcı yorumlarında geliştirilen oryantalist söyleme özellikle tarihi karakterlere yönelik nefret söylemiyle bütünleştiği örneklerde rastlanmaktadır. Araştırma sonucunda sosyal medyada inşa edilen söylemin iki faktöre bağlı olduğunu görülmüştür: İlki medya metninin söylemsel niteliği diğeri ise kullanıcıların söylemini etkileyen sosyo-kültürel arka plan. Kullanıcıların medya metinleriyle uyumlu bir söylem geliştirirken bazen tartışmalı ve muhalif bir yaklaşımla söylemi yeniden inşa etmesi ancak sosyal medyanın kaynak/hedef kitle etkileşimselliği bağlamında değerlendirildiğinde anlam kazanmaktadır.

503

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HAKAN SAĞLAM, FİGEN YAVUZ

NUSBD

KATKI ORANI BEYANI VE ÇIKAR ÇATIŞMASI BİLDİRİMİ

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504

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