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Enfoques atemporales en la cerámica de arte contemporáneo: un estudio sobre Can Gökçe

Timeless Approaches in Contemporary Art Ceramic: A Study on Can Gökçe

Dilek Alkan Özdemir

dalkan@anadolu.edu.tr, dilekalkana@gmail.com

Orcid No: 0000-0003-4346-8204

Anadolu University, School for the Handicapped Ceramic Department.

Eskişehir/Turkey

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Resumen

La cerámica, que ha sido parte del ser humano con la transición a la vida sedentaria, ha sido un puente entre el pasado y el futuro durante siglos. Las cerámicas se han diferenciado unas de otras a lo largo del tiempo por sus materiales, técnicas y formas. Uno de estos métodos de diferenciación es el arte del azulejo. Las aplicaciones de baldosas tienen un lugar importante y especial en el arte cerámico. El arte del azulejo ha arrojado luz sobre los seres humanos a lo largo de la historia y ha agregado valor estético a la vida como parte de su vida diaria. Como en el pasado, ha sido una fuente de inspiración para los artistas cerámicos de hoy. Nuestros motivos de baldosas se han utilizado en diferentes campos del arte, manteniéndose al día con la técnica y la tecnología en constante desarrollo. En este artículo se examinan las obras cerámicas de Can Gökçe, un cerámico y académico de joven generación que produjo obras con las huellas del antiguo arte del azulejo. Con su enfoque tradicional y moderno de síntesis del arte de la cerámica, las obras de cerámica de Can Gökçe representan el pasado, hoy y mañana, y es importante en términos de utilizar sus obras con diferentes disciplinas. El artista también demuestra un enfoque importante en términos de transferir, querer, sostener y preservar nuestro patrimonio cultural a las próximas generaciones en nuestra vida moderna.

El artículo incluye 19 obras del artista seleccionadas cronológicamente. Las primeras obras de época del artista se pueden ver en las primeras 4 imágenes. Es importante que el arte llegue a un público más amplio como resultado de colaboraciones artísticas interdisciplinarias, experimente una satisfacción más intensa y forme diferentes perspectivas. Artista Can Gökçe es un artista que aboga por la necesidad de la unidad interdisciplinar. Las imágenes 5-11 muestran trabajos seleccionados del proyecto que prepararon con el diseñador de moda Başak Cankeş. En las imágenes del 13 al 19 se ve que redimensionó motivos tradicionales, los adaptó a la vida actual y los utilizó en diferentes técnicas cerámicas. El objetivo principal del artículo es recordar una vez más que los azulejos, que de hecho son el patrimonio cultural turco reconocido por todo el mundo, son una de las principales herramientas de orientación en el arte de la cerámica moderna, para introducir el arte moderno de la cerámica turca en el ámbito internacional. plataformas y

enfatar la importancia de las colaboraciones interdisciplinarias. En este contexto, el artista Can Gökçe muestra un enfoque importante en términos de transferir, querer, mantener y proteger nuestro patrimonio cultural a las próximas generaciones en nuestra vida moderna. Además, se afirma en el artículo que el artista realiza proyectos innovadores y creativos utilizando líneas tradicionales y diferentes campos del arte.

Palabras clave: Cerámica, Arte Cerámico Contemporáneo, Azulejos.

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Abstract

Ceramics, which has been a part of human beings with the transition to settled life, has been a bridge between the past and the future for ages. Ceramics are differentiated from each other over time with their materials, techniques and forms. One of these differentiation methods is tile (çini). Tile applications have an important and special place in ceramic. Tile (çini) has both shed light on human beings throughout history and added aesthetic value to life as a part of their daily life. As in the past, it has been a source of inspiration for today's artists. Turkish tile motifs have been used in different fields of art, keeping up with the ever-developing technique and technology. In this article, works of Can Gökçe, a young generation artist and academician who produced works bearing the traces of the ancient tile, are examined. With its traditional modern synthesis approach to the art of ceramics, Can Gökçe's works represent the past, today and tomorrow, and it is important in terms of using his works with different disciplines.

