Rasim Yilmaz / Günther Löschnigg (eds.)

Studies on Balkan and Near Eastern Social Sciences

Volume 2

PETER LANG

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Foreword

The book *Studies on Balkan and Near Eastern Social Sciences – Volume II* is a collection of research papers on a wide range of social science issues written by researchers from several different universities and institutions.

Mucan Özcan reviews the literature on the relationship between country of origin and country image. İzmir conducts a research regarding the effect of the image of the country of origin on the product evaluation and also the direct and indirect effects of the image of the country of origin on the purchase intention by using Structured Equation Modelling. Topal, Bölükbaş and Bostan scrutinize the relationship between public debt and unemployment growth for the sample including Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain. The study by Yaşar and Yaşar focuses on wealth distribution and its relation to demographic differences.

Beken reviews conceptual and theoretical discussions on the middle-income trap. Kaya and Kutval inspect the reserve option mechanism and the reserve option coefficient. The study of Akyazi and Al aims to investigate the impacts of globalization on monetary policy and central banking. Kaya, Çelenk Kaya and Kaya aim to conduct a situation analysis of public hospitals in the Eastern Black Sea region of Turkey in terms of disaster management. The main focus of Özyurt Kaptanoğlu's study is the marketing of health tourism in Turkey and the world. Oral and Kaya attempt to conceptually study disaster and disaster waste management. Varol Kiliçaslan examines innovation in the health sector. Çelenk Kaya and Ölmezoğlu evaluate the knowledge level of miners regarding occupational health and safety.

The panel study by Koyuncu and Okşak scrutinizes the relationship between religion and female labor force participation. Özen and Saritaş attempt to empirically analyze the impact of religion on corruption. Yalçinkaya Koyuncu and Ünver empirically examine the impact of corruption on labor productivity by using 13 different productivity indicators. Özcan aims to determine the state of renewable energy potential of Turkey. Birinci and Genç evaluate the relationship between fiscal devaluation and foreign trade in Turkey for the period 1985–2014 by Toda and Yamamoto's causality test. Benli empirically studies the asymmetric effect of exchange rates on exports from Turkey to the United States. The study of Akinci empirically examines the relationship between public investment expenditures and private investment expenditures in Turkey. Tuncer, Sağdiç and Yildiz aim to analyze the public expenditure of the central government on the

social security and social solidarity services in Turkey from the point of view of the geography of public finance.

The study of Benhür Aktürk conceptually analyzes the concept of ethical leadership. Akdöl attempts to conceptually study leaders as ethical role models for the 21-century business environment. The study of Benhür Aktürk focuses on corporate governance. The study of Topak analyzes sustainability reporting of the chemical industry firms in Turkey.

The study by Özçelik and Sunay focuses on the Sabri F. Ülgener's views on the Ottoman economic mentality and the relationship between the Ottoman economic mentality and the Ottoman economic crises. Boynukara and Karagöz attempt to offer an insight into the primary assumptions and tendencies of postcolonial literature by centering on its preeminent scholars and their theoretical convictions as regards the impacts of colonialism on the colonized people. Uncu and Çalişir investigate the gender of color and the history of color representation of gender.

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Gonca Uncu and Gülsüm Çalışır

Gender of Color: When Did Girls and Boys Start to Wear Pink and Blue?

1 Introduction

Every generation develops new definitions of femininity and masculinity during their era. These definitions begin with the birth of the person and continue throughout the life of the person. Our behaviors, attitudes, and looks are largely determined by society/community. Sex discrimination begins with the birth of the child and reflects itself out with baby clothes. The colors of baby clothes are also determined by the society. Every color has different meanings in different cultures. However, some colors were proposed for baby boys and girls worldwide. Thus, the meaning of these specific colors is also used in sex discrimination from the beginning of very first days in someone's life. Because the names given to children are not considered enough to distinguish gender, the most important factor that plays a decisive role in the child's physical appearance is the clothes and the colors of these clothes. Common wisdom is pink for girls and blue for boys. The history of this belief is very old. The use of pink and blue in baby clothing first appeared in the mid-19th century. However, the use of colors for gender discrimination precedes World War I.

