

Historical Influences in Small Electric Appliance Design: The Case of Turkish Coffee Makers

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This study examines the integration of historical influences in the design of small electric appliances, specifically focusing on Turkish coffee makers. By analyzing a range of contemporary Turkish coffee makers, the research explores how traditional motifs, cultural symbolism, and historical references are incorporated into their form, material, and aesthetic features. The study investigates how these elements bridge modern functionality with cultural heritage, emphasizing their role in preserving identity while catering to global markets. For this research, purposive sampling was used to select Turkish companies in the small kitchen appliances sector known for their design properties. Selected designs reveal the subtle ways manufacturers reference Ottoman art, Turkish craftsmanship, and traditional coffeemaking methods. The findings highlight the relationship between nostalgia and innovation, as these appliances evolve into symbols of cultural storytelling. This research contributes to the discourse on product design by demonstrating how historical references are represented in the overall design, cultural identity, and the appeal of small appliances.

K eywords

Turkish Coffee Makers, Historical Influences in Design, Cultural Heritage.

Introduction

Turkish coffee, renowned for its unique flavor and brewing method, originated in the Ottoman Empire during the 16th century and quickly became an integral part of the region's cultural and social fabric (Hattox, 1985). Its preparation involves finely ground coffee, water, and sugar, brewed slowly in a traditional cezve. The term *cezve* refers to a small, long-handled pot, typically made of copper or brass, used for brewing Turkish coffee (Cambridge University Press, 2025).

The evolution of Turkish coffee makers from the traditional cezve to modern electric appliances reflects both Turkey's industrial progress and the changing demands of consumers. With the onset of industrialization in Turkey during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the production of everyday items, including coffee makers, was significantly transformed, combining traditional brewing methods with technology. Early electric Turkish coffee makers emerged in the 1950s, pioneered by Turkish companies such as Arcelik and Beko. These appliances automated the coffee brewing process, making it more convenient for consumers while retaining the essential aspects of traditional preparation, which previously required manual supervision over a stovetop (Güven, 2014). The designs evolved to incorporate durable materials like stainless steel and high-quality plastics, making them both functional and accessible to a wider audience (Sahin, 2018).

Arçelik and Beko, two of Turkey's leading household appliance manufacturers, have significantly shaped the design and mass production of electric Turkish coffee makers. Established in the 1950s, Arçelik focused on introducing innovative and functional designs that combined both modern technology and traditional aesthetics. Their electric coffee makers maintained the essential form of the cezve while integrating features like automatic temperature control and anti-spill systems. Beko, a subsidiary of Arçelik, followed suit by creating appliances that balanced contemporary design with cultural references.

Both brands, over the years, have continuously refined their coffee maker designs. Their products, characterized by durable materials like stainless steel and high-quality plastics, were not only designed for local markets but also global export, helping to establish Turkey as a significant player in the international small appliance industry (Erdem, 2016; Celik, 2019).

This study analyzes current Turkish coffee maker designs, comparing historical influences with modern iterations. By examining contemporary products, it highlights how traditional motifs, materials, and craftsmanship are integrated with modern functionality and aesthetics. The research aims to understand how historical references are employed in the current design market.

Methodology

In Turkey, the small kitchen appliances market is supported by a robust network of manufacturers. The White Goods Parts Suppliers Association of Turkey (BEYSAD) includes approximately 182 supplier firms, which are engaged in the production of components for household appliances, including small kitchen appliances (Trade.gov.tr, 2025). Additionally, the Small Domestic Appliances Industrialists Association (KESID) was founded on April 16, 2002, to enhance the small domestic appliances sector in Turkey. KESID supports the growth, development, and modernization of the industry, ensuring compliance with international standards and fostering global competitiveness (Kesid, 2025). The research focuses on the electrical Turkish coffee maker models of the top 3 companies dominating the market.

For this research, purposive sampling was used to select Turkish companies in the small kitchen appliances sector known for their design properties. Purposive sampling, also referred to as judgmental or selective sampling, is a non-probability technique in which the researcher deliberately selects cases or individuals that are particularly relevant to the research objectives. This method enables a focused approach, targeting a specific subset of the population that is most likely to provide valuable insights for the study.

By using this technique, the research narrows down its sample to companies recognized for their innovative designs, ensuring that the selected cases align with the study's goals of examining how historical influences are integrated into the design of contemporary Turkish coffee makers. Purposive sampling is especially suitable for studies that require detailed, in-depth analysis of a particular segment, as it allows the researcher to concentrate on subjects that exhibit the characteristics most pertinent to the research question (Patton, 2015). This sampling method enhances the study's relevance and ensures that the findings are directly applicable to the research focus.