The article includes 19 works of the artist selected chronologically. The first period works of the artist can be seen in the first 4 images. It is important for art to reach a wider audience as a result of interdisciplinary artistic collaborations, to experience more intense satisfaction and to form different perspectives. Artist Can Gökçe is an artist who advocates the necessity of interdisciplinary unity. Images 5-11 show selected works from the project they prepared with fashion designer Başak Cankeş. In the images from 13 to 19, it is seen

that he resized traditional motifs, adapted them with today's life and used them in different ceramic techniques. The main purpose of the article is to remind once again that tiles, which are in fact the Turkish cultural heritage recognized by the whole world, are one of the main guiding tools in the art of modern ceramics, to introduce modern Turkish ceramic art on international platforms and to emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary collaborations.

In this context, the artist Can Gökçe shows an important approach in terms of transferring, endearing, maintaining and protecting Turkish cultural heritage to the next generations in our modern life. In addition, it is stated in the article that the artist makes innovative and creative projects using traditional lines and different art fields.

Keywords: Ceramic, Contemporary Art Ceramic, Tile (Çini).

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1. Introduction

Ceramic, which is a bridge between the past and the future, is a material that emerged as a result of a natural human need, the need for containers. Human intelligence has become a branch of art with the development of technic and technology. It has been used in different fields throughout history during this development process. Especially the tile wall coverings used in architecture left mark with a rich narrative language with the quality of raw materials and geometric, floral and calligraphic decorations.

Used as a decoration element in the Islamic world and Turkish states, the tiles developed depending on the architecture and entered Anatolia during the Seljuk period. In the Ottoman period, it reached its highest point both technically and aesthetically due to the cultural richness that evolved parallel to the cosmopolitan structure brought by the state's wide geography.

The cultural diversity in Anatolian lands, the fact that the region is on a trade route and most importantly, the raw materials required to produce ceramics are abundant in these regions, made Iznik, which was the capital city for three times in history, and then Kütahya, the tile production center of the Ottoman period since the 15th century. The rich production in Iznik started to decline in the second half of the 17th century and came to a standstill. It is known that Kütahya stepped in during this period (Turan Bakır, 2007: 305). Kütahya is a city where ceramic production was made intensively during the Phrygian, Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods and this art is traditionally kept alive today, due to the rich clay deposits around it (Bilgi, 2005: 9).

Starting from the 14th century until the end of the 17th century, Iznik had a stunning richness of decor and the use of original techniques, the magnificent presentation of the tiles in palaces, social complexes and government buildings in Ottoman architecture. That prominence happened especially with the harmony of technical and aesthetic unity, which made Iznik tiles unique and continuous. Although traditional production and abstract decoration dominate the tiles and ceramics from the Anatolian Seljuk period to the period of the principalities, the line language of ornamentation and decoration in the Ottoman period shows an abstractive development towards the western approach (Uludağ, 1998:36).

With the Republican era, the innovations brought by the period and the rapprochement to the west were seen in the field of ceramics, as in other branches of art. Studies for innovation and differentiation have begun both in

industry and in educational institutions. This historical background and contemporary field of ceramic transformed with mosaics in Anatolian society have shaped today's art. Today's artists produce their works by being inspired by Anatolian culture in some periods of their artistic experiences. In this context, the artist creates a new work by absorbing his cultural heritage and adding his original interpretation to it. Thereby, this work both carries on the realities of the period in which it was created and becomes a document for future periods while establishing a connection with the past.

In the formation and development process of modern art ceramic, since the ways of thinking, understanding of art, life styles and political approaches of the artists are different, their handling of the subject in the works they will create, their interpretations, presentations, techniques will also differ.

In this context, doyen Turkish artist and writer, Atilla Galatalı, who uses the ceramic material has divided today's ceramic art into three groups as classical modern synthesist orientation, abstract original form, and ceramic sculpture in order to expound these differences clearly.

Classical modern synthesist orientation: Diversifying from classical ceramic reproducing the modern interpretations using functional ornamental logic and forms (Uludağ, 1988:36).

Abstract original form: Different from the traditional forms and decorations, they are works that are different from the template forms, originally produced by the artist.

Ceramic sculpture: Ceramic clay has a plastic structure due to its nature, which makes it a very good material for sculpting. With the exclusion of function completely, the works produced from ceramic clay formed the ceramic sculpture group. In this direction, as in the past, ceramic artists produce their works in

today's conditions, by adding their original creativity to their application areas.