Today, pink and blue are turned into consumer goods and popular culture symbols. Especially pink, which is a symbol of femininity, is symbolized by the popular color of girls and women. The identification of women and men with color has a direct effect on consumption habits as well as gender roles. It is not common to see a man dressed in a pink sweater. Comparing to pink, blue is less restrictive color. According to the researchers, blue might be preferred for both genders but blue is still a dominating color for males.

Discriminating gender by these specific colors is strongly criticized for being a component of marketing from fashion to consumer goods. It is discussed by researchers whether it is necessary to have gender color and this separation is a real need for the community. This study focuses on the history of color representation of gender, its evaluation in time, and why gender needs color distinction.

2 Gender and color

The origin of the word "gender" goes to the 1970s. Gender refers to social behaviors, roles, and activities based on the sex of a person. Men and women who

make up the society are exposed to gender discrimination (Ökten, 2009: 303). The gender roles of women and men are shaped by the society's expectations about their behaviors and duties. These expectations are taught by the cultural norms of the society during the socialization process of women and men. In these cultural codes, woman is always the weak one who needs protection by man. She is obedient and tenderhearted. Her physical look makes her a needy and dependent personal. On the contrary to woman, man is always strong, brave, and warier. His main role is being powerful and protecting his women and his land. These gender roles abide by men and women from the beginning of humankind (Oglesby and Hill, 1993: 720). These roles are determined by social and cultural habits and traditions, not by biological differences. The society expects to exhibit these behaviors from men and women by setting specific archetypes for the people. These expectations make man and woman passive in the society. Each gender lives with the roles imposed on and exhibits learned behaviors. In particular, women are the most damaged one about gender equality. How she is going to act, walk, dress, and speak are all determined by invisible rules in the community (Çalışır and Çakıcı, 2015: 7). When individuals act different from the gender roles determined by the society, they can face with exclusion from the society. Breaking down these stereotyped beliefs and roles is difficult and often impossible (Henslin, 2003: 289). Those who act outside these roles are called "marginal." They have to live in abstraction from the society and face many elements of social repression.

Each society redefines masculinity and femininity identities with its cultural criteria according to time they live in. The individual whose gender roles and choices are determined by the society is a passive entity whose looks and behaviors are determined from the moment of birth. It is a matter of curiosity about how the gender segregation phenomenon, which is physically made visible through color separation in accordance with the birth of the child, is born and spread. The first use of blue and pink to distinguish girls and boys was just before the World War I. However, the identification of girls with pink first started in the mid-19th century (Maglaty, 2011). It is seen that both girls and boys were worn white lace dresses without regarding any separation in the 1800s. The reason for this is that the purity of white color represents cleanliness and innocence. Another reason to prefer white is that its cleaning is easy. Another view considers that gender is the regulator of social relations and the behavior of individuals and is therefore necessary and useful within the social order. The social roles produced for women and men are also cultural constructs at the same time. Whereas describing a woman and a man by their gender roles is to imprison them in a certain area. Women and men

are intellectually free individuals. Therefore, it is inadequate to identify them with cultural variables determined by the society (Scott, 2007: 11).

Cultural norms and beliefs have also changed and transformed people's color preferences. Today, many different cultures have identified the pink with the girls and the blue with the boys. Therefore, the child sees these colors and is surrounded by these distinctive colors from the time of birth. However, the child is not aware of this distinction until the age of one. According to a research, a boy can reach the distinction that the pink is not his own color at the age of two. Girls and boys are aware of the sex difference from the age of two and they can understand the definition of girl–boy distinction through what they see around them. The color choices that children are exposed to determine children's behavior as well as parents' behavior toward children (Hammond, 2014).

