

**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
BAHÇEŞEHİR UNIVERSITY**

**POST – TELEVISION ERA IN TURKEY:
AN ANALYSIS OF LOCAL TV SERIES GENRES BY
STREAMING SERVICES**

Ph.D. Thesis

NİSA GÜLENER YILDIRIM

ISTANBUL, 2020

**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
BAHÇEŞEHİR UNIVERSITY**

**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
CINEMA AND MEDIA RESEARCH (PH. D.)**

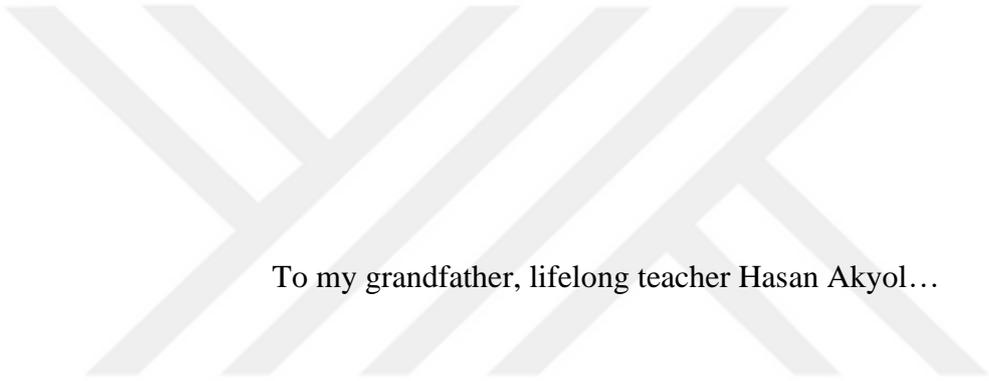
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SUPERVISOR: PROF. DR. NİLAY ULUSOY

ISTANBUL, 2020



To my grandfather, lifelong teacher Hasan Akyol...

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Nisa Gülener YILDIRIM

ABSTRACT

POST-TELEVISION ERA IN TURKEY AN ANALYSIS OF LOCAL TV SERIES GENRES BY STREAMING SERVICES

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With the rise of streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime Video, the way of consumption of television series has changed throughout the world in the post-television era. Even though broadcast television is still the dominant medium for mass entertainment, pre-determined / scheduled content has been losing its popularity. As the discussions on the future of television continue, this transformation process has also affected the television industry in Turkey and resulted in the foundation of two Turkish streaming services: Blu TV and Puhu TV, alongside the arrival of Netflix TR in 2016. Inspired by the fragmentation of audience in Turkey, the thesis analyses the genres of local TV series produced by streaming services in order to discover their differences from traditional television series, and concludes that some specific drama genres like crime or fantasy dramas which are excluded by Turkish television channels lately are primarily preferred to attract the audience who abandoned broadcast television. In addition, all six of the series studied as cases share a common pessimism in social context which is created by representing the evil as omnipotent and all members of the society as more or less victims, as well as depicting the status quo as unchangeable, and limiting the freedom of individuals with their own body. As a result, what they offer is again conservative, despite being freed from the constraints of traditional television. On the other hand, they can be criticized for normalizing dysfunctional legal system and neutralizing the prospect for improvement. Finally, the thesis argues that in the recent era, while television is changing its shell, streaming services fulfill the demand on diverse content by offering series in different genres, however, their narratives that are promoted as new, cannot go beyond reproducing already existing ones.

Keywords: Post - Television, Streaming Services, Genre, Television Series, Turkish Television

ÖZET

TÜRKİYE’DE POST-TELEVİZYON ÇAĞI: DİJİTAL PLATFORMLARCA ÜRETİLEN YERLİ DİZİ TÜRLERİNİN ANALİZİ

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Post-televizyon çağında, Netflix, Hulu ve Amazon Prime Video gibi talebe bağlı video dijital platformlarının artmasıyla birlikte, televizyon içeriğinin tüketim şekli tüm dünyada değişmiştir. Önceden belirlenmiş / planlanmış içeriğe dayalı yayın yapan geleneksel televizyon, kitlesel eğlence konusundaki hakimiyetine devam ediyor olsa da popülaritesini kaybetmektedir. Televizyonun geleceği hakkında tartışmalar devam ederken, bu dönüşüm süreci, Türkiye’deki televizyon endüstrisini de etkilemiş ve 2016 yılında Netflix TR ile birlikte iki yerli dijital platform olan Blu TV ve Puhu TV’nin kuruluşuna neden olmuştur. Türkiye’de seyircinin ayrışması konusundan esinlenen bu tez, yeni platformlarca üretilen yerli dizilerin türlerini analiz ederek bu dizilerin televizyon dizilerinden farklarını keşfetmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tez, geleneksel televizyonu içeriğini terk eden eden seyirciye ulaşmayı hedefleyen olan bu platformların, Türk televizyon kanallarının son dönemde özellikle kaçındığı suç dramaları ve fantastik dramalar gibi bazı türleri tercih ettiği sonucuna varmaktadır. Ayrıca vaka incelemesi için seçilmiş olan altı dizinin toplumsal bağlamda benzer bir karamsarlığı paylaştığı görülmüş, buna neden olanın ise ‘kötü’ye sınırsız güç atfedilerek toplum üyelerinin her birinin az ya da çok kurban olarak temsil edilmesi ve statükonun değişmezliğine vurgu yapılarak bireye verilen özgürlüğün bedenle sınırlandırılması olduğunu belirlenmiştir. Bu nedenle geleneksel televizyonların kısıtlamalarından bağımsız olmalarına rağmen, bu anlatıların yine muhafazakâr olduğu söylenebilir. Ayrıca işlevsiz hukuk sisteminin normalleştirmeleri ve iyileşme beklentisini nötralize etmeleri nedeniyle eleştirilebilirler. Son olarak tez, televizyonun kabuk değiştirmekte olduğu son dönemde, dijital platformlarının içerikte çeşitliliğe olan talebi yerine getirdiğini, ancak yeni olarak sunulan anlatıların mevcut olanı yeniden üretmenin ötesine geçemediğini savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Post-Televizyon, Dijital Platformlar, Tür, Televizyon Dizileri, Türk Televizyonu

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1. INTRODUCTION

Digital media has been one of the innovations welcomed with great interest despite the uncertainty about possible transformations it would cause (Wolff 2015, p.21). The technology which provides much more convenient ways for recording, transferring, and storing of the data had impacted the communication industry deeply. Before internet technology had become widely used all over the world, people met mobile phones which had been the most popular device of the last decade of the 20th century. According to Morley (2007, p.220), the mobile phone can be defined as the next privatizing technology after Walkman which was the medium offering privatization to its user for the first time. As the internet became accessible by masses, all industries had experienced a transformation which is known as the digital revolution. Interactivity offered by the internet, allowing two-way communication had been appreciated by the user and it reshaped the perception of communication forever. One of the media which had been transformed with the arrival of the digital revolution is television. As privatization allowed by internet technology became the main expectation of the user, the television industry had faced the necessity of diverse content, as well as the physical renovations of the device. With the rising popularity of the internet which is used mostly via personal computers or mobile phones, the arguments about the ‘end of television’ have arisen. According to Murphy (2011, p.26) television resembles a bridge standing between the previous media forms and new media technologies functioning as a model. It can be defined as the “information/entertainment medium” which designates and represents other technologies people are going to meet. Çelenk (2014, p.197) argues that the ‘end’ which is being mentioned in recent arguments is not about the act of watching television. An end can be possible for the conventional viewing habits of the audience with the transformation of television resulted in losing its dominance as a device after technology allowed all digital devices to function as a television.

Despite losing its popularity, television has been adapting itself to new expectations of the digital era audience, since the broadcast television of the pre-digital era has become idle. As a result of television’s transformation, a new term: *post - television* has been emerged to define the recent era. Strangelove (2015, p.121) defines the beginning of the ‘*post-television era*’ as the time when television was released from its jail - the black box

- and saved its audience from the rules of the marketplace. Audience of the post-television era does not have to wait for the scheduled hours of programs and can reach any content whenever they want via any medium.

With the progress in digital technology, the internet reached the required speed rate which makes streaming a film or a series possible. Different from the first technologies which had released the audience from scheduled content: the analog VCR technology and its digitally evolved versions CD or DVD, streaming technology allows the audience to reach any content without needing any physical component. As a result of streaming technology, online video-on-demand (VOD) services which are defined as OTT (over-the-top) services in general began to emerge. Soon after they were divided according to their business model as “advertisement-supported VOD (AVOD) such as YouTube, transactional VOD (TVOD) services such as iTunes, and subscription VOD (SVOD) services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime” (Doyle 2016, p. 631).

In the second decade of the 2000s people had witnessed the rise of SVOD (subscription video-on-demand) services allowing its subscribers to reach their libraries involving a huge amount of cinema films and television series archives. Especially the launch of tablet computers in 2010 had contributed to the popularity of these services. With the applications specially designed for mobile devices like tablet computers and mobile phones, users of these services could create their profiles and make their lists including their favorite content to watch later or rate them. Television content had also been privatized with devices that can be used as computers, and television -as a device in the living room- lost its audience gathering in front of it forever.

On the other hand, television adapts itself to the new standards of the industry to attract the audience by offering maximum visual pleasure. As the sizes of television screens get wider and the quality of resolution and sound improves, the line between cinema and television begins to blur (Tüzün-Ateşalp 2016, p.14). The audience who can access high-quality cinema films in their houses, their demand for higher quality in television content has increased, primarily for the series. SVOD services have started to produce their original content for a while to satisfy their subscribers.

As Bignell (2007, p.161) notes, television channels allow very limited time for the production processes of their programs. From project development to filming, all

members of the creative team always race against time, which results in conventionally directed contents. SVOD services which are freed from scheduling of daylong programming, have been changing the standards of the industry with their way of hiring production companies which create their original programs. However, corporations of professional companies which rule the television industry since its emergence continue. Under these circumstances, speaking about a completely different way of programming is not possible (Lotz 2018, p.177).

The Turkish television industry was also affected by the re-writing of the rules with the post-television era. Despite the rising popularity of Turkish television series in the international market, dominant television channels have been experiencing a loss in the share of their audience in the last decade. The first clear disengagement of a group of the audience had occurred while a crime drama named *Behzat Ç.* (2010-2013) was forced to use auto-censor basically on using alcohol and swearwords. From the year of the series beginning: 2010 to its final episode in its third season in 2013, the series had managed to create its loyal audience who appreciate the unusually realistic characters and narrative of it. However, *Behzat Ç.* had to struggle with punishments of RTÜK (Radio and Television Supreme Council) which made the audience tired of increasing censorship in the series. The broadcaster of the series: Star TV decided to try a new strategy and started to release the episodes without censorship on its official website soon after the new episode was broadcasted on television. After a while, the audience of the series tended to watch the series online without being exposed to the advertisement breaks. Star TV had tried the same strategy for another series which is a comedy-drama named *İşler Güçler* (2012-2013). The audience of these series were mostly the younger ones who were familiar with computer technology. In 2013, *Behzat Ç.* and a TRT series named *Leyla ile Mecnun* (*Leyla and Mecnun*) (2011-2013) were ended due to political conflicts. It resulted in the abandoning of television for the loyal audience of these series who later preferred to consume online content. *Behzat Ç.*, *İşler Güçler*, and *Leyla ile Mecnun* can be described as ‘niche’ series of television. However, they were the last ‘niche’ examples, and after they left the screen traditional television turned its face to the mainstream audience.