Today, we have artists who produce works going by these three classifications. It is a must- have approach for them to produce works due to their researcher identities, technical and aesthetic concerns in each of classical modern synthesist orientation, abstract original form and ceramic sculpture groupings, in different periods of their art life. Bearing these approaches in mind, works of the artist and academician Can Gökçe are included in the article.

2. Ceramic Works of Can Gökçe

After graduating from Dokuz Eylül University Fine Arts Faculty Traditional Turkish Handicrafts Department, Tile and Tile Repairs Art Major in 2006, the artist wrote a thesis entitled "Kütahya Tiles at the Victoria & Albert Museum in England" at Dokuz Eylül University Fine Arts Institute in 2011 and completed his master's degree with his exhibition. It seems to be relevant to handle the ceramic works of this young generation artist and academic Can Gökçe under the title of "Classical Modern Synthesist Orientation" of Atilla Galatalı, who is still continuing his proficiency training in art at Hacettepe University Fine Arts Institute, Department of Ceramics. While Gökçe emphasizes the importance of both technical and aesthetic unity in his ceramic works, he uses Turkish tile (çini), which has an important place in the history of ceramic, in modern works, wall panels and three-dimensional forms and in different techniques.

In his ceramic works, he redesigned the motifs belonging to different periods and used them in his works in a pictorial style. The plates, tiles, paints and glazes he used in his works are completely ready-made materials used in classical tile making.

He applied his designs on "Sultanate Boats", which he examined in 2010, by

using tile making technique, traditional patterns and colors, and brought a different interpretation by combining "Swans of the Bosphorus" with palace art.

Sultanate Boat: A boat adorned with many oars, on which the sultans and government officials boarded during the Ottoman period (Sözen /Tanyeli, 1992: 208).

In the Ottoman period, boats were named according to the places they used and the people who used them. There was a hierarchy among the boats. The boat carrying the Sultan was at the forefront in this hierarchy. Only he, his mother, his women and children could use the Sultan's boat. This boat was magnificent enough to symbolize the reign of the period and power of the state. A French count wrote that this boat was fascinatingly beautiful that cuts the waters like a sword; he described the gold leaf woods as "that workmanship, that magnificence". He wrote that the bird at the head of the boat, the symbol of the empire, was made of solid gold, the pavilion in the boat was almost the throne of the Sultan and jewels were placed on the ceiling (http-1).

In figures 1, 2, 3 and 4, selected examples of "Sultanate Boat", interpreted by the artist are seen. The works were patterned on the tile body, which was biscuit fired at 1050 °C, and glazed firing was applied at 930 °C.

In the 82 cm diameter plate seen in figure 1, the motifs of çintemani and china clouds catch our eye at first. The sultanate boat motif in the center, the Escher-style bird on the edge of the plate, and the fish motifs on the floor are all stylized uniquely. Small spiral patterns, which are generally used in miniatures, are used in this work to emphasize the sea element.



Figure 1. Can Gökçe, Sultanate Boat With Çintemani Motif, 2009, tile body, underglaze decoration, 930 °C glazed firing, R: 82cm. Can Gökçe photo archive.

In figure 2, we intensely perceive our traditional motif in the form of spiral vines, consisting of simple, small-leaved flowers, blue-colored, defined as the Haliç work since it was first found in the Haliç, and we see the Chinese clouds and bird figures on the edge of the plate. The Bosphorus view and Ortaköy mosque were applied in tile technique with the sultanate boat in the center of the plate.



Figure 2. Can Gökçe, Sultanate Boat in Ortaköy, 2009, tile body, underglaze decoration, 930 °C glazed firing, R: 65cm. Can Gökçe photo archive.

Figure 3 shows a 50x70x5 cm wall panel. It can be seen that Chinese clouds and cypress tree motifs are also used on the panel, on which tulip motifs are used prominently. Small spirals, which are generally used on plate edges and borders, are used to give a sea wave effect. The wall panel is completed with a stylized sultanate boat.



Figure 3. Can Gökçe, Iznik Tulips and Sultanate Boat, 2009, tile body, underglaze decoration, 50x70x5 cm.
Can Gökçe photo archive.

In figure 4, the sultanate boat, stylized on the wall panel of 50x90x5 cm, is patterned in the Bosphorus with spiral plant patterns called Haliç work, Chinese clouds, small çintemanis, stylized birds and fish.



