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**DESIGN MEMEPLEXES EXCHANGE INTERVENE IN TRADITIONAL TO
CONTEMPORARY PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**

GELENEKSELDEN GÜNCELE

TASARIM ODAKLI KÜLTÜREL KODLARIN EVRİMİ

ABSTRACT

This article attempts to consolidate evolutionary segments of object-based strategies driving tradition toward the contemporary via aspects of design meme exchange between Anatolian felt-makers and mediator/designer working in proximity. Although his-stories and genetic codes are differentiated, object-based reciprocity evolved through creative practices of “information sharing” in the workshop environment facilitates design meme transfer and thereafter-new design-memeplex.

Also, analysing the contextual model, this found after ten-year research period become base on creating alternate teaching and learning environmental issues deals within a larger spectrum; Tradition to Contemporary cultural evolution reflected up on inter-mediatory action of the author/researcher and Anatolian Felt-maker Artisans.

The outcomes of product orientated (theory related practice base) research; through memeplex exchange as a mediatory action of the rejuvenation practice for the

product (felted artefacts) and create another specific example in the cultural continuum of the art and craft movement in Anatolian cultural geography (Gürişik, 2006).

As a research method, theory related practice based design and product originated ; It is essential to explicate handmade production methods. The work with felt-makers in their ateliers consider experimentsand after evaluating the eliminated final results presented to Show a wider audince to take their opinions through out several exhibitions.

These results from the exhibitions have led the work of both the designer and the artisans (masters) as a verification and validation test.

In order to analyze the cultural characteristics and different approaches of the group of masters, historical literature scanning and archives of local museums were also evaluated.

This article aims to share this cultural memesh-exchange process and set an useful applicable example for similar research in other fields.

Key Words: Anatolian Hand Crafted Wool Felted Textiles, Memeplex, Cultural Object, Decorative Iconography, Aggregated Qualities. Essential Nature, Ottoman Katı Techniques, Seamless Dresses, Humanization of Time...

ÖZ

Bu makale, Anadolu keçe üreticileri ile yakınlarda çalışan aracı / tasarımcı arasındaki tasarım meme değişim yönleri ile geleneği günümüze doğru sürükleyen nesne tabanlı stratejilerin evrimsel bölümlerini pekiştirmeye çalışıyor.

Hikâyeleri ve genetik kodları farklı olmasına rağmen, workshop ortamında bilgi paylaşımının yaratıcı uygulamalarıyla ortaya çıkan nesne tabanlı karşılıklı durum, tasarım meme transferini ve ardından yeni tasarım memepleksini kolaylaştırır.

On yıllık araştırma döneminden sonra ortaya çıkan bağlamsal modelin analiz edilmesi, daha geniş bir yelpazedeki alternatif öğretim ve çevre konularının ele alınmasının öğrenilmesine dayanmaktadır; Çağdaş kültürel evrim geleneği, yazar / araştırmacının ve Anadolu Keçe Üreticileri Sanatkârlarının arabuluculuk eylemine yansımıştır.

Araştırma yöntemi olarak teoriye dayalı tasarım ve pratik ürün kökenli; el-yapımı üretim metotlarının irdelenmesi esas alınmıştır. Atölyelerde el-sanatları ustaları ile

çalışmalar bir deney niteliğinde sonuçları değerlendirildikten sonra elenip, sergilerle daha da geniş kitlelerin fikirlerine sunulmuştur.

Sergilerden alınan bu sonuçlar bir doğrulama ve onaylama testi olarak, hem tasarımcının hem de artisanların (ustaların) çalışmalarına yön vermiştir. Ustaların oluşturduğu grubun kültürel özelliklerini ve farklı yaklaşımlarını analiz etme amacı ile tarihsel literatür taraması ve yerel müzelerin arşivleri de değerlendirilmiştir.