A few years later, in 2016, two Turkey-based streaming services: Blu TV and Puhu TV had been launched, besides the arrival of Netflix TR. And these services started to

produce their original series in the following years. One of the most significant features of these series was their genres which were different from the ones preferred by traditional television channels. Since durations of television series had begun to reach three hours, they blocked the prime-time which means they had to be produced in accordance with particular broadcasting obligations, adjusted by RTÜK. These series in general had to be ‘family-friendly’ – not including nudity, alcohol, or cigarettes. As a result of these restrictions, particular genres like melodrama or comedy-dramas that allow building on conservative narratives had invaded the screens in the evening. Streaming services aiming to attract the audience who are not happy with the content provided by traditional television preferred the drama genres which are excluded by television lately. The crime drama has been the most popular genre among the series produced by Turkish services: Blu TV and Puhu TV. Being freed from the constraints of RTÜK had allowed them to use sexuality, alcohol, or cigarettes, including violence or blood which are part of the crime drama narratives. On the other hand, genres of the first two series released by Netflix TR were fantasy drama. Due to the strategies of Netflix Company which has been functioning as a global television in last years, they aimed to reach a broader part of an international audience with their Turkey-based fantasy dramas including authentic characteristics on their narrations.

The thesis aims to study the series produced by Blu TV, Puhu TV and Netflix TR between the years 2017 and 2020, by analyzing the generic conventions of six series that were chosen as cases, to discover their differences from traditional television series. Before focusing on these series, the process which resulted in the fragmentation of the audience in Turkey will be explained in detail.

As all countries did, Turkey experienced an introduction era for television technology which was regulated by the state. Public service broadcasting which defines the way of broadcasting to fulfill the needs of public on communication without intentions to obtain profits had been ruled by TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) about more than twenty years by prioritizing the education of the public until private television channels had been founded at the beginning of 1990s. Despite the domination of foreign programs in the early years of television, local content started to be preferred by TRT in the following era. Television series adapted from Turkish literature had been welcomed by the audience who demand to see familiar cultures on television. After a while, a

tradition that was unique to TRT had been formed via these series having a consistent way of storytelling in themselves. However, as the private channels joined the creators of television content, the audience in Turkey had been exposed to programs that were very different from the ones released by TRT for years. This change had made a revolutionary impact with its all positive and negative consequences. A group of audiences who demand more entertainment had been satisfied with the result while other parts began to complain about uncontrolled content. The release of uncontrolled content had continued until RTÜK was founded in 1994 to regulate the broadcasting policies of the channels.

Despite the popularity of television shows which were introduced by private channels in different genres such as reality shows, competition shows, or talk shows, television series had gained their popularity in the second half of the 1990s, and they had started to dominate the television screen from the beginning of 2000s. Family drama genre including series like *Süper Baba (Super Daddy)*, *Mahallenin Muhtarları (Mukhtars of the District)* or *İkinci Bahar (Second Spring)* had been very popular series in the 1990s, while sitcom genre becomes the dominant genre of the early 2000s with series like *Tatlı Hayat (Sweet Life)*, *Dadı (The Nanny)* or *Çocuklar Duymasın (Don't Let the Kids Hear)*. However, these two genres could not protect their popularity and melodramas like *Asmalı Konak (Maison with Grapes)*, *Bir İstanbul Masalı (A Story from Istanbul)*, or *Aliye*, started to invade tops of the rating lists in the following years. When the number of exported Turkish series increased, local melodramas had strengthened their position as the dominating genre, especially after the success of *Binbir Gece (A Thousand and One Nights)* both in the local and international market. In the following years, melodramas like *Aşk-ı Memnu (Forbidden Love)*, *Öyle Bir Geçer Zaman Ki (As the Time Goes By)* or *Kuzey Güney (North South)* continued to obtain very high rating results, which means the reason of the fragmentation of audience in Turkey cannot be explained with the dominance of one genre, and it requires further evaluations.

The impacts which caused fragmentation of the audience, as well as the emergence and rise of streaming services, can be divided into two as the impact of the television industry and the impact of technological progress. Six mainstream television channels: Star TV, Show TV, ATV, Kanal D, Fox TV and TRT 1 have been dominating the television industry in Turkey, and their common characteristic is broadcasting television series in almost seven evenings a week from 20.00 to 23.30, which turned them into ‘series

channel' especially in the last decade. This time interval, including the prime-time, has been blocked by only one series lasting more than three hours with advertisement breaks in total. As a result, they demand almost four hours of the audience every evening which makes a group of audience abandon watching television. Television channels are not giving up their strategy on blocking all evening with only one series which is used to be criticized by the production crews due to being forced to work very long hours. The limited-time allowed for production also impacts the quality of the series and they consequently become similar narratives mimicking each other. Besides this strategy of the channels, RTÜK had increased censorship year by year in the last decade, which interrupts the creativity of writers and forces them to create conservative narratives by considering restrictions on sexuality and/or alcohol using. On the other hand, as the young audience started to prefer consuming corporate audiovisual content via their personal computers or mobile devices, they abandoned watching television, which increased the average age interval of the television audience.

Technological progress had also impacted the fragmentation of the audience by allowing devices that have computer technology to function as television as a result of higher internet speeds with smaller bandwidths. Illegal use of the internet had also been one of the negative results of technological progress which allows downloading of a film or a series, and be shared among users possible via illegal websites. Besides, the number of websites that stream unlicensed content including huge archives of films and series all over the world, increases and they cannot be controlled despite various legal regulations. Unsurprisingly, users of the internet who consume audiovisual content are mostly the young people that are familiar with computer using when they are compared with older people.

The thesis adopts genre analysis as a method to study narrative and character formations, visual characteristics, and ideological representations of the series to allow a comparison with traditional television series. The series of the case studies of the thesis are Blu TV's *Masum (The Innocent)* and *Bozkır (Steppe)*, Puhu TV's *Şahsiyet (Persona)*, and *Dip (Base)*, and Netflix TR's *Hakan: Muhafız (The Protector)* and *Atiye (The Gift)*. These series were selected according to two main reasons which were determined by streaming services' own early era strategies. Firstly, two series from each streaming service were chosen, because the number of series released by Netflix TR until 2020 was only two,

which are both fantasy dramas. Secondly, all of the original series of Blu TV and Puhu TV had evaluated according to their genres, and then it is revealed that crime drama is the genre that has the highest number of series in total. On the other hand, Puhu TV had released only three series in three years, which are one drama and two crime dramas. As a result, two crime dramas from each Turkish streaming services were chosen to protect consistency among their genres and reach an outcome gathered from the maximum number of cases. There is also one point which should be mentioned. Blu TV is the service that released the highest number of series between 2017 and 2020. Four of the ten dramas released by Blu TV is *Masum (Innocent)*, *Bozkır (Steppe)*, *Sıfır 1 (Zero 1)* and *Behzat Ç.*. However, these series can be divided into two, because *Masum (Innocent)* and *Bozkır (Steppe)* are the original projects created for a streaming service from its pre-production process and the release date, while a Youtube series *Sıfır 1 (Zero 1)* was transferred after its second season, and *Behzat Ç.* which is a television series met the audience again with its fourth season after six years. As a result, the aim of selecting *Masum (Innocent)* and *Bozkır (Steppe)* was using sources that reflect the characteristics of its medium completely.

The second chapter following the introduction, the characteristics of pre-digital television, and their evolution throughout history will be explained. Chapter continues with outline the term of post – television, which is followed by the concept of quality television whose beginning is referred to American network channel HBO. Then the foundation of Netflix and its functions as global television of today will be mentioned. Recommendation algorithms that have been one of the main arguments in post-television era due to lowering the agency of the audience will be studied, before discussing the time famine in the digital world and predictions on the future of television.

The next chapter will be on the methodology of the thesis which adopts genre analysis. After identifying the theoretical background of the genre, chapter continues with the explanations on television drama genres which are melodrama, comedy-drama, sitcoms, police/crime shows, science fiction, fantasy drama, and noir as a theme and style.

In the third chapter television in Turkey will be analyzed in detail from TRT's monopoly era to private channels before focusing on the television series produced between the years 2000 - 2019. The most popular five series will be chosen for each of twenty-year,

and their genres will be listed with their short plots and number of total episodes. Then reasons which opened the way from streaming services will be argued under subtitles: Television Today, Previously on Television: *Behzat Ç.* and *Leyla ile Mecnun*, Turkish VODs and Globally Popular TV Shows, Progress of Digital Technology and Dark Side of the Internet. And three streaming services in Turkey will be evaluated before the case studies.

The cases including series: *Masum (The Innocent)*, *Bozkır (Steppe)*, *Şahsiyet (Persona)*, *Dip (Base)*, *Hakan: Muhafız (The Protector)*, *Atiye (The Gift)* will be studied according to their generic conventions divided to three subtitles as plot and characters, styles and settings, and themes and ideology. The findings of the cases will be evaluated with three approaches of Feuer (1992, p.109) as the aesthetic, the ritual, and the ideological. While the aesthetic approach focuses on the characteristics of the author's work, the ritual approach considers the features of the content including plot, characters, and themes which are based on the relations between industry and audience. On the other hand, the ideological approach questions how the audience is positioned in accordance with the dominant ideology.

The final chapter of the thesis will be the conclusion chapter which claims the lack of remarkable differences between the narratives of the streaming services' series and television series, except the scenes including nudity or alcohol that would be censored on television. The thesis aims to contribute to literature both on providing a detailed analysis of streaming series produced in the early post-television era in Turkey, and the evaluation of popular television series produced last twenty years according to their genres.

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.1 PRE-DIGITAL TELEVISION

2.1.1 Characteristics of Broadcast Television

Since television became popular in the 1950s, it has been the easiest and free way of entertainment. Today's people have been living in the era of electronic audiovisual media for more than half of the century, and it is not easy to remember how life was before these technologies for most of them (Meyrowitz 2009, p.34). At the center of the media-based public sphere, there had always been television. It was connected to all other public communication as a medium and combined "the society's public life and private lives of citizens" (Gripsrud, 2010, p.3). Rather than assuming television just as a machine, it was considered as the element which determines people's behaviors and practices (Lotz, 2014, p.34). It is mostly used at home where the character and worldview of an individual are shaped among other family members. For Silverstone (1994, p.24) who defines television as a "domestic medium",

It is part of our domestic culture, providing in its programming and its schedules models and structures of domestic life, or at least of certain versions of domestic life. It is also a means for our integration into a consumer culture through which our domesticity is both constructed and displayed. Television has become embedded in the complex cultures of our own domesticity. We can no more think of television as anything other than a necessary component of that domesticity than we can think of our domesticity without seeing both in the machine and the screen a reflection and an expression of that domestic life.

The households were changed with the entrance of television. Domestic space was organized by it and unknown lifestyles were discovered by the members of the house. As a new medium, it was the "sign of modernity". By watching its fiction contents consisting of various genres, viewers had witnessed different lifestyles of strangers. Television introduced the "modern world of consumerism and mechanization" (Ellis, 2000, pp.41,42). All family gets together in the living room, both looking at the television. While children and the mother take places on the couch or carpet, the father sits close to the television to bring the "benefits of modernity" to his family, which gives him

“proprietor’s role” (Turner & Tay, 2009, p.1). Morley (2007, p.278) contributes by defining the television set as the “totemic item of furniture”. The set was placed in commonplace of the house – mostly living rooms - which resulted in a change for the arrangement of the other furniture. In today’s house design, it is still common to see the same way of furniture organizing, whose star is the television, conditioning the couches and seats to see it from different angles. Morley also points out the television’s role in the determination of domestic time. In a usual core family, family dinners used to be prepared according to scheduling hours of the evening shows. This electronic device turns into a family member metaphorically, however, it impacts the relations among other members literally (Silverstone, 1994, p.40). Besides, it turned into a challenging factor by bringing the world outside into the home, which means the “positive feelings of security and belonging” about the home was threatened. (Ibid., p.29)

The short dark stranger which everybody met in the last century, not only changed the spaces people live in, it also impacted the comprehension of space. The human mind reconsidered the limits of their sight. Meyrowitz (2009, p.35) emphasizes how the meaning of physical location, both socially and psychologically, was reshaped when television became an extension of people’s eyes.

