Chapter 79

Ottomentality as Technology of Self:
How Do Mobile Games Aestheticize the Entrepreneurial Self?

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ABSTRACT

Extreme-right populist tendencies are getting stronger day by day. Although there are various factors that make the extreme-right populist tendencies stronger, the fact that cannot be ignored is that these tendencies must be reproduced discursively (history, culture, etc.) by the ruling power structures. Today, digital media and especially games are the primary areas where this reproduction process is most visible. Mobile games, in particular, turn into dominant cultural phenomena related to daily life beyond leisure, entertainment, and mind refreshing functions. Within this view, it is claimed that the mobile games based on the historical narratives in Turkey work as technology of self to contribute to the discourse of neo-Ottomanism. In order to test this claim, the three most downloaded mobile games (Game of Sultans, Magnificent Ottoman, and Age of Ottomans) in the Appstore and Android markets are selected as examples, and the aesthetic production realized through the structural elements of the game will be analyzed.

INTRODUCTION

With the increasing use of digital technologies in all areas of daily life, the areas of study in social sciences are expanding. In particular, it should be said that there is a large literature on digital and mobile games. This situation raises the question of how mobile games are integrated into daily life from various

angles. Today, mobile games are not just platforms that a certain group uses to spend their free time and have fun. These platforms also function as socializing platforms. As a matter of fact, the links established through mobile games exist both online and offline, and as a result, play a role in shaping social relations.

This study is based on the claim that mobile games are involved in the reproduction of hegemonic discourses in the shaping of social relations. In this process, although mobile games do not take part in the establishment of hegemonic discourse, they play a role in its adoption by the players. In this context, if we use Foucault's terminology, mobile games can be considered as dispositif in which social relations between players are shaped. In this respect, mobile games, on the one hand, contribute to the banalization, ordinaryization and internalization of the hegemonic discourse among the players, on the other hand, they also allow the formation of the entrepreneurial-self ethics of neoliberal governance.

The entrepreneurial-self project of neoliberal governmentality, in the context of neo-Ottomanism discussions to address the ethical-cultural has become essential, in Turkey since 2009. *New Turkey* rhetoric being established links with the Ottoman past masculine and power-oriented, are becoming visible in many areas of everyday life. Mobile games are one of the most visible environments of this ethical-cultural project regarding entrepreneurial subjectivity in daily life. Historical-strategy games based on the Ottoman past do not only promise the players as entertainment and leisure activities; In another aspect, it gives players the opportunity to redesign the past in a glorious way with its scenarios, visual effects, characters (playability). This design allows the player to construct a new reality with the past beyond the official historical narrative.

GAME/DISPOSITIF AND THE GAMES OF TRUTH

Dispositif is a conceptualization put forward by M. Foucault to express the network formed by the articulation of the discursive and non-discursive. According to Foucault, our subjectivities emerge as a result of the relationality between knowledge (epistemology) -power and ethical (self-care) networks. Foucault thus adopts an approach which leaves the understanding of external knowledge and power to the subject concept. Power and knowledge are articulated in discourse (Foucault, 2012: p. 72). Accordingly, knowledge cannot be thought without power, but also power cannot exist without knowledge. Foucault rejects a state of being with self-care in which the subject is formed under the decisive power of an external power. Power takes on meaning only when it is with free subjects; otherwise it is necessary to talk about domination, not power. From this point of view, according to Foucault, resistance is immanent in power; power must protect the formation of a subjectivity, albeit minimally, otherwise it ceases to be power (Deveci, 2005: pp. 34-35). The subject, then, is not a given by power, but a state of social formation that establishes itself (in relation to itself) in the context of the games of truth (jeux de vérité) between discursive and non-discursive practices.

In his post-1980 studies, Foucault begins to deal with the processes of subjectivation in order to understand power relations. According to Foucault, self-care is the knowledge of the person himself. However, it is also the knowledge of certain rules of conduct and principles that are both truth and imperative (Foucault, 2014: p. 227). Because the self-care always appears in institutionalized structures and associations. Therefore, it is shaped not only by the networks of power, but also by relations within communities such as kinship and friendship. Essentially, at this point, the ways of knowing of power come into play, and according to Foucault, the person establishes power relationship called himself,

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