Figure 4. Can Gökçe, Sultanate Boat in Front of Kızkulesi, 2009, tile body, underglaze decoration, 50x70x5 cm. Can Gökçe photo archive.

Turkish Tile (çini) motifs, which are Turkish cultural heritage, affect not only field of ceramic, but also other fields of art and joint work areas are born. As the French philosopher Voltaire quoted "All the arts are brothers, each one is a light to the others", all fields of art actually support each other and are related. The works created as a result of projects carried out with different disciplines create an environment that supports innovation and creativity. In this context, Can Gökçe's interpretation, inspired by Iznik tiles and Edgar Degas' ballerinas, came to life by printing on silk fabrics in the 4th Wearable Art Collection, prepared by fashion designer Başak Cankeş. As a result of a work process that lasted for 4 months, original designs emerged. Images 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 contain selected examples from these works.

A brand-new design has been created with the combination of Saz Road and Hatayi motifs used in Iznik tiles with ballerina figures. In the style of the Saz Road, the motif can be extended forever by curling the motifs over each other or passing one through the other. In this sense, it is a motif that expresses the

continuity of life and renewal. In figure 5, the new design of Saz Road and Hatayi motif with a ballerina figure can be seen on the wall panel of 10x60x5 cm. The design was patterned with tile paints on tiles, and glazed firing was applied at 930 °C. It shows the print version of the design on silk fabric is on figure 6, clothing version of the design is on figures 7 and 8 ([http-2](#)).



Figure 5. Can Gökçe, Iznik Tiles and Ballerinas, 2017, tiles, under glaze decoration, 10x60x5 cm. Can Gökçe photo archive.



Figure 6. The work in figure 5 is printed on silk fabric. Can Gökçe photo archive.



Figure 7. The work in figure 5 is used in the costume. Can Gökçe photo archive.



Figure 8. The use of the work in figure 5 on the costume. Can Gökçe photo archive.

Figure 9 has a 10x60x5 cm wall panel. The panel shows the aesthetic unity of the Saz Road motif, large dagger leaves, paw motifs obtained by stylizing a bird's eye view of a flower and ballerina figures. The design is patterned with tile paints on the tiles, and glazed firing is applied at 930 °C. In figure 10, the design is printed on silk fabric, and in figure 11, it is transformed into a garment.



Figure 9. Can Gökçe, Degas in Nicea, 2017, tiles, under glaze decoration, 10x60x5 cm.
Can Gökçe photo archive.



Figure 10. The work in figure 9 is printed on silk fabric. Can Gökçe photo archive.



Figure 11. The work in figure 9 is used in the costume. Can Gökçe photo archive.

In figure 12, a ballerina figure applied on two flat ceramic plates with a diameter of 72 cm and 62 cm is seen. The skirts of the ballerina in the figure are made of rose motifs stylized in a tile pattern. When looking at the work, a tile pattern is not seen anymore. As stated in the introduction of the article, Can Gökçe's ballerina figured plates have become a new design that carries the modern approach while establishing a connection with the past. Technically, the under glaze was decorated using a sable brush and, in this process, glazed firing was applied at 930 °C using relief tile paint. The application stage is seen in figure 13.



Figure 12. Can Gökçe, The Dream of Degas in Rose, 2017, tile body, underglaze decoration, R: 72cm R: 62cm. Can Gökçe photo archive.



Figure 13. Can Gökçe. 2017. Can Gökçe photo archive.

In figure 14, a tile plate reflecting today's woman is seen. While the tile décor applied with a completely black sable brush is seen on the background, there is a contemporary female figure in the center. In the study, the position of women in society is addressed. It is seen that the artist's own senses are fictionalized on a traditional structure, completely moving away from the traditional tile interpretation. It is a work with under-glaze décor with a sable brush on a ready-made ceramic plate with a diameter of 25 cm and glazed firing at 930 °C.



Figure 14. Can Gökçe, Woman in Red, 2013, tile body, under glaze decoration, R: 25 cm. Can Gökçe photo archive.