According to Frosh (2009, p.96, 97), what television does is “shrinking the world”, as if containing it and “magically reproduce it inside one of its subunits: that primary arena of individual intimacy and strong sociality, the family home.” The design of a pre-digital television set which looks like a box makes us think that there is a space behind its screen and so the box augments “the sense of permanent depictive depth already aroused by the screen’s reflective surface”. He emphasizes that this sense has an “uncanny effect” on the audience and he gives examples of black-box scenes from the horror movies *The Poltergeist* (1982) and *The Ring* (2002). Another film that can be added to his examples is Cronenberg’s *Videodrome* (1983), which is about the discovery of a device “containing a subliminal signal that causes hallucinations”. In *Videodrome*, television screen functions as a “part of the eye” (Jameson 1992, p. 38,45).

Figure 2.1 Frame from *The Ring*



Source: Gore Verbinski (2002) *The Ring*

Figure 2.2 Frame from *Poltergeist*



Source: Tobe Hooper (1982) *Poltergeist*

Figure 2.3 Frame from *Videodrome*



Source: David Cronenberg (1983) *Videodrome*

Postman (2005, p.78-79) claims that how people use other media had also been orchestrated by television. It has the power to adjust the communications environment of people. Choices about telephone systems, movies, books, records, magazines, the radio

programs were made under the impact of television. As a result, it functions as a “meta-medium”, directs people’s knowledge of the world, and “knowledge of *ways of knowing* as well”.

Different from the cinema which let the viewer see the movie for a few hours and from a distant location, meeting the audio-visual communication technology as a domestic medium had presented the human as a subject to investigate. Meyrowitz (2009, p.35) explains how mass media changed the limits of social experiences by emphasizing the television screen which made it possible to study closely the faces, bodies, words, and vocalizations of other people in other places. Ellis (1992, p.131) highlights that the use of close-ups is more common in television content than cinema, which resulted in the emergence of a generic name as *talking heads*. One of the visual characteristics of pre-digital broadcasting which Frosh (2009, p.87) defines in detail is the headshot technique, making the human face become a televisual image. According to him,

Expressivity of the televisual face exposes individuals, from a very early age, repertoire of feelings (including extreme emotions), thoughts, and moods than they are likely to come across with any frequency in their everyday personal encounters: anger, ecstasy, humiliation, despair, avarice, fear, hope, love. It helps to train us in the subliminal art of face-reading, and it generalizes this interactive art by showing expressive faces from distant places and unfamiliar cultures: in effect television universalizes by presenting these strange faces as expressive, as always interpretable by those to whom they are shown. Along with photography, television can be held responsible for constituting and maintaining facial expressivity as part of universal language of human, a responsibility with significant political and moral implications. One understands the outside world through one’s relationship with other (televised) human faces: the human acts as the interface between viewer and a broader depicted reality. (Ibid., p.92)

Postman (2005, p.80) evaluates the educational function of television from the aspect of children and notes that television has not only been the “first and most accessible teacher” of today’s young people but also their parents. For Postman finding an education that has not been affected by television has not been possible anymore. Meyrowitz (2009, p.38) contributes by highlighting how children of the television era are different from the children of the print era, about their knowledge about the adult’s world by witnessing their behaviors and way of expressing their emotions on television. For Fidler (1997, p.111) emergence of television had also impacted parent’s control of their children. They could hide adult secrets from children by hiding the books or other printed material in the print era, however television at the house conquered their authority a long time ago.

In addition, Meyrowitz (2009, p.40) emphasizes the impact of television on gender issues and points out that both men and women have been educated by television about the secrets of genders. Everybody learns how to analyze and solve the other gender and even how to manipulate them. Indeed, television has illuminated the dark side of both genders by revealing the human tricks for decades, couples of television generations did not need to read romance novels to discover the dynamics of love and relationships.

A very significant change that emerged in the television era is very well explained by Fidler (1997, p.110) who tells that “with the television, the joy of entertaining oneself was quickly replaced by the joy and expectation of being entertained.” Moreover, Postman (2005, p.80) claims that television does speak in “the voice of entertainment” and “entertainment is the supraideology of all discourse on television.” For him, all contents of television, no matter what the subject is and how it is represented, aims to keep the audience in a distant position and promise them satisfaction (Ibid., p.87). Being a tool for amusement as Postman argues, makes television the least respectful medium when it is compared with books or films. According to Meyrowitz (2009, p.34), viewers who have little imagination and mental capacity could comprehend the content of television. On the contrary of books, television was accessible for all age groups and social classes, which makes its quality diminish. Besides, it was a threat to the culture due to corruption it causes with its contents which were determined according to the demands of advertisers, media owners, and political elites.

One of the most popular theories about the characteristics broadcast television had been Williams’ (2004, p.90) *flow*. In his book *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* published in 1974, he addresses the earlier phases of television broadcasting when there were intervals between program units “usually marked by some conventional sounds or pictures to show that the general service is still active” and had been used for advertising later on. For Williams filling these intervals with “particular insertions” and make the broadcasting continue without intervals twenty-four hours a day creates a planned flow. He claims that rather than conceiving broadcasting as a combination of different program units with interruptions, “it may be even more important to see the true process of as flow” (Ibid., p.93). He also mentions that people describe their experience as watching television instead of using the name of the program they watch (Ibid., p.89). Lotz (2014, p.14) contributes to the Williams’ argument about the act of “watching television” and

defines broadcast television as “linear television” which can be checked to find out “what is on” at any hour of the day, even while doing something else like getting ready to go to work or cook for dinner. However, for Ellis (1992, p.118), *Williams’ flow* “severely compromises and alters the separate texts of TV has manufactured”. He accuses Williams about underestimating “the complexity of broadcast TV’s particular commodity form” which cannot easily manipulate the single text. Programming the flow of broadcast television is defined by the term of schedule. For Gripsrud (2010, p.9) the communication that was offered by broadcast television is ‘push-type’, meaning that delivery of pre-determined programs cannot allow viewers to select the content that they want and they have to accept what is on air. Hours of the day and night are divided into slots and times of suitable programs and advertisement breaks are arranged. Experienced television audiences were able to guess what to find, on when and in which channel, especially in prime time (Ellis, 2007, p.175).

Miller (2010, p.83) emphasizes the role of genres in scheduling. Genres are the professional classifications of the industry and they are not stable arrangement of scheduling times of programs is a “matter of dramatic rules and economic ones”. Ellis (2000, p.131) resembles the genres of television to building blocks and schedule to architecture. The schedule is a unique characteristic of television. Scheduling requires considering audience preferences and existing genre distribution within definite time slots. Combined programs form the flow of the evening, evenings as a whole form the week, and weeks form the season.

2.1.2 Public Service Broadcasting

Between the era from the 1950s to the 1980s television functioned as a “national phenomenon” due to being controlled and determined by governments (Miller 2010, p.53). The introduction of television technology in a country had required a great investment which makes it impossible to be undertaken by private companies. As a result, governments had to take responsibility for the construction of this new technology in their countries. The most appealing feature of television which makes it a mass medium was being able to be used for the benefits of the public (Turner 2009, p.54). The term ‘public service broadcasting’ is used for these attempts which means the broadcasting made via

television channels founded and regulated by governments without interrupts of private enterprises. Tinic (2009, p.65) mentions the tradition of Western Europe, assuming airwaves as a natural resource which makes it a common property of the public. As being the source of information and entertainment, television started to shape the culture of nations and European countries agreed-upon common principles to protect public service broadcasting from the impacts of commercial interests. However, being regulated by governments, television had to face the conflicts on the interests of government, technological progress, local and national issues, and ideologies (Wolff 2015, p.93). Besides these conflicts, public service broadcasting was strictly controlled by regulations for the elements such as “allocating and administering licenses and space on the electronic spectrum; censoring advertising, politics, sex, and violence; restricting cross-media and foreign ownership; and mandating local, regional, national, ethnic, sporting, and children’s programs.” The requirement for all these regulations was evidence of how television was perceived. Assuming television such a powerful medium which has a great impact on the public, resulted in two different opinions about its function: perceiving it as a national medium bringing people together or a technology to provide entertainment for the public (Miller 2010, p.57).

As television became widely used medium in the houses of citizens, different demands started to come from the audience who were not happy with government regulation resulting in one-way programming which does not reflect their own culture. Ellis (2000, pp.54,55) mentions the debates about commercial television in Britain between 1950 and 1954 which was expected to be a source for popular culture. In that era, BBC was the channel for public service broadcasting and it had been criticized for being too London-based and too concerned with the high culture of the more affluent classes. People who demand commercial television were not happy with the ‘standard English’ of the BBC and they were feeling excluded for having strong accents. Moreover, they believed that their culture was not being represented in the contents of the BBC. The television as a service was “imposed upon”, far from satisfying their expectations. After the first commercial television: ITV (Independent Television) which was a regional television had been founded in 1955, BBC lost its popularity and the three-quarters of the audience preferred to watch ITV. As a result, the BBC had to compete with ITV by changing its

broadcasting policies. It made the first news magazine which was mixing serious and human-interest stories and a situation comedy fashioned around the popular comedian Tony Hancock (Ibid., p.56). As the audience in Turkey had witnessed the era with the private channels' foundations after TRT's monopoly for over twenty years, the introduction process of television as a new technology had similar histories about the relationship between audience and public service television channels for many countries. Ellis summarizes the process as:

This story was repeated throughout Europe over the following thirty-year, and the terms of the debate are remarkably similar. On the one side lay a public service television whose primary ethos was one of national unity, whose aims were the education, information and the improvement of the population. Entertainment was conceived as a means of achieving these aims, as a necessary envelope for these more important messages. Against this ethos was an unstable coalition of regional interests, populist tendencies and entertainment interests, allied with companies concerned with developing the consumer market (Ibid, p.56).

Lunt (2009, p.132) contributes by emphasizing the establishment of Channel 4 in 1982 which was also a public service television but had different broadcasting strategies than BBC. This new channel was the result of citizens' complaints about not being represented fairly by the BBC, and it had arranged their way of programming according to audience preferences. Considering the audience, producing more popular programs had altered the tradition of public service broadcasting. Starks (2013, p.180) emphasizes that the necessity for competition and adaptation to society's demands made public service broadcasting difficult to define. For him what should be mentioned with public service broadcasting are "a core set of principles includes universality, independence of government and commerce, serving minorities as well as majorities, reflecting national culture and identity and sustaining high quality."

In the history of television, America has a distinctive story when it is compared with other countries that started to use this new technology in the same era. The reason which differs America from other countries is the financing method of television in its introductory period. The other way of finding financial sources for broadcasting was by incorporating advertising companies. Being the core business of mass media, advertising has been used since it was introduced with the printing press, which can also be defined as the economic source for the establishments which do not prefer to be funded by the government. The

democratic countries as England, France, and others had assumed broadcasting a national service that should not have a relation with commercial issues such as advertising. However, the only country which preferred the advertising/newspaper symbiotic relationship had been America (Levinson, 1999, p.75). Being freed from the regulations of government had made American television to be the medium for popular culture, the source of entertainment. In the following decades of television's arrival, public channels of other countries had bought American content for their national audiences. Even today television content of America dominated the television industry all over the world. The formats which were born in America are getting popular quickly, the TV- shows are reaching audiences from various countries. Morley (2007, p.277) explains the progress of the American television industry by showing the advertiser as the "driving force". For him, these corporations intended to use this new source for the marketing of their goods and services. The exploitation of this medium was not interrupted by the regulations, as a result, they arrange the content to reach the consumers, especially domestic ones: the housewives.