Makalenin bu kültürel alışveriş sürecini paylaşarak diğer alanlarda da benzer araştırmalara örnek oluşturması hedeflenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anadolunun El-yapımı Yünden Keçe Tekstilleri, Kültürel Ürün, Memeplex, Kültürel-ürün Bezemeci İkonografı, Yüklenen Değerler, ‘Katı’ Kitap Süsleme Tekniği, Dikişsiz Elbiseler...

Introduction

Within continuing activity of Anatolian Felt-making, (craft activity) was deteriorating in the later eighties. As a solid outcomes of the information gathered from several statistics data of National Research throughout in Turkish Republic (Gürışık, 2006). The axiom in research activity; exemplifying mutated transposition and transformation of the craft-object into cultural object (folkloric) then on into an artefact had been a main action. Building up a biographical his-story, which evokes tradition within contemporary dynamics according to rejected cultural evolution and contemporaries’ customs. The objects his-story is rooted in its authentication as a cultural object (in this case the Anatolian felted textiles) its lost aura relates to social change affected by the technical and non-technical factors.

By a process of aggregating specific traits introducing additional design memeplex in terms of diversified product action provide autonomy in random circulation through differing sociocultural locations.

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Restoration or transposition of lost aura it is suggested can be determined by a strategy of selectivity design-meme transferring. Implementation of meme transfer must first occurs with identification of difference and thereby the potential for introduction via receptive memes.

Memes Exchange Concept in Cultural and Art&Design Interaction

Memes-pool helps to clarify and give a better understanding of the nature of the reservoir of accumulated units of information as processed in the human body-mind-brain activity of perception. Determinants of the perceivers' value judgments are the economic and cultural units embodied in their genetic codes together with the accumulated previous experiences, which reflect and or constitute the differentiated levels of consciousness. Furthermore, the action of selection and personal will possessing the cultural object relates to this body-mind and brain action.

Dennett (1998,) pointed out, "*People are particular sort of animal, properly furnished by, or infested with memes* " these units of information, which instruct to produce behaviours reside in brain and replicate/propagate by jumping from human to humans' brains, as sociable animals human's social life accelerates the process of imitating through interchanging of these information.

It is therefore suggested that this biographical evolutionary changes (not necessarily progressive) in multi layered reciprocal activity of social/situational learning in craftsmen's workshop under the circumstances of master and apprenticeship reveals ambiguity of memes in genetic inheritance.

Blackmore (1998) defines that as "our personalities, abilities and unique qualities derive from the complex interplay of these replicators, so our innermost selves, the "real me" are co-adapted meme complex, which also formalise the notion of the consciousness". The political belief systems, cult, religion and safe haven are sets of memes, we all know that they do not have to be true, so we, ourselves are a myth. Our brains have only got neurons, one cannot find in it any little person pulling the strings keeping the show on track, a place for conscious decisions made as mentioned before only co-adopted meme complexes live within this brain.

Consequently, exchanging these differentiated systems requires a strategy in terms of aggregated traits/qualities, product action and oscillations or dynamics in evolving the continuity of a specific cultural path way.

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After this introductory theoretical back ground of the Memeplex¹, the specific mediatory action² of the designer/author and Anatolian felt-makers (craftsmen) which memeplex transferred according to the selected design aspects.

Mainly material to function and aesthetic notions towards contemporary culture's demand and high-values (within perception) accordingly implemented up on traditional techniques and produced in various regional workshops of the felt-makers. During this interacted production sessions of designing and making activity created inevitable influential memeplex exchange. This mediatory action between designer and felt-maker masters will be clarified in Diagram: 1.

Also, designer's main dedication was creating contemporary ways of getting design commissioning to expand artisans' circle/network to make them more visible through international clientele. Mostly felt-makers' ateliers have been settled in touristic towns, where felt making was an attraction to most of the visitors. Demonstrating how to make felt in a foreign language and bringing groups by the tour operators started an extra selling opportunity to the regional artisans.

