



HIDE-A-BED SOFA: THE EFFECTS OF TRANSITION FROM NOMADIC TO SETTLED LIFE ON TURKISH FURNITURE INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The furniture used by Turks started to become widespread during the period of Abdülmecid II with the help of Westernization policies. The most obvious evidence of this situation can be seen in the planning and furniture selection in Dolmabahçe Palace. While the Topkapı Palace represents the nomadic culture in East, Dolmabahçe Palace reflects the Western culture including rococo and baroque. Although the Ottoman space tradition gave way to a life with furniture over time, the people weren't able to adapt to this change completely. The most crucial reasons of this situation were sitting, eating and resting on the floor, which were the habits originated from the nomadic culture. Hide-a-bed sofa as furniture was accepted by the society because of its familiar to nomadic culture. In this point, the relationship between the concepts of hide-a-bed sofa and nomadism was evaluated within the study.

Keywords: Nomadic Life, Settled Life, Furniture, Hide-a-Bed Sofa

ÇEKYAT: GÖÇEBE HAYATTAN YERLEŞİK HAYATA GEÇİŞİN TÜRK MOBİLYA ENDÜSTRİSİNE ETKİSİ

Özet

Türklerde mobilya kullanımının yaygınlaşması II. Abdülmecit zamanında batılılaşma politikası ile ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunun en bariz örneğini de Dolmabahçe Sarayı'ndaki mekân düzenlemesinde ve mobilya seçimlerinde görebiliriz. Topkapı Sarayı ne kadar doğudaki geleneksel göçebe kültürüne benziyorsa, Dolmabahçe o kadar rokoko ve barok esintili batı kültürüne benzemektedir. Osmanlı mekân geleneği zamanla değişip, yerini mobilyalı yaşam almaya başlasa da halk, bu değişime tam olarak adapte olamamıştır. Göçebe kültür alışkanlığı olan yerde oturma, yerde yeme ve yerde yatma bunun en büyük sebeplerinden biridir. Mobilya olarak çekyat, göçebe kültürüne yakınlığından dolayı halk tarafından kabul görmüştür. Bu noktada çekyat ve göçebe kavramı arasındaki bağ incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Göçebe Hayat, Yerleşik Hayat, Mobilya, Çekyat

1 Introduction

The Turks that had a life based on nomads culture, had lived as to a life style with almost unfurnished for long years and all the furniture was formed by moved easily and not loaded during long travel. These communities, which used to live in changing conditions frequently, could carry flexible and easily transportable items such as mattress, quilt, since they had a living space in big tents in a word marquee. Nomads life style of the Turks for long years complicated to adapt into furnished life. However, hide-a-bad sofa that used widely in Turkey, adapted into Turkish culture without difficulty, easily and quickly because of its closeness to Turkish life style. In this context, the objective of the study is to evaluate the place of hide-a-bad sofa in Turkish nomadic culture.

The study is consisted of three chapters. In the first chapter, short historical knowledge of furniture sector in Western and Turkey, in the second chapter, the relationship between the concepts of nomads and culture and hide-a-bad sofa are examined. Conclusion is reported in the last chapter.

2 Short Historical Knowledge of Furniture Sector From Past to Present

The word of furniture has entered to Turkish and many languages from the Latin word of *mobilis* (mobile), Italian "mobili" and French "meuble" [1].

Furniture can be defined as transportable, functional or decorative home objects. Home furniture was used just as functional in history; however its usage evolved from period to period [2]. Today, it is not impossible to define the usage of these objects just as functional or decorative. The evaluation of furniture usage, which has complicated relationships with users as well as social environment, is required a historical and social viewpoint [3].

The furniture has already been used by Western nations before being used by the Turks. The most crucial reason of that is the nomadic life of the Turks. Furniture has been able to seen in Turkish homes with the transition to permanent settlement. Herein, the concept of nomads is remarkable, by the reason of being an important factor that effect on Turkish furniture sector.

Historical development of furniture usage is embraced with two parts as in Western and Turkey, in this chapter.

2.1 Furniture History in Western

The existence of furniture proves that human pass to a social order by evading animalistic behaviors and the furniture has the characteristics of environment that belongs to permanent settlement contrary to nomads. It indicates us as aforesaid above that home furniture has become widespread in Western earlier than Eastern that had a nomad culture.

The first examples of furniture could be seen in Egypt. Current furniture has reached today. The tradition of Mausolea was appeared because of the belief in continuance of life after death and the furniture was buried with the royal family member. However, the information about the usage of the furniture by the community could be obtained. The usage of the furniture did not exhibit large changes in Greek and Roman periods.

The furniture began to be seen as a branch of art in mediaeval Western and it was assumed as objects that indicated wealth and status of the owner. The furniture expressed a luxury life for people, who had a low income level and life with the aim of surviving [4].