Different from the policies on broadcasting, television in pre-digital era had also experienced technological changes. For Gentikow (2010, p.143) the most significant ones are color television which came after black and white, and easily attracted the audience, progress in sound technology became stereo after mono, arrival of video cassette players which created a VCR era and impacted the movie industry, and finally, the technology of cable and satellite which followed the TV antenna, let a great increase in the number of television channels in a short time. Besides, remote control device which allowed users change the channel from the place they had been, was also the great invention for television audience who has hundreds of channels to watch after the cable and satellite technology.

In addition, the first interactive technology which was offered to audience before the digital era was *teletext*. Viewers could reach teletext page with a special button on the remote-control device and by entering the page number again with buttons of remote they could the page they want and read about contents about sports, news, magazine, etc. (Fidler 1997, p.141).

During the black box was the member of the family who gathers others in front of it every evening, technology companies were trying to find new ways to offer viewers appealing experiences. One of them was the *picture-in-picture (P.I.P.)* technology which lets the viewer watch a different channel on a small rectangular window that appears on the screen as a second screen. *Multivision Company Inc*, a California based company introduced this technology in 1988 which was required a set-top box to connect it to the television. Especially the audience who are interested in sports especially football matches was targeted and the systems were promoted as a way of “keeping an eye on the football game in the corner of the screen” while watching a movie. (Pollack 1998) In the same year, a Turkish company *Vestel* had presented its model which the set-top box integrated version and the advertisements of the product started to be on TRT. (“Vestel Multivizyon TV, 1989”) Even though it was not very convenient for the viewer, or did not become a popular application among those era’s audience, it is important to consider the innovation attempts of technology companies. The advertisement for *Vestel Multivision* was as below:

“We are presenting one of the most exciting innovations since the invention of television. Please watch carefully. In this television, you can watch the first and second channel at the same time. You can check the satellite channels while watching a video. Vestel Multivision can make the screen you like bigger or smaller, change its position and you can pause it if you want. What do you think? It is like a miracle, is not it? World is getting ready for this television. Vestel is ready.”

Figure 2.4. Frames from Vestel Multivision Advertisement



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=js0HYsUxxLs> (accessed 23 December 2019)

The innovations made for customizing the television in the pre-digital era prove that television industry tended to reach all members of the family to keep them in front of television as long as possible. Uricciho (2009, p.71) divides the history of television into

three according to technological changes as “*Dial Television (1950-1975)*” which is programmer - dominated and targets mass audience, “*Remote Control (1975-1999)*” which is viewer controlled and targets segmented audience and “*From TiVo to Youtube (1999+)*” which use metadata/filters and targets the niche audience. (p.71) In addition, Ellis (2000, p.39) divides the history of television according to content provided by television channels.

The first era is characterized by a few channels broadcasting for part of the day only. It was the era of scarcity, which lasted for most countries until the late 1970s or early 1980s. As broadcasting developed, the era of scarcity gradually gave way to an era of availability, where several channels broadcasting continuously jostled for attention, often with more competition in the shape of cable or satellite services. The third era, the era of plenty, is confidently predicted by the television industry itself. It is foreseen as an era in which television programs (or, as they will be known, ‘content’ or ‘product’) will be accessible through a variety of technologies, the sum of which will give consumers the phenomenon of ‘television on demand’ as well as the ‘interactive television’.

As Ellis explains in the definition of ‘*the era of plenty*’, the television industry has been busy for a while to keep up with the audience’s demands which are diverse than ever.

Another theorist who divides history of television into three eras is Lotz. According to her, the first era of television “from approximately 1952 through the mid-1980s” can be defined as ‘*network era*’, while the era from “the mid-1980s through the mid-2000s” as ‘*multi-channel transition*’. She uses the term ‘*post-network era*’ for the recent era which began after the multi-channel transition (2014, p.8).

For Lotz’s post-network era, Turner & Tay (2009) use ‘*post-broadcast era*’, while Leverette et al. (2008) and Strangelove (2015) prefer ‘*post-television era*’ which is also selected for the thesis focusing on the contents of the services which are positioning themselves opposite of the television.

2.2 POST-TELEVISION ERA

2.2.1 Outline of Post – Television

The ‘post-television era’ is a recent definition in new media studies that emerged as the result of the convergence of television and the internet. *Convergence* as being one of the main characteristics of new media means the integration of one medium to another as hybrid technologies and allows users to reach functions of different media in one medium. It creates multi-task devices, “resulting in a level of alignment and integration of media never before experienced” (Logan 2010, p.57). Today’s smartphones are offering users a telephone, a television, a radio, a voice recorder, a photograph machine, or even a torch. In today’s technology, a television program, a movie, or a video can be watched with any medium which has a screen and internet connection. According to Jenkins (2006) convergence has two different processes: one of them is “top-down” driven by media companies and the other is “bottom-up” driven by users. He suggests that media companies have been finding new ways to spread their content and reach different markets and consumers are becoming able to control the media and get in touch with other consumers. Starks (2013, p.136) highlights that what let convergence is the digitization of video and audio signals and three technologies he defines as below have this feature as common.

Digitally coded content can be replicated, manipulated and transferred between different producers and distributors, crossing traditional communications boundaries. IPTV (Internet Protocol Television) has become a way of distributing both the Internet and TV services – and, as speed and penetration increase, the broadband platform could become one of the principals means digital of distributing television.

Internet technology which completely changed the rules of the mass communication can be interpreted from the McLuhan’s “*Medium is the message*” viewpoint, it can be claimed that the content determines what people are watching but it cannot be ignored that the characteristics of the medium change and determine the production process of the content, in short, the content itself. Consequences of technology have been interpreted in different ways for years. Scannel (2006) criticizes technological deterministic interpretations for

being mostly negative and blaming the technology for the exploitation of nature and human. On the contrary of interpretations which see the technology as an enemy or as a savior, Castells (2004, p.8) emphasizes the technology's evolution process, instead of defining it "as the use of scientific knowledge to set procedures for performance in a reproducible manner." According to him, society interacts with technology with all its dimensions and impacts the evolution of technology. Besides, technology has its own dynamics related to the science and its application in society.

Meyrowitz (2009, p.35) corrects the misunderstanding of the medium theory which is comprehended as if it ignores the importance of content and assuming human as passive as to be impacted by medium's itself without interpreting the content/message. He points out that particular content has different impacts related to the medium it was conveyed with. Postman (2005, p.84) argues that technology turns into a medium by being charged to have a symbolic function, and be assigned a position by society, be connected with economic and political dynamics. He names technology as a machine that created "the social and intellectual environment". Medium functions as language, it regulates the formation of discourse by impacting the ways of thinking, as McLuhan claims by saying 'the medium is the message'. What a medium does is using metaphors which can be called media-metaphors to categorize the world and offer ways how to interpret it (Ibid., p.10).

One of the most popular theories of new media is Castells' (2004, p.3) *network society* definition. He defines the society that lives in the digital era as network society and notes that the social structures of this society based on networks that are created by digital technologies. In today's world, societies are being built around information technologies developed by microelectronics (Ibid., p.7). Hassan (2009, p.69) contributes to him by highlighting the impact of digital networks on time and space. According to him, the logic of space and time for network society's individuals have changed and were rearranged. Moreover, these individual's currency is not money anymore, it is information and they talk in a new language which is 'digital'. Poster (2001, p.8) emphasizes the importance of information in the network society and he argues that it had gained a fetishistic feature. Information became a must-have property in the modern world and its amount determines the individuals' position in society, creates a "new social ideal", especially among "middle class" individuals.

According to Mirzoeff (2006) people who live in advanced capitalist societies have learned to be media themselves by putting cameras to their eyes to collect memories. Their smartphones which are also the perfect photograph machines, do record every detail of their lives, and people have never been as immortal as they are today. Hassan (2009, p.86) also comments about the relationship of today's people with digital network and he defines this network as "alive". People who use this network do not feed this network by using devices having digital technologies and getting connected, instead, network is today's people, they do not join the network, they become itself.

By becoming the network's itself as Hassan argues, today's people have been familiar with the concept of participatory culture, which is also the result of one of the characteristics of the digital era: the interactivity. Participation can be defined as the way of becoming the producer of the content rather than being only the consumer or the user. From the point of television participation of the audience is very important for the television industry. Seiter (1999) mentions that television networks use online communication to get feedback from the audience and make changes in the screenplay or characters of particular programs. As the audience starts to complain about an issue, they take steps according to common ideas. The integration of computer technology to television lets viewers customize the content by reaching more information about the television content. They can search the comments about the content they are interested in, can make comments, or share the content with others (Lotz 2014, p.49). On the contrary of pre-digital television which has no feature as interaction, viewers of the post-television era can meet in a virtual space to create communities based on their favorite contents, which creates the fan culture (Ibid., p.276).

Spigel (2004, p.2) defines the television of pre-digital era as 'TV' which was based on the technological, governmental and industrial dynamics, throughout different ages it experienced like public service or networks, and he offers to define the new era as "the phase that comes after TV". As Spigel points out, the evolution of broadcast television has caused discussions about the future of television. The process when radio has lost its popularity after the emergence of television is mostly mentioned while the predictions are being made. Lotz (2014, p.6) uses the radio as an example who's social and cultural

functions were taken and combined with images in motion by television. She points out that radio did not become extinct and survived by being renovated according to the needs of new society who gives the priority to television. However, in the post – television era, what television has to compete with is not a different medium, it is being threatened by itself. Indeed, internet technology does not offer a medium that makes its users forget television and abandon its content forever. On the contrary, a huge part of the content on the internet belongs to television. As Lobato (2019, p.20) points out, internet functions as a “distribution channel and archive” for the infinite content including the ones belong to television. According to him, most of the audience all over the world define television as a service working online with the combination of various websites, portals, apps. He uses the terms of “distribution ecology” which is interconnected and has different categories occurring leakage among each other which makes measuring too difficult. The key elements he describes are: (Ibid., p.21)

- a- online TV portals (*BBC iPlayer, ABC iView, NRK TV*)
- b- subscription video-on-demand - *SVOD (Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hulu)*
- c- transactional video-on-demand – *TVOD (iTunes, Google Play Store, Microsoft Films & TV)*
- d- hybrid TVOD/SVOD/free portals (*YouTube, Youku, Tencent Video*)
video-sharing platforms (*Daily Motion*)
- e- informal on-demand and download services (*BitTorrent, Popcorn Time, file-hosting sites (cyberlockers), Illegal streaming sites*)
- f- unlicensed live, linear channel
- g- recommender and aggregator apps

Integration of the internet and television had another outcome that liberated viewers from schedule times, supposed to be more important than participation. Gentikow (2010, p.147) interprets the evolution of television which turned it into a personal medium after being a mass medium for decades, by emphasizing the freedom from determined times of televisual content. For him, the slogan of post - television era is ‘*Watch what you want whenever you want*’.