In addition to ceramic plates and panels, we see the traces and reflection of tile patterns in their three-dimensional forms. Two different forms are seen in figures 15 and 16. The common features of these forms are that the upper part has spiral folds made using the openwork method, which resembles the Haliç Style, and the use of blue “Egypt Paste” between the surfaces. In the works, the “Haliç Style” motif was combined with Egypt Paste and came to life again in the form of a bowl. In addition, single firing was applied at 950 °C.



Figure 15. Can Gökçe, Untitled, 2018, openwork and Egypt Paste technique, R: 14cm. Can Gökçe photo archive.



Figure 16. Can Gökçe, Egypt 1, 2010, openwork and Egypt Paste technique, 15x15x3cm.
CanGökçe photo archive.

In figure 17, the form created by repeating the unit consisting of 6 squares and 8 hexagons, defined as a truncated octahedron in geometry, is seen (<http-3>). Unit model is produced by drawing in 3D software. The form, which was inspired by the pattern and form mentality of Edirne Muradiye Mosquetiles, exhibits a dynamic structure, underglaze décor was applied, and glazed firing was performed at 1150 °C. In figures 18 and 19, two different forms formed from the same unit are seen. In these works, underglaze decoration was applied, and glazed firing was performed at 1150 °C.



Figure 17. Can Gökçe, Muradiye, 2020, 3D Design, underglaze decoration, unitsize
5x5x5cm.

Can Gökçe photo archive.



Figure 18. Can Gökçe, Untitled, 2019, shaping with mold, underglaze decoration,unit size
5x5x5cm. Can Gökçe photo archive.



Figure 19. Can Gökçe, Untitled, 2019, shaping with mold, underglaze decoration, unit size 5x5x5cm.

Can Gökçe photo archive.

3. Conclusion

The unique patterns and shapes on the tiles have also been reflected in fabrics and weavings, architecture and objects used in daily life, and have been a source of inspiration for other art fields. It is very important in terms of maintaining this tradition, preserving cultural heritage, transferring it to young people and making them love it.

In "Criticism" statement of the contemporary Turkish artist Attila Galatalı, the modern artist who uses ceramic material was presented as "Contemporary ceramic artist; He is such a person who can abstract the art from the concept of handicraft and open-use vessel with the criticism he will direct to the structure

of ceramic art in history, and who can reveal the contemporary visual art structure in a way that can shed light on the future”. As the definition makes it clear, he underlines the fact that art ceramic is a modern connection between the past and the future and provides information transfer to the future.

In this context, while creating a unique style without detaching itself from his/her cultural heritage, it should be among the goals of an artist who uses ceramic material to bring a contemporary interpretation to his works and to make these new designs worth considering in the world field of ceramic.

Artists such as Ünal Cimit, Sadi Diren and Alev Ebuzyiya, who are among the doyen names of Turkish ceramic art, started out from the sources offered by traditional Anatolian and Turkish culture and produced their works by adding on them. At this point, it should be noted that the works of the intellectual man, Muammer Çakı, who passed away at a young age, produced modern works based on Turkish traditional tile culture, are also a good example in this field. Reflections originated from Anatolian culture can be seen in the works of many other artists. In this article, the ceramics of Can Gökçe, a young generation artist and academician, who gave them a different dimension in his works by inspiring from the heritage of Turkish tile (çini), were examined.

The artist, who transfers his experiences to his works in his own unique expression, renews himself in this sense by following current techniques and technologies, as well as producing different works, as can be seen in the works in the article, and keeps the inherent connection up to date in his works while doing research. The artist's control over the material further strengthened his expression in his narratives. In his works, he uses Turkish tile patterns both superficially and in three dimensions with different techniques and he is an artist who also collaborates with the other artists from different disciplines. Can Gökçe, who has done 2 projects with fashion designer Başak Cankeş, also expressed

during a speech that he wants to work on traditional patterns in the digital environment with a graphic designer in the future.

Gökçe is an artist who always puts his researcher identity forward in his ceramics bearing traces of Turkish cultural heritage, renews himself, conveys current life and social events in his works, and attaches great importance to artistic collaborations. He stated that his goal is not to produce as a part of popular culture, but to create timeless works that will live in the future. In this direction, he continues to produce his works and continue his academic studies.

As a result, the better we know our past, the better we understand and express our day. Followingly the work we create becomes a timeless work that evokes the past, has something to communicate with the present and the future, and has a message.

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