In this case, the selection criteria were based on the recognition of companies that have received prestigious design awards such as the iF Design Award (iF Design, 2025), Red Dot Design Award (Red Dot, 2025), and Good Design Award (Chicago Athenaeum, 2025) for their small kitchen appliances, particularly coffee makers. These awards are widely regarded as indicators of innovation, aesthetic appeal, and user-centered design in the global market. The companies chosen for the study were those that have demonstrated their leadership in design by receiving one or more of these honors in the small kitchen appliance category.

The specific brands selected for analysis include Arçelik, Beko, Vestel, Korkmaz, Arzum, Emsan, and Schafer, as these brands have consistently been recognized for their high-quality, innovative designs in the small kitchen appliance market. By focusing on these award-winning companies, the research ensures that the sample represents industry leaders in design, offering valuable insights into the relationship between design awards, innovation, and cultural identity in the Turkish market. This purposive approach enables a deeper understanding of how Turkish manufacturers are shaping the small kitchen appliance market through award-winning designs. Below is the list of companies in alphabetical order with the awards for small kitchen appliances.

1. Arçelik:

- Telve Coffee Machine: Bronze Design Award (A' Design Award, 2025), iF Design Award, Red Dot Design Award (A' Design Award, 2025; iF Design, 2025; Red Dot, 2025).
- Telve Pro Coffee Maker: Red Dot Design Award (Red Dot, 2025).
- Tadı VarTM Yogurt Maker: iF Design Award (2022).

2. Arzum:

Arzum Okka: iF Design Award and Red Dot Design Award for its innovative Turkish coffee-making technology (iF Design, 2025; Red Dot, 2025).

3. Beko:

CaffeExperto Series CE 3000 & CE 4500 Coffee Machines: iF Design Award (iF Design, 2025).

Emsan Elegant Espresso Machine: iF Design Award for design excellence in small kitchen appliances (iF Design, 2025).

5. Korkmaz:

Korkmaz A397 Coffee Maker: iF Design Award (iF Design, 2025).

6. Schafer:

Schafer Smart Coffee Machine: Red Dot Design Award for its smart features and user-friendly design (Red Dot, 2025).

Object Selection and Data Collection

This research focuses on analyzing the websites of selected Turkish appliance companies to study their electric Turkish coffee maker models. The study collects data from product pages, technical specifications, and multimedia content provided by the official websites, aiming to evaluate the design and features of these appliances. The data collection process is conducted between 01.02.2025 and 20.02.2025.

To maintain a systematic approach, the companies and their products are listed in alphabetical order. On websites where alphabetical sorting is not available, the products are organized based on price, starting from the cheapest. This ensures consistency in the data presentation and allows for easier comparison of the products.

Only the Turkish versions of the websites are analyzed to focus on models and information relevant to the local market. This scope helps capture the product variations, marketing strategies, and user-focused details tailored specifically to Turkish consumers. By narrowing the study to official Turkish websites, the research avoids inconsistencies that may arise from international versions of the sites.

Through this approach, the study provides insights into the design trends, functionality, and key features of electric Turkish coffee makers offered by prominent Turkish appliance brands. It also examines how these products are presented and marketed online, contributing to a better understanding of consumer-targeted strategies within the Turkish market. This research serves as a foundation for exploring broader design and usability aspects in the context of household appliances in Turkey.

Findings

The study begins with an investigation of Arçelik's website. Turkish coffee makers are categorized under the Coffee Makers and Small Electric Appliances sections, both of which can be accessed through the main page navigation (Arcelik, 2025).



Figure 1: TKM 3341 Telve-X Anthracite Turkish Coffee Machine (Arcelik, 2025).

Figure 2: TKM 3341 Telve-X Turkish Coffee Machine Video Screenshot (Arcelik, 2025).

The TKM 3341 Telve-X in anthracite (Figure 1) is a modern Turkish coffee maker characterized by a sleek, rectangular casing with silver framing and a black coffee pot. The casing, with filleted edges, prominently displays the brand and model name. The design of the coffee pot, while practical, does not strongly evoke traditional Turkish coffee makers. Figure 2 presents two color variations of this model, maintaining a contemporary aesthetic. Although the coffee machine features a modern design, the accompanying video demonstrates the traditional Turkish coffee preparation method, including pairing the coffee with Turkish delight, which reinforces the cultural connection (Sengelen, 2023).