The greatest change in the history was experienced in production technologies and social construction after 18th century, especially in Victorian period; the furniture that has been supposed as the status symbol and costly due to its hand- crafted production, stated to be produced affordably with the industrial revolution thus and so its usage has become widespread [5].

Production methods have changed as well as the product itself with industrialization and mechanization [6]. Industrial revolution provides to be able to afford carved furniture that produced with machine similar to hand-crafted furniture cheaply for non-wealthy part of the society [7].

2.2 The History of Furniture in Turkey

Currency of the furniture usage in Turkey is related closely to modernization process of the society and this process is accelerated with the enhancing communication opportunities. Today, the furniture is used absolutely in every home especially in cities.

The furniture types such as table, chair, credenza, and nightstand were not confronted since the recent period of Ottoman. People sit down lox cedars, ate in floor tables and used half- covered shelves and inbuilt cupboards that formed by wooden material [8].

The usage of furniture by Turkish people rose in the time of Sultan Abdulmecid II with the western policy. The most obvious example of that can be seen in Dolmabahçe Palace in place arrangement and the selection of furniture. While Topkapı palace resembles traditional nomads culture in Eastern, Dolmabahçe palace reflects rococo and baroque western culture. Emiroglu cites the transition of the Turks to the furniture usage that "the usage of European- style furniture gained a momentum in Ottoman Empire with the exhibition of furniture industry across Europe in London exhibition in 1851, the effects of French and British, who came to İstanbul

during crimean war, Dolmabahçe palace that was constructed between the years of 1835-1855" [9].

One of the most important indicators of the pastiche to Europe is the transition to apartment life. The apartments have been constructed since the recent years of Ottoman, living in these apartments rather than detached homes was accepted as an crucial symbol of being western thusly, notables of the society preferred to live in apartment flats. The usage of western furniture in homes developed contemporary with the enhancing city life consolidated by apartments. "The concept and dimension of home diminished and traditional furniture commenced to be not appropriate for these homes with becoming the apartment construction" [10]. It can be observed as in the historical period, traditional Ottoman space had a metamorphosis and "life with furniture" has been maintained ever after [11]. However, despite the fact that people moved in the apartments by continuing life with furniture, they could not adapt to this quick change due to many different habits of nomads culture such as sitting down on the floor, floor table and sleep on the floor. Homes have two separate parts for sitting down of the families. One of them is saloon and the other one is sitting room. Sitting room is used for daily by the people, who cannot get over the effects of traditional culture and saloon is space, where is used to be entertained the guests and has expensive and a lot of furniture.

Ayata describes the people that could not adapt to life with furniture as that "sitting room reflects glass, melamine plate, spring mattress, old carpet, tin ashtray, simple lamp, clothing with undershirt and sleepwear, sitting cross- legged, very small dinner table and saloon demonstrates crystal glass, porcelain plate, luxury armchair, new carpet, dapper clothing and controlled behaviors by the guests. This comparison commentates that the family has absolutely separated two worlds. While sitting room means closeness, sincerity, density, immediateness, artlessness, comfort, familiarity, and saloon is the world that getting in contact with foreigners disturbing the family. Behaviors in sitting room are characterized as comfortable and sincere and saloon-specific behaviors are entitled as "polite, kind" and sometimes "modern". The individual struggles to behave differently than daily such the examples as that the tea is stirred slowly, the accent is tried to be reformed, and cake is eaten by slicing into small bites, napkin is used. The word "formality" is used to define this atmosphere [12].

3 The Relationship between Hide-a-Bed Sofa and Nomadic Culture

3.1 The Concepts of Nomadism and Nomadic Culture

The word of nomad has originated by "immigration-oba" or "immigration- ave" from Persian. The idioms of nomadic, migrant, migratory were used currently in Ottoman and the concept of migrant was identified as "an individual, who has a home, moves to different places seasonally". The concepts of immigration, sitting down,

transition and moving are used in Central Asia Turkish dialects [13].

The word of nomadism as to Turkish Language Society is defined as the following that; 1. being a nomad, 2. soc. a tradition or habit of social unity that moving regularly for obtaining necessary resources to live.

Nomadism is not a transition irregularly according to citation of Tuncel from the book of "Housing and Settling in Anatolia from past to present". Nomadism became inevitable in time due to the efforts of transition to permanent settlement, finding new cultivation areas by disposing of ineffectiveness of the land since they did not know fallow and needing of the animals' natural vegetation. The basic indicator of nomadism is to reach food and water that are life sources. While the population increases, life sources are consumed more and number of labor enhances in order to obtain more life sources. Dispersion and league together should not be understood as solely revulsion of different societies and over clustering. This characteristic is valid for a single society. Units in a society that connected line of descent, are separated from each other in order to hunt depending upon unsuitability of season and climate, the level of mobility of animals and mess of plant cover. They close up farther and league together in the case of being intensified of food and water in a certain area.