The transformation of television which resulted in a fundamental change on its most characteristic feature made the television industry adapt itself to the new era. First of all, the perception of mass had been altered by a niche audience which is more convenient to sell the right content to the right viewer. Negroponte (1995, p.36) makes an emphasis on the importance of focusing on niche audience by offering a different way of production for broadcast television. According to him, the strategy of television which is “delivering

a thousand television programs to everybody”, can be changed to a delivering “one program to each person in one-thousandth of the real-time”. As Negroponte had offered many years before the post-television era, the diversity among televisual content is the recent strategy of the television industry. While the industry has been trying to deal with the fragmentation of the audience, number of corporations that provide content for this new audience is increasing. While the experience production companies continue to reach audience with high budget content, independent productions can find a way to reach to audience easier than it was in the twentieth century. According to Ellis (2007, p.12), the editorial experiences of traditional broadcasters make them more advantageous in the “new-screen market”. However, Lotz (2014, p.11) rejects considering this experience positively, besides she assumes that moguls of the broadcast television whose way of production became outmoded, now had to find new strategies against their competitors “who had a vision of a new era.”

Broadcast television which tries to find ways to survive in the post-television era, technological progress does not only impact the medium in terms of scheduled content, besides, the improvements on mechanical technology which changed the structure of television as a device has also impacted the relationship between the audience and broadcast television. As the black box had vanished and abandoned its place to smart TVs, the changes of screens have been allowing viewers the experience of watching a movie in a theatre. Frosh (2009, p.98) points out the relation of impacts of headshots with the dimensions of traditional television which has an aspect ratio of 4:3. He explains the change of face in television with the aspect ratio of 16:9 which digital televisions have. Television screen with its new dimensions “includes more of the background and environmental surroundings of the human face” and this technological change makes human face “become less dominant in the televisual repertoire than previously”. The change in aspect ratio has also been impacted the way of narrating and the production quality of television content. In the second decade of the 2000s, high budget productions like *Game of Thrones* (2011-2019) had been globally popular by offering viewers cinematic experience.

2.2.2 Quality Television and HBO

Since its first days, when the screen was black and white, television content had always been criticized for not having high quality. Most of the arguments were based on not being the right medium for the representation of an artwork and it had been approved for daily entertainment which does not require extra effort for production companies to satisfy the viewers. According to Pearson (2007, p.243) television resembles “Cinderella” since its beginning, who was “left in the kitchen with the servants while the theatre and the cinema went to the ball and mingled with the aristocracy.” He explains the disadvantage of television when it is compared with cinema as the time and budget scarcity for the production and the industrial conditions which make authorship impossible (Ibid., p.247).

The critiques on television content for having less quality had been overcome by the rise of pay-tv channels in America, which have been impacted the way of production and storytelling of television in other countries in the following years. Weissmann (2012, p.166) explains the birth of quality television in America with the changing demands of advertisers. At the end of the 1970s, advertisement companies started to look for ways of reaching to audiences who are well educated and living in the cities. These people were the citizens who were willing to spend more money. Therefore, television programming strategies readjusted to attract the “more literate and culturally aware tastes of the educated elite.” Nelson (2007, pp.49-50) points out that television dramas which are visually narrated, are assumed to be having more quality, for sharing the characteristic of cinematic practice. Besides, he underlines the differing tastes of individuals which makes quality television difficult to identify.

Ellis (1992, pp. 128- 129) clarifies the use of sound and image in television and cinema which are determined by the properties of each medium. Due to having the advantage of centered audience, cinema can construct its narrative on the image, while television narrative has been more sound-based to keep the attention of its audience. In the post-television era, television as a device has evolved as a result of technological innovations which make it come closer to provide cinematic experience with wide screens having high resolutions. SVOD services are allowing the audience to reach a very broad archive

of movies which makes the distinction of television and cinema get blurred for a while. Cardwell (2007, p.26) explains quality television as below:

American quality television programmes tend to exhibit high production values, naturalistic performance styles, recognized and esteemed actors, a sense of visual style created through careful, even innovative, camerawork and editing, and a sense of aural style created through the judicious use of appropriate, even original music. This moves beyond a 'glossiness' of style. Generally, there is a sense of stylistic integrity, in which themes and style are intertwined in an expressive and impressive way. Further, the programmes are likely to explore 'serious' themes, rather than representing the superficial events of life; also tends to focus on the present, offering reflections on contemporary society, and crystallizing these reflections within smaller examples and instances.

One of the first pay-TV's of America named HBO (Home Box Office), founded in 1972, had changed the rules of television by providing high-quality programming and gained prestige, and with other pay-tv channels followed the path of HBO. By becoming an alternative to television programming who aim to reach masses, HBO became the correspondent for the definition of quality television (Miller 2009, p.1). HBO and its competitors such as FX, Showtime and AMC are producing TV-shows every year which becomes globally popular. Santo (2009, p.20) points out the necessity of promoting different content that cannot be accessed in free television channels, which makes HBO have to emphasize quality and "exclusivity" as the main feature of its broadcasting policy. For Santo, what HBO sells to its users is "cultural capital." After 1982 HBO started to create its original movies as other network channels and in the continuing period, and year after year became well known with its content of comedy specials which introduced new names to the industry (Ibid., p.22). As a pay-tv channel, HBO itself positions network channels as content providers that do not offer high quality and it uses the same slogan since the late 1990s which is "It's Not TV, It's HBO". However, Lotz (2014, p.238) highlights the contradictory argument of their way of promoting. According to her, HBO cannot differ from the other channel which uses television as a medium, due to using similar implications for production as all other channels. Santo (2009, p.24) also criticizes the slogan about rejecting of being a television channel, and argues that HBO had constructed its content by reinterpreting "existing television forms, narratives, aesthetics, themes, and economic and institutional practices". Beside Santo offers using the term

“para-television” which for him targets the “coalition audiences” and differs itself from television which targets mass audience (Ibid., p.30).

About the impact of HBO on other television channels, Miller (2009, pp. 1,2) makes an emphasis on how the other pay-tv channels like FX, AMC, and Showtime had been inspired by the works of HBO while producing their shows such as *The Shield*, *Madman* or *Dexter*, besides more significantly he highlights the network channels like ABC, FOX and NBC had also used the “formula” of HBO on their works such as *Desperate Housewives*, *Lost*, *Arrested Development* and *The Office*. Santo (2009, p.28) contributes by explaining how HBO builds the narratives of its programs which makes them inspirational for other channels. For him, the narratives of HBO include various evaluations of the theme from different standpoints until the climax is reached, whose time cannot be easily predicted, on the contrary of the narratives which include the emergence and solving of problems in a linear way.

Lotz (2014, p.234) emphasizes two different series produced at the end of the 1990s by American cable channels HBO and FX. First, she points out *Sex and the City*, the series introduced before *The Sopranos* on HBO, which had an uncommon story which was not possible to see on broadcast network channels and was independent of network era norms. With this series, HBO targets the “young, upscale, professional women”, the group which had not been addressed before on television. The success of the series was the result of HBO's “flexible and commercial-free schedule” which frees the writers from the rule of twenty-two-minute format of broadcast comedies in America and let them construct the story without considering the ad-breaks (2014, p.236). The second series Lotz mentions as a trailblazer for cable network series is *The Shield* which was aired in 2002 on FX and presented with a great promotional campaign. The genre of the series was police drama however its narrative was centered on a “rogue police detective clearly playing outside the bounds of proper procedure” (2014, pp.244, 245). What *The Shield* made was attracting the audience by crossing the boundaries of television norms for violence and language using, which resulted in getting highly criticized and targeted by advocacy groups. Lotz (2014, pp.247,248) shows this period as a reason to reach “upscale male audience” and giving FX a brand identity.

In February of 2010, HBO had presented its first online streaming video service HBO GO to its subscribers. Content of the leading channel of quality television had been released from the black box for the first time. Eric Kessler the co-president of HBO evaluates their service “as the next step in the digital age and a way to strengthen its relationship with subscribers and distributors” (Szalai 2010). Five years later from the presentation of HBO GO, a new online service HBO NOW which requires no cable subscription of HBO had launched in 2015. The service which is based on again subscription which costs \$14.99 per month, but instead of being only for the ones who use their television for television’s content consumption, HBO NOW has been available for the ones who prefer watching television only through internet. Welch (2015) mentions that people had waited for years to reach the content of HBO without having to subscribe to a cable television. He also emphasizes the liberating feature of renovated streaming service of HBO, by telling users they could quit their subscription whenever they want or they can only subscribe when for the time intervals of new seasons of their favorite TV shows were released. Lotz (2018, p.161) who argues that the year of 2015 had been the year when the television distributed via internet has started to shape its own was as a new industry, notes that HBO NOW had two million subscribers one year later of it was launched, and another cable television Showtime had presented its streaming service named Showtime Anytime in the same year. She also mentions that how the internet television surprised people who were not able to guess the transformation of screens which were released from the monopoly of television, by making two online on-demand services: Netflix and HBO Now become a ‘television’ (Ibid., p.115). However, the audience from different countries had experienced this transformation differently. As Lobato (2019, p.43) highlights, Netflix was distributed all over the world which makes it a transnational television, HBO Now was only available in Latin America, Central Europe, and Asia.

2.2.3 Global Television: Netflix

Negroponte (1995, p.173) confirms that *Blockbuster* – a VCR rental company in the USA - had opened six hundred new stores in 1994 and in the same year its founder H. Wayne Huizenga declared that 87 million American homes took fifteen years to have a \$30 billion investment in VCRs. After sharing this information, Negroponte adds his

prediction about the incoming decade and says “I think videocassette-rental stores will go out of business in less than ten years.” In the last two decades of the twentieth century, the sale and rental of VHS created a great business and became highly profitable for the film industry. However, VHS tapes were not convenient for television content because recording television seasons which were more than twenty hours was impossible. *Netflix* was founded in 1997 when the transition from VHS to DVD technology started. The business of the company was based on the sale and rental of DVDs via mail. In the beginning of 2000s, DVD box sets of television series, especially HBO productions became popular. Lotz (2018, pp.117,118) emphasizes that Netflix had found out people’s potential to pay for television content before other members of the industry. Another significant feature of that period was the demand for more distinctive series which was bigger than the ones targeting the largest audience. She also points out the advantageous position of Netflix which arises from the data they have from DVD-by-mail business. As they realized the demand for television content, the core of the companies’ business shifted from film to television. The year when Netflix launched its streaming service which allows subscribers to watch movies and TV shows online is 2010. Arnold (2010) evaluates the year by claiming that the growth in the DVD and Blu-ray industry which reached to double-digit numbers in the beginning of 2000s would not be experienced again and what Netflix had done with its streaming service is transforming not only the rental system but also the whole entertainment business. Wolff (2015, p.67) contributes by emphasizing the game-changing feature of Netflix for the industry. While television had been a geographical service, Netflix’s new way of content supply had also altered the business by creating an international service which is not constrained by the borders of the country. Becoming a “rerun television network” after serving for rental business for years made Netflix a “de facto television channel”. Its system which was based on licensing the already produced content of television channels which were mostly TV shows had also created a new profitable way for television which also fed the industry. As a result, Netflix made digital a part of television business. “Much like the ‘big three’ broadcast networks of ABC, CBS, and NBC in the 1950s, in the 2010s the TV streaming industry started to consolidate into the ‘big three’ of TV companies: Netflix, Amazon Video, and Hulu” (Shattuc 2020, p.146).

According to Lobato (2019, p.23), the launch and rise of Netflix can be evaluated as a test from the aspect of feasibility of television used globally and ways of distributing content by digital technology. He emphasizes how Netflix had become a part of household entertainment. Broe (2019 p.101) highlights the dominance of the serial form in production in all three television arenas which shifts from network to cable to online streaming services. Indeed, the TV-shows are still the most appealing genre of television content among television viewers all over the world and the major entities are competing with their serials in today's world, even do not hesitate to spend high budgets for them, just like the *Game of Thrones* or *The Crown*.