Figure 3 presents a listing of various coffee machines, highlighting several color and dimension variations of the same model, as well as technical specifications. In the K 3300 Mini Telve Black model, the copper lining on the casing frames can be interpreted as a subtle reference to the color of traditional Turkish coffee pots. This color choice is further reflected in the following model, TKM 9961 B Telve, which incorporates more advanced technical features. In this model, the traditional reference is more prominent, with copper coloring applied to the coffee pot's body. Additionally, a narrow copper-colored rectangle can be found below the machine's interface on its top surface (Figure 4), further enhancing the connection to the aesthetics of traditional coffee brewing.

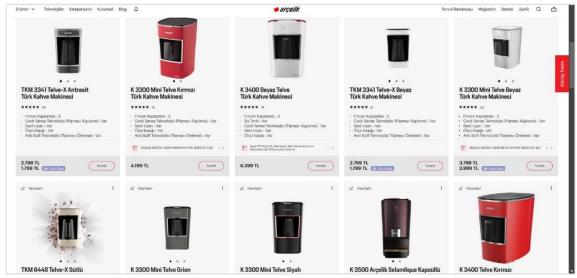


Figure 3: Arcelik Turkish Coffee Makers Webpage Screenshot (Arcelik, 2025).



Figure 4: TKM 9961 B Telve Turkish Coffee Machine (Arcelik, 2025). Figure 5: Arzum Turkish Coffee Makers Webpage Screenshot (Arzum, 2025).

Arzum, another prominent brand, offers its Turkish coffee maker, Okka, in various colors and dimensions (Figure 5). The OK001 Okka Turkish Coffee Maker, listed alphabetically as the first product, is a two-cup model that is relatively larger compared to earlier examples. Its primary color scheme is black, accentuated with copper details (Figure 6). Notably, the copper bar facing the user features a floral motif pattern. While this pattern draws inspiration from traditional Ottoman textile designs, it has been significantly minimized. Ottoman textile designs, crafted by the royal design atelier (nakkaşhane), adapted shared decorative motifs for weaving constraints. Popular patterns included floral designs with wavy stems, blooming palmettes, carnations, and pomegranates, as well as ogival layouts featuring peonies in lattice formations. These lattice patterns, gaining prominence under Sultan Süleyman I, likely drew inspiration from Iznik tile decorations, earlier Mamluk silks, and Chinese designs. The interplay of floral iconography and elegant layouts exemplifies the artistic sophistication and cultural influences in Ottoman decorative arts (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2025).

Another version of Okka can be seen having the same aesthetic approach (Figure 7). This model includes a pot which has a copper coloured body and a handle with copper colour framing. The interface of the main body facing the user has the same properties, along with the brand and model name written on the surface. Again, the copper colour choice signals the traditional coffee brewing copper pots.



Figure 6: OK001 Okka Turkish Coffee Maker (Arzum, 2025).

Figure 7: OK0010 OKKA Minio Pro Turkish Coffee Maker (Arzum, 2025).

The main body's interface, facing the user, retains the same design elements, including the brand and model name inscribed on the surface. The copper accents again evoke traditional Turkish coffee brewing practices, referencing the iconic copper pots.

The next company is Beko, which similarly has a selection of Turkish coffee makers to Arcelik (Figure 8). Both the colour choices and forms of the products are the same, while technical properties, which are out of the scope of this research, may differ. In the selection Beko offers, there are no strong references to the historical background of Turkish coffee making.

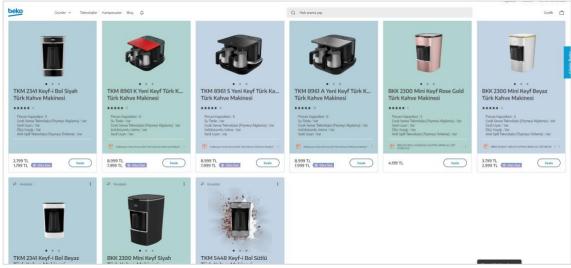


Figure 8: Beko Turkish Coffee Makers Webpage Screenshot.

Figure 9 shows two models of the Emsan, Homend Pottoman Milk in 1873H, Turkish coffee maker, available in two color variations. The first model features a cream and metallic finish, combining a black center. The second model showcases a black metallic design with a consistent dark tone, accented by a silver metallic handle for contrast. Both models have a compact, rectangular form with rounded edges.