Besides changing arrange of goods accordingly established a new collection of products (design objects), which easy to carry during the travelling. Later on, increasing the number of international courier companies and mutual trusting between parts; interaction of sending items become regardless the size matters. Pre-paying and delivering the ordered products' negotiations/bargaining facilitated to establishing an expanded market.

These newly introduced commercial transactions took a while to be accepted by these secluded and conservative group of felt-makers' regional culture; to realizing of a tourist guide can act as a go-between and paying a small commission to the service they provide made everybody happy in peace; at the end.

Seeing the schedule of the design process and preparations from the starting point to the final stage was a completed story-board, which was depicted the new additional process techniques methods. To convince them to adapt these derived methods was the most difficult task to consider as a main memeplex exchange, which need to repeat regular sessions.

² Refers as the designer/mediators intervenes by working in proximity, involving knowledge exchange towards resulting in the production of derivative objects according to the specifics of reciprocity within differing cultural locations. Discussed in the context of 'rejuvenation of the creative memeplex in multifunctional practices' (Gürışik, 2006).

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Even their work-power and ateliers' facilities were hired and paid regularly; to convince them, to adopt their traditionally old methods into these experimented, but verified contemporary methods.

Designer was fully intended to grasp technical details and making principals while demonstrating the contemporary design aspects, which not accepted until international verifications through exhibitions and design-fairs by the regional craftsmen (Wittgenstein, 2005).

Also, introducing traditionally established hand craft techniques, after historical survey of National Cultural methods, which more familiar with craftsmen' background; eased this transformation of the design-memes. Realisation of many accumulated/inspiring artefacts, increased their self-confident and valuing own culture-objects. This also lessened their fear of cultural degeneration.

Inspiring by the ancient book embellishment Katı technique³ call Heaven I is one of the samples. See: Figure 1.

Figure: 1, Wall hanging (Heaven1) by Halil Selçuk Gürışık

A continued flow; a flood of cultural, artistic/aesthetic experiential changes in the consciousness of the society. The iconography and surface decoration techniques, and motif-making methods have been specified according to their masters' former traditions and they

³ Katı Technique is an Otoman paper cutting and using dried flowers imported from the Holly lands, this piece is one of the rare example of transferred into felt-making ("Explore with MWNF", 2019).

hesitated to experiment with any new patterns or motif-making techniques. This prohibited activity was considered antagonistic and disrespectful to their masters.

When they realised that one of their responsibilities as contemporary masters was to create their own handwriting by innovative additional patterns in order to keep the continuum of the craft activity, they started to interpret various visual themes within their traditional methods. After all they realised that they were not against their masters and not giving any harm to their traditions had been transformed master and apprentices. Religiously obeyed methods of making, iconography of patterns and selected materials could be revised to increase the regressive demand in souvenir-objects market.

Figure: 2, a Samples of seamless dresses, by Halil Selçuk Gürışık

Another design-meme transformation is derivations of Kephenek making into seamless garments. Contemporising method of shepherd coat-making, which made of folding while felting (thinking/designing in 2D but producing in 3D (See; Figure: 2a) and Figure: 2b) was another valuable inspiration source created admiration towards craftsmen.

Figure: 2b, Exhibiting seamless dresses in Topkapı Palace Museum, by Halil Selçuk Gürışık, 2003

Working as a creative pattern-maker and consulting with professional experts finding out a particular form of a plan, which opened shape of the garment and embellishing the surfaces differently was researcher/designers self-experimentation happened in his atelier. Then the piece were transport to the felt-makers' workshop to finalize. See Figure: 3

Figure3: Pattern of a seamless garment, by Halil Selçuk Gürışık

Felt is an essential Nature of the Nomadic Culture and has been utilizing product alternative to pelt/fur, which conceptually very appropriated for contemporary ethics of the sustainable and green fashion issues.