2010 became the year in which television lost its throne. While the leading factors which created the post-television era are evaluated, the mobile digital devices which have stolen the throne of television living as a member of the family for decades should be prioritized, instead of considering the streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu or Amazon Prime Video which have stolen the audience of television as the main reason. Lotz (2018, p.114) defines the year of 2010 is the "starting point of the story" due to introductions of services and new technologies. She emphasizes the launch of Netflix as a streaming service this year which made the company increase its subscribers 63 percent, besides she adds, the tablets: a new generation mobile technology which was firstly introduced by Apple and diversified by other technology companies such as HP, Dell and MSI made television abandoned by viewers to meet the new way of viewing experience via different screens. Another significant point she notes are the applications that allow users of mobile devices to access the interface of the services and control it. In addition to Smart TVs which allow the use of streaming services, external devices like Xbox and Apple TV had also made viewers to watch these services if their televisions do not have an internet connection. Wolff (2015, p.75) claims that aim of the technology companies which introduced tablets to replace the mutual television with a personal one which can also be used for gaming. However, the change had been experienced in a different way. Users, mostly the younger ones, started to use tablets instead of their computers. Due to having lower prices, tablets became a way of entertainment that also have computer functions. He also points out the incapability of television about becoming a convenient computer, which made tablets a tool for users to carry entertainment with them everywhere. According to the results of

Statistica (2015), 82% of subscribers of Netflix in America prefer the service due to the convenience of on-demand streaming. Being cost-effective and having a broad content library are the two following most popular reasons for preferring Netflix and half of the attendants of the survey had answered as the feature of multi-device using affect their using habits.

In its first years, streaming services like Netflix and Amazon had a peaceful relation with television industry due to paying them licenses for the already made and seen contents. A new medium to sell the contents from their archive was a great chance for television institutions (Lotz, 2018, p.116). However, peace has not continued so long when these services started to produce their original content. Netflix made its first original TV Show *House of Cards* in 2013, besides *Orange is the New Black* and the fifth season of *Arrested Development* had made Netflix increase its subscribers to thirty million in America at the end of that year (Ibid., p.121).

House of Cards, the first original TV-Show of Netflix had nine Emmy nominations with its first season in 2013 and its director David Fincher had the award of best directing of a drama series, besides two more awards on creative arts. Shattuc (2020, p.157) notes that the impact of *House of Cards*' quality had been evaluated as "the end of cable as the provider of quality TV" in a critic of *The New Yorker*. Sottek (2013) uses the title for the news about the awards *Netflix challenges the TV establishment with Emmy wins for 'House of Cards'* which he summarizes the discussion would be made in the entertainment industry in the following days. Ted Sarandos, the chief content officer of Netflix, had contributed the discussions by saying: "the goal is to become HBO faster than HBO can become us." With having the Emmy with its first original show, Netflix had more reputation which made it known by larger audience internationally too. The rise of Netflix made the competition started with HBO which would result in HBO launching its streaming service HBO Now which has the same subscription system as Netflix in 2015. That year, Kafka (2015) had claimed in his article that the aim of Netflix went beyond to compete with HBO and he says "Netflix Doesn't Want to Kill HBO. It Wants to Kill TV" by referring the recently made declaration of the CEO of Netflix, Redd Hastings who said: "Linear TV has been on an amazing 50-year run. Internet TV is starting to grow.

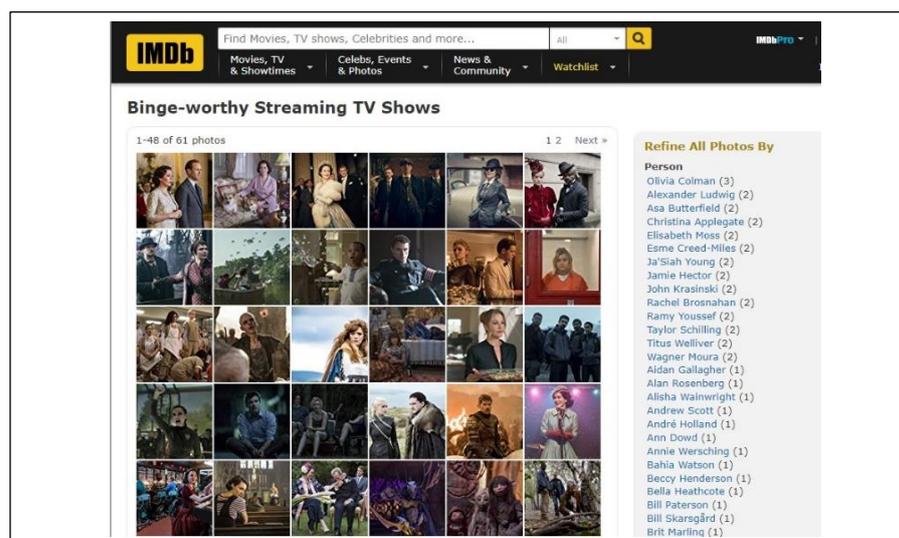
Clearly, over the next 20 years, Internet TV is going to replace linear TV. Internet TV is the way that people will consume video in the future.” However, Arnold (2018, p.62) opposes the opinion which assumes the original contents of Netflix different from the contents of other television institutions, despite its administrators’ claims about the death of traditional television. He argues that Netflix has been comprehended as television which is based on the internet by the viewers and industry professionals and Netflix is positioning itself distant from traditional television and defining itself as a new medium that will take the place of the previous one is not meaningful at all.

Johnson (2018, p.105) mentions the features of the content by highlighting the amount of content which were “the residual media texts of the twentieth century”. He defines what the streaming services as selling the tool for reaching old media texts. Indeed, the rate of the amount of old content should be much more than the recently produced ones. For him, these services use TV shows which are already known and even had fans all over the world as “bread and butter” by giving the examples of Netflix’s rerun of Full House which was on ABC between the years of 1987 and 1995 and Gilmore Girls of WB/CW viewed between the years of 2000 and 2007. In 2018 Netflix also declared that they bought the license of *Friends*, the legendary sitcom of NBC, which was run for ten seasons, between 1994 and 2004. Lee (2018) explains the reason for Netflix’s attempt to keep Friends in its library by paying \$100 million to WarnerMedia, aiming the increase its subscribers base both nationally and internationally.

Wolff (2015, p.125) notes that different from the audience of mass television who prefer more clear narratives, not including ambiguity, the expectations of the niche audience who use subscription-based services, which he also names ‘upmarket audience’ can be explained as the content which are diversified in narratives, written by creative writers, based on deeply portrayed characters, and themes which depicts the world. Broe (2019, p.110) criticizes Netflix for starting as a quality television with its well-designed original content but soon after starting to resemble a mass production company which makes productions for free television channels or cable channel, not dealt with quality. In addition, he defines Netflix’ using of its logo and a definite sound in the openings of its original content as being “the super-narrator” (Ibid., p.174).

With the revolutionary arrival of streaming services, Netflix’s unique feature of ‘binge-watching model’ had altered the viewing habits of online content consumers. Since the release of House of Cards in 2013, Netflix has been releasing the whole episodes of the new season of a series on the same day which makes viewers freed from waiting for the release day of the next episodes every week. As Lotz (2018) had briefly explained binge-watching is watching the episodes of a series one after another for long hours just like a viewing marathon. The releasing policy of Netflix has not been adopted by any other streaming services but despite the rumors about Netflix’s abandoning binge-watching model soon, Velasco (2019) informs that Netflix does not plan to quit the binge-watching model which has become a specific feature of the brand, even though it is declared that Disney+ will use weekly release model. However, According Blake and Villarreal (2019) Binge watching impacts the TV show negatively to keep their popularity for long. They give the example of number of Twitter mentions about Stranger Things' third season which dropped to one-tenth of its first week in its fifth week. Besides they mention the studies which claim that long hour viewing of the shows makes viewers enjoy the show less. On the other hand, very recent research shares the reasons declared by the audience who prefer binge-watching as “curiosity, focusing on the series, forgetting problems of daily life, inexpensive leisure time activity, socializing by joining the conversations about the series, and get rid of spoilers” (Tüzün-Ateşalp & Başlar 2020, p.132).

Figure 2.5. Binge-worthy Streaming TV Shows page of Imdb.com



Source: <https://www.imdb.com/gallery/rg797940480> (accessed 05 March 2020)

Broe (2019, p.22-23) also points out the addictive impact of binge-watching. According to him, the algorithm used by Netflix can choose and recommend the like-minded series to the viewer, which makes watching an unending activity. Indeed, the number of people who complain about not being able to control themselves not to start watching the next episode when they have another responsibility or just need to go to sleep is increasing day by day. In addition, Jenner (2018, p.222-223) highlights the policy of the weekday choice of Netflix for new releases which is Friday. She relates the day Netflix chooses with the binge-watching option for the weekend. She also adds that using the definite release day contributes to transnational characteristics of Netflix by allowing it to reach all the viewers all over the world at the same time.

2.2.4 Agency of Audience and Recommendation Algorithms

As mentioned above with Broe's argument, the users of digital technologies are facing various algorithms that track their every step on the internet, and their agency becomes problematic. The promise about free choices becomes less convincing as the individuals deal with recommendations for the goods or services promoted by the internet. Uriccho (2010, p.37) points out the shifting of agency in the digital age as:

we are becoming much more dependent on program meta-data and on search engines, and can see increasing signs that social recommendation systems will play an important role in how we imagine navigating the medium. At the same time, the blurring of producers and users and the active distribution of the results promise even greater variation of content. Most importantly, users can control over the flow of program elements, constructing contexts and playing with the ensuing meanings. Together these affordances in the areas of access and agency enable viewers to look beyond their regions or nations, assessing the world from outside a long-controlled viewing position.

Lotz (2014, p.275) supports Uriccho by confirming that the post-television era does not let the user obtain the power of control. Even though digital communication technologies are allowing interaction, changing the position of users which had been passive in pre-digital era, the agency of the individual is still very limited and only allows s/he to reach a diverse content and which is still controlled by the computational interferes of the service providers. As Arnold (2018, p.65) notes, Netflix collects the data from the

interactions of its subscribers and uses these data to create recommendation lists that are unique for all its subscribers. It even can generate data by following all the seconds of the user who is joined, and saves the details about scrolling, selecting, quitting, playing back and forth and pausing. Moreover, users can give their responses to the content by contributing to determine its rating by clicking the icon thumbs up or down. The option for creating their own lists to watch later also provides data for future recommendations to the users. Netflix names the algorithm it uses as PRS (Personalization, Recommendation and Search). The catalog of the library that every user meets when they logged in is different according to their previously generated data by the algorithm of PRS which has a specific logic independent from the user, but it shapes the choices of the user (Ibid., p.67).

The company initially divided the audience by geographic communities, gender, and age, much like the Nielsen ratings during the broadcast TV era. But by 2016, the viewers were split into “taste communities” based on Netflix’s belief that audience tastes were more complex than a series of demographic differences. With over 2000 taste communities of viewers who have similar tastes – often across international boundaries – Netflix has tailored its programs, production, dubbing, marketing, and advertising to them by isolating the specific elements of the series and forefronting them. (Shattuc 2020, p.150)

Jenner (2018, pp.174,175) mentions how Netflix had learned from the popularity that *Orange is The New Black* had, and continued to consider diversity in its following original shows. This policy was also adopted as a result of being a transnational service, and targeting the niche audience as the quality television has been doing since the late 1990s. She also emphasizes how Netflix considers cultural codes for determining its system of tags and argues that the norm includes the white, male, heterosexual and the excluded ones are assumed as diverse by mentioning the tag of ‘strong female lead’ which as similar terminology for male (Ibid., p.176). Arnold (2018, pp.70,71) compares the traditional systems used for audience measurements and recommendation system determined by algorithms. He points out that the audience measurements of pre-digital television aim to predict the preferences or expectations of viewers but could not make assumptions via the outcomes of their measurement. Manipulation on the viewer’s agency was less than today’s systems. However, the algorithm which shapes the choices of the users interferes with their agency and makes it dysfunctional.