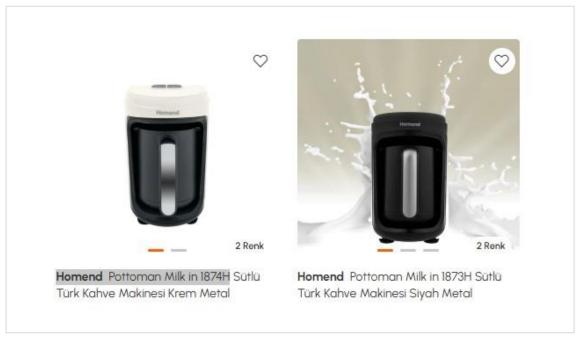


Figure 9: Emsan, Homend Pottoman Milk in 1874H, Turkish Coffee Makers (Emsan, 2025).

Korkmaz is another company that offers a selection of Turkish coffee makers. There are a total of 37 options under the webpage Coffee Makers, of which 26 are Turkish coffee makers (Korkmaz, 2025). Kahvekolik and Otantik are the two main models that vary in colour and dimension on technical specifications. Figure 10 shows the model Kahvekolik on various dimensions. Overall, a rounded black casing with copper coloured framing covers the black pot inside, which has a black body and a copper coloured handle.



Figure 10: Korkmaz Kahvekolik Deluxe Otomatik Turkish Coffee Makers (Korkmaz, 2025).



Figure 11: Korkmaz Otantik Black A865 Turkish Coffee Maker (Korkmaz, 2025).

Figure 12: Korkmaz Smart Electrical Inox/Black Turkish Coffee Maker (Korkmaz, 2025).

The Korkmaz Otantik coffee maker, available in black and silver variations (Figure 11), features a curvilinear design that can evoke a floral inspiration. Other color variations of this model predominantly utilize modernist combinations. The Smart Coffee Maker (Figure 12), which more closely resembles the traditional cezve in shape compared to the rest of the collection, is an alternative example of the Korkmaz collection. The Smart Coffee Maker is designed with a silver body and black accents, including a lid, which is not a feature typically associated with traditional coffee pots.

Schafer offers two models, Coffee Point and Kahvecim, in a total of 7 variations (Figure 13). Models are dominantly compact casings with rounded edges presented in black, cream, red, blue, silver, and copper colours. Pots are mostly black, only one being silver, with colour accents on the handles.

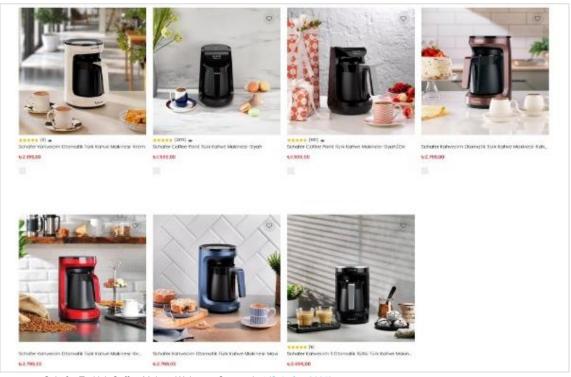


Figure 13: Schafer Turkish Coffee Makers Webpage Screenshot (Schafer, 2025).

Discussion

The integration of historical references in contemporary Turkish coffee maker design exemplifies a set of user-centered approaches, references of nostalgia, and a modernist lifestyle. Companies like Arçelik and Beko design products that respect cultural heritage while responding to modern lifestyle needs, such as convenience and efficiency. The form and function of these coffee makers, inspired by the traditional cezve, cater to users' needs, addressing not only functional expectations but also symbolic meanings. Here, industrial products become mediators between the past and the present, fusing Ottoman-era aesthetics with contemporary materials and user habits. The nostalgia embedded in design elements, such as form references or ornamentation, transforms these everyday objects into cultural storytellers. This fusion illustrates the enduring power of heritage in shaping national branding, particularly in a globalized marketplace. The level of use between modernist and historical references between different modes and brands creates a foundation for future research which is beyond of scope of this study. It can also be discussed that winning prestigious design awards validates these strategies, suggesting that innovation today often involves not radical reinvention, but the strategic reinterpretation of cultural memory. Thus, Turkish coffee makers reflect a broader shift in product development from purely functional solutions to emotionally and culturally resonant experiences. This convergence of design thinking, cultural heritage, and innovation repositions domestic appliances as tools of both modern living and identity preservation.