Photo 1 and 2: 32nd President of the United States: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, New York, 1884 (Bentman, Corbis)

(https://www.buzzfeed.com/bennyjohnson/fdr-had-the-greatest-childhood-ever?utm_term=.amDqqoLMP#.we0JJEwQG)

Until the end of the 1800s, the gender difference was not considered and all children were dressed in elegant white-collared dresses and skirts. In Photo 1, the white dress and the skirt that the American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt wears tell us how clothing habits were in 1884 in the United States. Sex discrimination is not recognized in children's haircuts as well. In his book *Pink and Blue: Telling the Boys from the Girls in America*, historian Paoletti (2013) investigated the stages

of this dramatic change and searched when children were given up wearing these natural white clothes and they were forced to pink and blue distinction. The author mentions that children have been dressed in white clothes until the age of six over the centuries. Parents are afraid that the wrong colors will lead the child to heresy after certain age (Maglaty, 2011).

The concept of gender of colors belongs to the 20th century, and it is specific to the Western world. The fashion and textile industry rapidly developed along with the Industrial Revolution. In this period, the colors have been diversified and colors specific to girls and boys have begun to be proposed. Until the 1800s, pink was a color used especially by boys, while blue was a color that girls wear too. In 1918, a magazine called *Ladies' Home Journal* claimed that pink is more suitable for men because of its stable and strong color, and that the blue is the most suitable color for girls because it looks more delicate and elegant (Frevele, 2011). Until the 1950s, pink and blue were not united with girls and boys. In Nazi Germany, the pink was identified with femininity. Nazis labeled homosexuals by using a pink triangle form. In the Christian belief, blue was a feminine color since Holy Virgin was depicted by blue in the tradition. Due to this religious belief, the ritual of blue dressing for girls was widespread. However, this view changed permanently in the 1950s by thinking that pink is the best color for girls and blue is the color most suitable for boys. It is argued that the identification of pink with the woman started with a movie named "Funny Face" in the 1950s. The pink clothes of Audrey Hepburn in the movie led to the identification of pink with the woman (Frassanito and Pettorini, 2008: 881–882). As can be seen, the identification of girls with pink is a concept that belongs to the 20th century and has spread uncontrollably by capitalism. The 1970s was the beginning of the era when the pink enfolded the girls. Increasing mass production and growing chain of stores along with rising capitalism have fostered consumption society and gender discrimination has been used as a tool of consumption. The pink has become one of the means of making this distinction and increasing consumption. Today, this color creates a uniform image of women, imprisoning girls within the borders of the pink. In the girl children's department of toy stores, pink is a dominant and also very eye tiring color. There is a more diversity in boys' departments. For boys, there is a more liberal choice of clothes, colors, and toys. Almost all toys belonging to girls are designed for their appearance, not their mental development, and all the toys and clothes are in pink tones. "Pink" is not just a name of color, it is the name of a label that is affixed on the woman since childhood, and it has been turned into a popular culture icon (Arıcan, 2012). Arıcan (2012) criticized this issue in the

following way and argued that girls were intentionally prevented from mental development since childhood:

> In the pink painted department store for girls, there was not one toy to introduce science to the girls and make them to think among Disney's princess toys, princess clothes, makeup and manicure sets, and even toy credit cards with Disney's princess picture on it. All of the toys seemed to teach girls to dress up, blush, and wait for the prince on white horse without thinking about science and real life issues.

The sex discrimination by color is shaped in American culture. In 1927, the *Times* magazine published a list of American stores where color-coded clothes were sold. In most of the shops in this period, pink clothes for boys were offered and sold. Until the 1940s, certain color patterns were not dictated to boys and girls. With increasing mass production, the child's style has been redefined and clothing preferences have been permanently determined by sex discrimination. Girls are expected to wear like their mothers and boys like their fathers at the school. But the breakup of this taboo by women has started with feminism and women's freedom movements in the 1960s. In this era, women who opposed the definition of masculinity and demanded equal rights had come up with a so-called phrase: "Tomgirl." The phrase of Tomgirl emphasizes the place and importance of the woman in the society, and at the same time, it starts a period in which the woman can also be seen as more masculine as man and be able to wear unlimited clothes and colors (Paoletti, 2013).