Interfering the user's agency is not only specific to streaming services. The logic of internet is based on following the footsteps of the user to collect the higher amount of data and process it to be used for manipulating the users according to the strategy of the web site, mostly to make them purchase. As Morley (2007, p.221) says "Human who join the network is the best one to sell things." The post-television era which introduced narrowcasting instead of broadcasting is welcomed by the advertisers more than other industry members. Because identifying the demographics and sending the message to the right customer has never been easier due to the logic of internet which makes the user never be able to hide. Distinguishing the expectations of the users makes them be attracted to messages designed specifically for them (Lotz, 2014, p.199). Online activities of the individuals are tracked by the special software which are named as cookies. For more specific data that can also be collected offline, requires the use of algorithms. The socially categorized users are targeted by the adverts and they meet the content if they match the criteria of the adverts (Arnold 2018, p.67). The characteristic of digital technology that allows tracking the users is interactivity. Since the internet has been a part of the lives of today's people, the interactivity is evaluated differently. For Van Dijk (2004), interactivity occurs if the communication has two sides or it is multilateral. The requirement of interactive communication is participation. Playing computer games or uploading a photograph or video to social media is interactive communication, however, watching a Youtube video cannot be defined as interactive action. If the user writes a comment under the video, the process becomes interactive because s/he interacts with the person who uploads the video or other people who watch and write their ideas on the comments section. As Manovich (2001) notes, the user can be named as the co-author if he/she has chosen what is going to be shown or decided how the communication will continue during the process. If digital television or SVOD platforms are evaluated for being interactive, the result would be negative even though they are new media technologies. Van Dijk (2004, p.153) explains why today's digital television is still not interactive by telling that easy opportunities in which digital television offers the user to choose any channel or program do not mean the user can change or interfere with the content. According to Andrejevic (2008), the main problem which the developers of interactive television have to manage is designing a relationship between the screen and the computer user who can watch and participate.

Even though it is still not possible to talk about an interactive television yet, an interactive film named *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* has been released by Netflix in December of 2018. The first choose-your-own-adventure movie of the post-television era was a sci-fi drama set in 1984 and about a young man named Stefan who adapts a novel into a computer game and tries to sell it to a software company. The film lets the viewer decide how the story will continue by offering two options each time. The viewer can choose the music that Stefan listens on the bus or decide about the answer he gives to the boss of the software company about the game project.

Figure 2.6 Frames from the film *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*



Source: <https://www.netflix.com/> (accessed 18 February 2020)

Bandersnatch can also be assumed as an episode of the series named *Black Mirror* which is a Britain based sci-fi drama, tells about the technology's impacts to human in its every episode which are independent of each other. *Black Mirror* was firstly released on *Channel 4* and after its second season was transferred to Netflix (Ivars-Nicolas & Martinez-Cano, 2019). Ninety minutes long *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* was released one year later than the fourth season.

Before focusing on the relationship of the new format with Big Data, the experience of watching an interactive film can be evaluated. The experience of following the story of *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* differs from the one which has linear stories, due to the interruptions demanding choices of the viewer. This point makes viewers feel as if they are playing a computer game, which makes them anxious about giving the right decision not to make a mistake. The second point is about possibilities that disturb the concentration of the viewers because viewers might feel curious about the consequences of other options which even might make them return and try it before reaching the end.

Turkish writer and academician Murat Gülsoy (2018) evaluates *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* by questioning the intent of the viewer who wonders the experiences of ‘the other’ and claims that the interactive format which positions the viewer as the protagonist cannot offer a satisfactory experience if s/he wishes to share the experiences of the other. He explains:

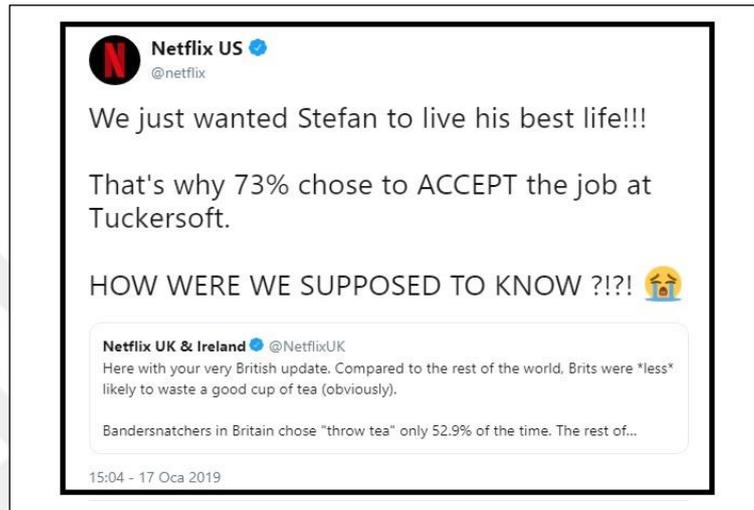
The character in the story makes his own choices and experiences the consequences. I would recognize that character as a reader, perhaps share an experience I would never have so that I know myself better. Sometimes the question of what I would do if he was me could take over my whole self, but the important thing is the choices of the character of that story, his experiences. So I can say that the basic condition that creates the depth is to be able to contact someone else. When the choices are left to me, when the story started to be written by me, I cannot feel the depth of the text anymore. The other one whom I want to learn about disappears and I became alone. However, a novel or a film is one of the best ways to get out of myself and meet the others, to understand them.

When the identification of the viewer with the protagonist becomes impossible, viewers define their viewing experience as more like playing a game rather than watching a film. It can be concluded that the interactive format asks viewers to change their expectations from a fictional narrative which has a centuries-old tradition. However, such a radical change needs a new generation who grows up with it.

In terms of data-generating, this new format provides much more detailed user responses to be processed. Damiani (2019) points out the function of algorithms that Netflix uses to understand the tastes of its users with *microgenres* and he explains how the company can take advantage of the interactive format in different aspects. The format prevents the content to be shared illegally and the involvement of the viewer can create fans of the content. However, the main benefit of the online interactive storytelling is about data mining, by turning the viewer into a great source to analyze. The difference from the data collected from the linear contents, users who watch an interactive content gives data about their “real-world decisions” by choosing the music of the protagonist listens to, the food brands s/he prefers to eat and determining how s/he behaves in under various circumstances. Moreover, the data which Netflix gathers are beyond the choices of users. Even the number of seconds which the user spends before s/he decides about Stefan’s future can be reached and interpreted for various purposes. Despite its strict policy about not giving information about the data collected, on 17 January 2019, a tweet was shared

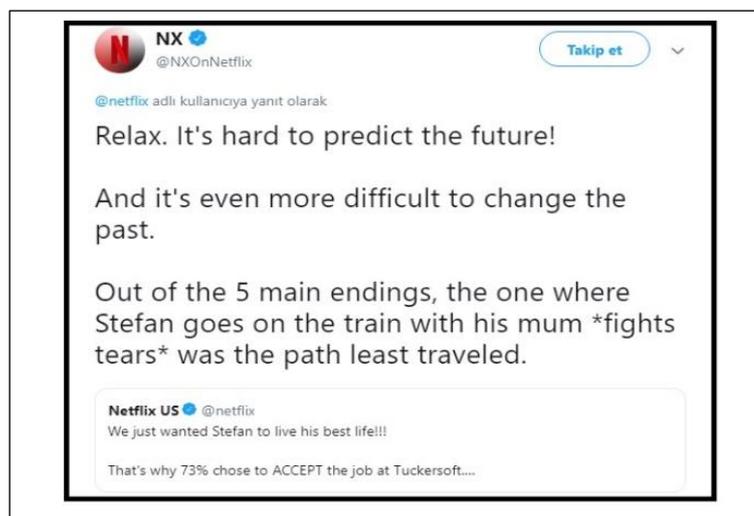
from the official Twitter account of Netflix about the distribution of users' decisions for the near future of Stefan. This data can be interpreted from the point of the users' expectations and values about the real world. It can be predicted that Bandersnatch is mostly been watched by the young audience, and the result which prioritizes the career reveals the concerns young people in today's world.

Frame 2.7 Tweet of Netflix US



Source: Twitter.com (accessed 12 January 2020)

Frame 2.8 Tweet of NXOnNetflix



Source: Twitter.com (accessed 12 January 2020)

Different from the highly accepted job offer, the most preferred cereal which is also the first question that viewers have to decide on the options which are 'Sugar Puffs' or

'Frosties' was declared via the official Twitter account of Black Mirror Series in the same day as "One of the biggest of Stefan's life, over 60% of his friends from the future fed him Frosties." It can be commented that interactive format can be used for a new kind of programmatic product placement. As Damiani notes "Even though Bandersnatch is set in the past, it may have just made the clearest case yet for the way technology could shape the future of entertainment."

2.2.5 Inspiring Youtube

Shuttuc (2020, p.150) claims that Youtube "should be seen chronologically as the first streaming network. Netflix's move to streaming was inspired by YouTube's success as a video streaming service." In February of 2005, three PayPal employees Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim had founded Youtube and two months later co-founder Karim had uploaded a video named "Me at the Zoo" which is the first video of Youtube and only nineteen seconds. One and a half years later, Google had bought Youtube for 1.65 billion dollars, which is now the world's most popular video sharing web site (Dickey, 2013). In 2005, the first slogan of this very new web site was 'Your Digital Video Repository' and it was changed in 2011 as 'Broadcast Yourself'. Van Dijk (2013, p.150) who defines it as homecast platform, points out how Youtube uses algorithms to recommend the content related to user preferences. Video sharing traffic of the site is controlled by "metadata, search engines, ranking and profiling systems". The recommendations become more specific to user preferences if s/he logs in, however, if the user prefers to spend time in the site as a guest, then the following recommendations are made by considering the previous searches of the users. As Müller (2009, p.57) notes, if the user wants to upload a video, s/he has to create an account which then becomes her/his channel, similar to the system of broadcast television. Having a channel makes the user work as an individual broadcaster and gets subscribers to her/his channel as the audience. Besides, the uploading process of the video requires information about the content which are the keywords best fit the video and categories such as Film & Animation, Music, Pets & Animals, Sports, People & Blogs, How-to & Style, Science & Technology, Nonprofits & Activism, News & Politics, Gaming, Travel & Events, Autos

& Vehicles. Müller also emphasizes the democratizing factor of digital technologies by the example of Youtube which allows ordinary people to become the producer of their own content, instead of consuming content of professional institutions as passive audience (Ibid., p.59). Indeed today, more than 500 hours of video are being uploaded to Youtube every minute. (Clement, 2019) Having an excessive amount of internet traffic makes Youtube a great source for data of the users. For Wolff (2015, p.101), Google considered this feature of the site to reach and read to the source which he defines “human behavior” more than owning a profitable company. Van Dijk (2013, p.155) highlights the broadcast companies’ interest in Youtube which is increasing lately and he explains their changing attitude towards the site as the result of its success at attracting the advertisers. In the last years, YouTube has already become an income source for individual users. As the videos they shared are viewed, YouTube pays for these channel owners. A new profession called ‘YouTuber’ has emerged which is mostly embraced by young people. Despite including a high amount of television content, the major part of the videos is not professionally made and as Lotz (2018, p.121) argues, that is the reason why it is not assumed to be a threat to television. And Jenner (2018, p.98) contributes her by emphasizing that YouTube is being mostly associated with social media.