Conclusion

This study explored the integration of historical influences in the design of modern Turkish coffee makers, focusing on the interplay between tradition and contemporary design. By analyzing the designs of Turkish coffee makers from several prominent manufacturers such as Arçelik, Beko, Korkmaz, Schafer, and Arzum, the research identified patterns in how traditional motifs, materials, and cultural heritage are incorporated into the products' visual and functional elements. The findings reveal a spectrum of approaches, ranging from subtle nods to traditional craftsmanship to overt references to Ottoman art and Turkish coffee culture.

Across the selected brands, copper was the most common material or color used to evoke the traditional cezve, a copper or brass pot historically used to brew Turkish coffee. For example, Arcelik's TKM 9961 B Telve model prominently features copper coloring on the body of the coffee pot and subtle copper accents on the machine's top surface. Similarly, Arzum's Okka coffee maker uses copper details on the pot and interface, with a decorative floral motif inspired by Ottoman textile designs. These design choices demonstrate how manufacturers leverage the cultural significance of copper to bridge historical and contemporary coffee-making practices.

Additionally, Arzum's Okka models incorporate minimalist floral motifs reminiscent of Ottoman design traditions, such as blooming palmettes and carnations, which historically adorned textiles, ceramics, and architecture. By reducing these intricate patterns to simplified, elegant forms, manufacturers create designs that are both culturally resonant and suitable for contemporary aesthetics.

While traditional influences are evident, the designs are also characterized by sleek, modern forms and advanced technological features. For instance, Arçelik's Telve-X and Schafer's Coffee Point models prioritize functionality with compact casings, rounded edges, and automated brewing systems. Despite the modernist design language, subtle traditional elements such as copper accents and familiar forms are incorporated to maintain a connection to cultural heritage.

Arçelik and Beko offer products with similar designs, emphasizing functionality over cultural references. Although their color schemes include copper, these models lean toward minimalism, focusing on clean lines and user-friendly interfaces. In contrast, Arzum's Okka coffee makers balance modern technology with cultural references more prominently, including elements like copper-colored bodies and historically inspired floral patterns.

It can be discussed that brands like Arçelik and Beko prioritize minimalism over strong historical referencing to appeal to a broader, possibly international audience. Minimalist designs offer versatility, ensuring compatibility with various interior styles. This strategy aligns with a focus on functional, userfriendly appliances rather than culturally specific designs.

Different manufacturers approach the integration of tradition and modernity in varying degrees. Arçelik and Beko's designs reflect a more restrained use of cultural references, often limiting historical elements to color choices and material finishes. Their focus appears to be on practicality, targeting a wider, possibly global audience. In contrast, Arzum explicitly incorporates traditional motifs and design elements. For instance, Korkmaz's Otantik and Kahvekolik models feature rounded black casings with copper-colored frames that evoke the traditional cezve. The Otantik model even employs curvilinear shapes reminiscent of floral inspirations, blending traditional forms with contemporary design. Schafer, while not as explicitly traditional in its designs, uses copper and other metallic accents in its compact and modern casings.

The results indicate that manufacturers intentionally balance nostalgia with innovation. Domestic consumers may value culturally rich designs reflecting Ottoman motifs and copper finishes, while international buyers prioritize functionality, sleek aesthetics, and ease of use. This dual demand might encourage manufacturers to balance tradition and modernity, offering models that cater to both local heritage and global market trends. The incorporation of traditional elements, such as copper coloring and Ottoman-inspired patterns, allows brands to preserve cultural identity while maintaining the competitive edge of modern functionality. For example, Arzum's Okka series not only incorporates traditional motifs but also provides advanced brewing features, ensuring the appliances appeal to consumers seeking both cultural connection and convenience. The findings underscore the dual role of Turkish coffee makers as functional appliances and cultural symbols. By combining traditional motifs with modern design, these products might resonate with local consumers while also appealing to global markets.

This study highlights the nuanced ways in which historical influences are integrated into modern Turkish coffee makers. The commercialization of Turkish coffee makers can lead to superficial cultural references, risking cultural dilution. Manufacturers may prioritize profit by using generic motifs rather than authentic designs, reducing cultural elements to aesthetic tokens. This tension challenges brands to maintain cultural integrity while achieving competitive market positioning. The findings demonstrate that these appliances are not only tools for brewing coffee but also artifacts of cultural storytelling, bridging the past with the present. By blending traditional elements with contemporary aesthetics and functionality, manufacturers contribute to the preservation of cultural identity while adapting to the demands of global markets.

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