Sex discrimination by color is popularized by popular culture and pink has been turned into a symbolic color for girls with a conscious perception. American culture has made an important contribution for pink to be the icon of popular culture. One of the most concrete examples of this is the Barbie doll culture. The Barbie doll, which has an important role in the life of girls and their socialization, defines female and gender roles for girls since it has been created in the 1940s. Exposed to intense criticism of gender discrimination, every tone of pink is used in the logos, packaging, and clothes of Barbie dolls (Uncu, 2015). A Barbie doll is sold every three seconds around the world, and this doll touches almost every child's life in the world. So the perfect life that Barbie has is causing girls to admire the pink from their early ages. Girls want to look like Barbie (Rogers, 1999: 15–20). This is a desire for something unrealistic and it has a rather devastating effect in the life of girls. Every kind of textile and beauty product known as Barbie pink is a cultural bombardment carried out on women. This pink bombardment, where girls are exposed from a young age, supports consumptionism. This intentional color pressure over the girls restricts girls and makes them unqualified personals in the society.

3 Conclusion

In this study, girls' and boys' attitudes toward colors have been analyzed in order to understand whether they are making an instinctive preference or they prefer them because the majority of textile products are in pink for girls and in blue for boys. It is concluded that the identification of colors by gender is a phenomenon belonging to the last century. This phenomenon became popular and is supported by the consumption society. This is a necessity for the consumption. The consumption society offers new habits and new forms of life to the consumers through advertising for its own continuity. Beginning from the 1950s, advertisements have imposed new forms of life and behaviors on people. Color is one of the elements of gender division. With this distinction, women are reminded of their femininity. With such a distinction, the woman has become an active demographic group at the socioeconomic scale. This is a distinction of modernism. Indeed, in the medieval period, bright colors such as pink, red, and purple represent the magnificence, and the kings and aristocrat class preferred these colors. Today, it can be said that the construction of masculinity and womanhood is a reflection of the consumption society. The preference of pink and blue is actually an imposition of popular culture on girls and boys. The choice of gift and clothing according to sex is the reflection of this imposition. However, such a distinction didn't exist in the 19th century. The children were dressed in white clothes and lace dresses without any gender discrimination. Other colors began to be used beside white over the years. However, this situation did not directly lead to a gender division at that time. The 1900s were a time when colors were reflected more on children's clothes. Unlike today, pink colors were recommended for boys and blue colors were recommended for girls in this period. Proposition of different colors for different sex is a necessity for the growth of capitalism and industrialism. When it came to the 1920s, the dress became a proper outfit only for girls and the boys started wearing pants. This new color distinction reflected in all the clothes. In the 1940s, the distinction between pink for girls and blue for boys was accepted by textile companies. Until the 1980s, despite the rise of anti-separation voices and campaigns, the textile industry flaunted production with color and dominated the market for clothing style fashions by sex. So that a man dressed in pink is found strange, it is thought to in a gay style or a "girl-like" clothing. Color is a concept that exists in nature, and nature has not imposed such a distinction on people. This distinction is a created phenomenon by human effort. The cause is closely related to capitalism and is a pattern created to produce and consume more. In order to raise free and independent women, there is a need for generations that cannot comprehend these patterns, think multifaceted, and make their own

choices. Children must be freely dressed to stop this distinction. Parents have a significant role in this change.

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Studies on Balkan and Near Eastern Social Sciences Volume 2

This volume is a collection of empirical and theoretical research papers in the social sciences regarding the Balkans and the Near East written by researchers from several different universities and institutions. The studies include a wide range of topics from economic, financial, political, agricultural, sociological, international relations to historical, cultural, and feminist issues in the region of the Balkan and Near East. The book is aimed at educators, researchers, and students interested in the Balkan and Near Eastern countries.

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