Lives of nomads were formed as to shepherding characteristics. Life style was based on the mobility at any time. Ipso facto nomad should have possessed a mobile, fast, light, practical structure. Two basic elements of immigration were horse and wheel. The wheel was a mobile home and horse was an element that provides safety for community during a possible war. The wheels that used for carrying human and load were used till modern times by pulling with powerful horses as mobile homes. Traveler life verged of meeting need of sheltering, being removed easily, transportable and being pitched outdoors for nomad community and the concept of tent has emerged [14]. Immigration is a life style for nomadic people and these communities move as well organized. Nomadic people adapt whatever conditions easily due to their nomadic life styles. Nomadic people carry all the necessary objects they need nearby. Sheds, tents and shelters named as home, stuff and the furniture have light, flexible and versatile legibility. Many of nomadic people travel for herding their animals or hunting. In addition to this, mobile life is the most important factor that generates the identity of nomadic people [15].

Previous settlement of the Turks before they came to Anatolia has all the properties of nomadism. Asia steppes are not appropriate to live and settle. This situation required to change location continuously. The concept of "location" and "feeling of homeland" have solved thereby land and mobility. Natural and inappropriate effects of steppes induced to enhance the concept of "a limited, protective living environment" [16].

Open courtyards that located in the center of extant traditional Turkish homes confronted as the transformed

style of this habit. The Turks came to Anatolia after the acceptance of Islam and they adopted sedentary life [17].

3.2 Hide-a-Bed Sofa

Hide-a-bed sofa is identified according to Turkish Language Society as "an armchair or a sofa that can be used a bed by opening if required" [18]. Although hide-a-bed has become prevalent in 1980s in Turkey, it appeared with different names and similar functions in Turkish furniture history.

Turkish society spent a nomadic life during the period in Central Asia, yet they adopted sedentary life after their transition to Anatolia. They preferred the furniture that close to the floor thereby their earthbound lives. As the improvement the life requirements, life culture and required furniture began to differentiate and the furniture faraway floor has been in use [19].

Primary elements that used for sitting and rest in furniture history of the Turks are cedar and sofa, cupboards for storage.

3.2.1 Cedar and Dewan

The sitting spaces are constituted by raising the most important sitting element, named as "cedar" in front of the windows [20]. Cedar is a fixed element that appropriate for sitting, lying, rest, however table is a mobile element that established for meals [21].

The effects of Turkish room on social life can be observed as a crucial instance as in sitting act. The Turks, who get used to sit as crossing the legs, prefer to sit on the floor, though they have cedars at home. Sitting elements so-called as cedar is interesting as being closer to the floor, since its core meaning is the desire to sit on the floor. Cedars are placed on window ledges and along walls with windows, thus made the center desolated by forming the sitting spaces nearby the walls [22].

Dewan means as to Hasol's Encyclopedic Architecture Dictionary that "Far. Cedar with new style, sofa without backrest".

3.2.2 Cupboard

Cabinets called as cupboards service to hide many elements such as pillow, quilt etc. in the daytime. There are many shelves in cupboards with different length and shaped, even some of their upper side are held on the base so that it can be used as shelves. Thereby, cupboards have become functional wooden furniture, placed opposite the windowed wall of the rooms and inlet side, additionally it provides sound insulation between the places [23].

Abovementioned functions of the furniture such as sitting, sleeping and storage are supported by different elements in the beginning of Turkish furniture history. However, many functions are consisted in a only element with hide-a-bed sofa.

3.3 Nomadic Culture with Hide-a-Bed Sofa

The Turks were late for usage of furniture due to their nomads' lives for a long. Their aim was to use a material for more than one after the usage of the furniture. The

orientation of furniture usage has been similar; though different life styles have appeared. There are some similarities between nomad culture and permanent settlement. Firstly, narrowness of space if they even have life space in permanent settlement has resemblance to space uncertainty in nomad culture. The other similarity can be seen in progress to live in throng in permanent settlement and living in throng in nomad culture. Finally, old culture habits if it did not refer even to mobility in permanent settlement resembles to being continuous travelling in nomad culture.

Abovementioned similarities convey us to storable goods that function overly. Thus, hide-a-bed sofa becomes appropriate furniture for the Turks that pass to permanent settlement. They can meet their needs of sleeping, sitting and storage by only a good. It also solves the problem of occupying a place due to possessing a multifunctional style.

4 Conclusion

Hide- a-bed sofa maintains the habits of sitting, rest and storage in the same place that belong to nomadic culture with the characteristics of sitting in the daytime, transforming into bed in the nights and its storage the essential materials for bed together. Besides, hide-a- bed sofa has a feature as a way of facilitating the life without waiving aforesaid habits. While people have to carry the materials such as pillow, quilt by wrapping with bed lining, hide-a- bed sofa presents a storage place without carrying over. The usage of hide-a-bed sofa emerges a particular nomadic order within the permanent settlement [24].

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