However contemporizing activity, revivalist action (memeplex exchange) was taken; the great extent of appreciation of product's routed cultural aspects and expectation the traditional values made this process genuinely mutual exchange.

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Cultural Objects' functional usage accordingly whether traditional and/or contemporary; within reversible manners can be accepted as a planned 'Kitsch', which can be accepted as a sensory replacement for the nostalgia.

Figure: 4, Tented roof details from Chintemani Restaurant, by Halil Selçuk Gürışık, London 2006

As Urban-Nomads, natural habitat of the tented space is a desirable action in terms of revisiting Essential Nature of the material's history. See, Figure 4

Also mixing different fiber and non-woven and woven materials were considered degeneration of the traditional hand craft activity in its cultural continuum to the future generations. See: Figure: 4.

As textile and fashion designer; researcher experimented in fiber-fusing and selective mixing improve the product qualities of none woven textiles. Mixing woven textiles/fabrics with all other protein fiber (felt able fiber) was a new memeplex exchange, which regional artisans found strange and resisting strongly; after all they only sandwiched cotton-muslin in between the layers of wool, to give extra strength while they produce Kephenek (shepherd coat).

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Working with precious fiber such as silk and cashmere was not a regular habit of the Anatolian felt-makers. They only use local-goat, mohair as some fringes. They were hesitating the need of reversed techniques had to be implemented; but realising in terms of felt making there was no need to adopt any new method.

Working alone in their cocoon like workshops and living secluded society in a small town in Anatolia, they were preserved and keep away from modern society problematics. The whole notions of slow and nature-friendly organic production line and also sustainability had been a great role-model and inspired the re-visited researcher who had art and design education out of his native country. In fact it was the most attractive side of his decision taking action to start to learn how to make felt was these concepts. Even though later one realization of how to romanticizing the level of puritanism and naturalism.

Figure: 5, Tented roof details from Chintemani Restaurant, by Halil Selçuk Gürışık, London 2006

CONCLUSION

Exemplifying the samples applied some of material and design iconography; in terms of memeplex exchange between mediatory designer and felt-makers (craftsmen), there is a most beneficiary resultant after this ongoing research is the model of ‘Rejuvenation of the creative memeplex in multi-functional craft activities’.

Simply, knowledge exchange experience of the product orientated research: analysing the memeplex transformation can create a mutual learning and teaching environment to produce cultural object (felted textiles) into artefacts and/or design objects.

This multi-functional Model can be analysed and re-evaluated to find out some solutions for the art & design education issues; regardless designer-maker and/or theorists.

The Central section of the diagram Model explains the memeplex exchange activity from tradition to contemporary between researcher and artisans (felt-makers). In terms of five aggregated qualities⁴ of design aspects; Material, Function, Structure and Economy and Aesthetic.

The mediator, who has been revisited his routed culture and raising awareness for the socio-economic declining, but as a contradiction protecting cultural value was the main reason to take decision to mediate and taking action to research possibilities to repair the damages created up on the secluded group of artisans’ conservative attitude to not to keep up with the evolutionary changes.

In fact this model can be implemented on any other craft activity, which has similar problematics within some revisions and alterations. Verified design-objects throughout exhibitions and fairs are clarified within written pieces of the self-analytical evaluations of the process technology, See; Diagram 1

⁴ The Oxford Dictionary provides sub-clause conceptual definitions for both words separately and in the case of the notion of ‘Aggregation’, “A total considered with reference to its constituent parts; a gross amount” has been selected. In the case of ‘Qualities’, “An inherent or distinguishing characteristic; a property, Degree or grade of excellence” is considered appropriated. Therefore, in this context ‘Aggregated Qualities’ combines definitive notions relative to mediatory design action designating visible and invisible physical quality combinations in resultant objects (Gürışık, 2006).

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Diagram; 1, The Model for Rejuvenation the Creative Memeplex in Multifunctional Practices (Gürışik, 2006).

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