2.2.6 Skip Intro: Time Famine in the Digital Era

Due to its binge release method, Netflix had required to offer an option to the audience which allow them to get rid of the opening credits repeating at the beginning of each episode, and the company had introduced the ‘*skip intro*’ icon which let the audience to continue watching the series as if they are watching a ‘hours long’ film divided into parts. The impatience of the digital age’s audience on reaching the content can be interpreted as preferring to use time efficiently while watching television, instead of watching television to waste time.

Even though post - television era is associated with the changing technologies of the entertainment industry, the relationship between human and time should also be mentioned about the rise of demand for non-televisual content. Castells (2004, p.37)

emphasizes the importance of clock time in the industrial era which lets people organize their day according to their duties and free times. Then he points out how information age compressed time for network society which can be explained as work and life intervenes. In the early 2000s, people who have professions requiring online communication started to suffer from non-ending working hours which disrupt their work-life balance. Getting e-mails 24/7 from their colleagues or bosses became possible with smartphones and this extra responsibility made them feel as if they also work in their free times which they define very stressful. As the third decade of the 2000s arrives, free time became hard to define due to information and communication technologies (ICTs) which changed the individual's relation with time forever. According to Broe (2019, p.40), the separation between leisure and work started to blur after the 1990s with the arrival of neoliberalism. A new concept which is called 'flex time' has emerged to define the way of working which has no definite work hours. Broe notes how the distribution of television content started to be adjusted according to the new way of professional lives of people by finding new ways to reach the audience with "less centralized modes of delivery".

Different from the relationship of people with time, Hassan (2009, pp.97,98) focusses on the readjusted relationship of people with information which also impacts the viewing habits of people in the information age. The amount of information that an individual meets and uses every day is higher than ever in history. Besides the amount of information, the speed of it is also making the individual feel as if running in a marathon. ICTs are sending symbols and signs which make the brain of the individual keep processing, as a result, individual everyone develops their unique way of processing for this information flow. Hasan prefers to use the term '*abbreviated thinking*' to define how today's people should think and decide very fast to continue their social relations. Information overload which is one of the negative consequences of new media technologies does impact the viewing habits of people who cannot get rid of their busy minds, exposed to a high amount of stimulants during the day. In the years before the emergence of digital technologies people had fewer options for domestic entertainment. The main activity of the family members was watching television altogether in the evenings. However today people have their mobile phones, tablets, personal computers besides the smart televisions in their houses. Especially the time spent on social media which is getting widely used all over the world causes a decrease in the amount of time

spent on consuming television content. People do not have to sit in front of the television and wait for their favorite program. The audio-visual content on the internet is limitless and on-demand options for television content offer the viewers a broad archive to choose. As Ellis (2000, pp.170,171) emphasizes an individual who makes a 'choice' has to know all the options before preferring one of them, besides taking the risk of quitting the other options. Ellis also points out the *'time famine'*, which can be defined as a disturbing feeling which a person faces due to having less time than s/he needs to complete her/his tasks. As the information era values time more than previous eras, people suffer from having a limited amount of it which makes them feel obliged to choose the best option in every moment of their lives. However, they even have to spend time analyzing the options before choosing one of them, by keeping in mind they have no luxury to waste it. Ellis points out how two features of post – television era: 'convergence' and 'on-demand' might seduce the one who has time famine and feeling tired against limitless options creates *'choice fatigue'*. He claims that "Broadcast television answers to this feeling. From the perspective of choice fatigue, its schedules might appear to be liberating." Indeed, people of the recent era who prefer on-demand content are complaining about spending so much time while checking the archive of streaming services. This browsing time can even make the user quit watching after losing a lot of time while scrolling down and up to pick one of the contents. Cantante (2018) mentions the design of Netflix's interface which is arranged to reduce the choice fatigue. Netflix shows an optimal amount of content at once for each genre in the browsing page, despite having more crowded archive for that genre. However, the categories such as 'Popular on Netflix', 'Trending Now', 'New Releases', including 'the list' of the subscriber do offer enough content to make people get confused. Cantante also notes that how the satisfaction of the viewer decreases when s/he considers the other option which s/he ignored. Even though the algorithms of the streaming services recommending content which is the closest to the viewer's preferences, the result might not succeed always and the viewer who wants to get entertained becomes more stressful. At this point, Ellis' argument about the "therapeutic role" of broadcast television becomes more significant (Ibid., p.176). It cannot be claimed that the broadcast television will become popular again in the near future, due to time famine and choice fatigue created by the limitless content on the internet. However, the function of scheduled content which frees the viewer from the

responsibility of making a choice should be considered when the new way of television is evaluated.

2.2.7 Predictions on the Future of Television

About the viewing habits which are being readjusted in the post – television era, Lotz (2014, p.29) features that there were two points which are not related to television directly. The first one is about the huge difference between generations who use the medium. While the youngest generation highly prefers digital technologies, the older ones still have bonds with traditional entertainment options offered by broadcast television. The second point which determines the relation of the viewer with new ways of entertainment in the post-television era is ‘computing skills. People who are familiar with computers tend to use streaming services more than the others who are lack of it. Different from the information overload, another negative consequence of new media technology which is highly emphasized is the *digital divide*. Despite being promoted with its democratizing factor, the internet is not equally accessible for the whole parts of society. The inequality among citizens is also seen about having computer skills. More educated people who have better economic conditions easily access and use new media technologies while others have to continue their old habits for entertainment, dominantly broadcast television. Lobato (2019, pp.57,58) contributes the discussions about the digital divide by emphasizing the varying internet speeds which are based on the user’s budget and location. He notes the “bandwidth limitations” which shape the consuming of audiovisual content on the internet. Netflix requires at least 0.5 Mbps (megabits per second) bandwidth for streaming. However, this rate cannot allow users to reach HD streams of Netflix which require at least 3.0 Mbps. The user’s location is also related to the internet using options. People living in urban areas are much easily access the internet, while people living in rural areas have very limited using of the internet, perhaps they have no access at all. In addition to the speed of the internet which is related to the user’s income and location, owning a credit card is also another necessity for reaching the online premium content. However, having a credit card requires having a stable income which is not possible for all citizens.

Morley (2007, p.220) says “if the Walkman is one ‘privatizing’ technology, then the mobile phone is now perhaps the privatizing technology of our age.” People quitted sharing their phone before they start to quit sharing their televisions. The years when mobile phones were not as smart as they are now, predicting that it will become a threat to broadcast television was very difficult. As the mobile phones had internet connection and became alternative screens to television, the first steps of the post-television era were seen. Ten years after the introductions of tablets which were highly welcomed and easily turned to a personal computer and also a television, the discussions about the future of television continues. Gripsrud (2010, p.14) gives the example of photograph which did not cause an end for painting, or cinema did not make literature disappear. He also mentions radio which experiences a similar process when television emerged but survived by adjusting itself according to the new demands of users. Starks (2013, p.138) explains the survival of radio by pointing out how it is still being listened to on the internet which also makes it become globally accessible and has its own broadcasting ways such as news-based ones or music-based ones. After conquering the throne of radio in the last century, television now has a competitor which is more dynamic than it. Balderston (2019) shares the results of ‘Rethink Technology Research’ which was made on prediction the future of broadcast television and according to the research, viewing hours of SVODs will be equal to viewing hours of traditional television by 2023. Negroponte (1995, p.47) who has a widely known claim as “The key to the future of television is to stop thinking about television as television”, predicted that the TV-sets could not be survived for long, twenty-five years ago. However, Scannell (2009, p.223), argues that television will be used even after five hundred years later than today, as the printing technology which is being used for centuries. He offers to think television “as a central component of a globally connected, communicatively joined-up world”. According to Logan (2010, p.58) predicting a media form that has the capability of doing everything is not right, instead, it should be anticipated that different needs will be served by different media and there will be various forms of them. Hassan (2009, p.93) emphasizes the innovations of digital technologies which will change the future of computing by making them ubiquitous, even a part of the human body. Indeed, when the recent innovations of computer technology about wearable devices such as wrist phones or smart glasses, prediction the evolution of the entertainment industry is harder than ever. VR (virtual

reality) headset is offering a completely different viewing experience for a while. Despite being used recently for playing games, these devices might be a new tool for interactive film watching in the near future. The scientific developments continue to surprise today's people and inspire new ways for content consumption. However, predicting the future of television can be made easier when the economic function of online technologies are considered. Internet is the best medium to deliver messages of advertisements due to allowing them to reach the right demographics. As Morley (2007, p.221) says: "If the audience is actually the consumer, the target of the advertising, transformation of broadcast TV to digital is not an option or probability or prediction. It is clear."



3. GENRE ANALYSIS

3.1 GENRE ANALYSIS AS METHOD

Genre as a word is derived from French which means ‘kind’, and it is used for the categorization of texts. It is known that *Aristotle* was the one who used categories for the first time. He classified the texts of Greek literature as tragedy or comedy which are later used for derivations of subgenres by taking into account the way of the protagonist’s actions (Casey et al. 2008, p.135).

The concept of genre has been criticized for its limiting function. According to Derrida (1980, p.56), genre gives orders as “do” or “do not”, at the moment it is heard as a word. He emphasizes the possible prohibitions for meaning which will occur when a text is attached to a genre. However, Cohen (1986, p.204) opposes him by suggesting that categories are not unchangeable, a genre can be altered by a new work which is defined under that genre. He adds that the process in which genre occurs requires human for interpretation and separation of the text. Also, Neale (2000, p.165) uses the term process about the genre. For him, genre can be defined as ‘processes’ which are based on repetition and difference. These processes are related to the expectation of the audience and the other works of the same genre. As Mittell (2004, p.41) argues “genres are not found within one isolated text”, multiple texts which are related to each other can create a genre. What texts need to have intertextual relations are cultural practices. Intertextuality which is a post-structuralist concept, “refers to the connections between texts and can be defined as the process by which texts communicate meaning to audiences through reference to other texts, genres, discourses, themes or media” (Casey, et al 2008, p.157). Besides being intertextual which makes genres open to change, making a definite distinction between genres is not easy. They might intervene with each other in some text and become mixed genres (Chandler, 1997, p.2).

Fiske (2001, p.109) who defines television as a very ‘generic’ medium, emphasizes the significance of genre for producers and audience to arrange the texts and meaning which have a wide range. And Feuer (1992, p.108) points out how unlimited originality of

programming might cause chaos in television industry if they are not categorized. From the point of audience, genres assure audience to choose among options by letting them know about the characteristic of the content which s/he is going to meet. From the points of the industry, the scheduling which is the core of television is based on genres, and by the help of genres easily recognized by the audience, the hours of the day which fits each genre are arranged according to audience habits. Chandler (1997, p.8) emphasizes the limits of flexing the conventions of genres. Some experienced readers can manage to recognize the genre of the text even if his/her expectation is not satisfied with the text presented. However, the conventions of the genre cannot be modified not to disrupt the unity of the text. As Mittell (2004, p.142) notes, criminals are never represented in a way that makes the audience identify with them or a romantic comedy cannot have two lovers who are actually enemies and kill each other in the final. Edgerton & Nicholas (2005, p.249) note that in the pre-digital era, television producers focused on the formulas which they were good at, instead of trying new ways for programming. Therefore, some genres which were preferred by major broadcasting companies used to be more popular than others, and they used as strategies for marketing.

It can be argued that drama had been the most popular genre of television since its early times. Producing drama as fiction for television has started in the age of mass marketing. By protecting its definite formulas, its production reached a grand scale to make it reach every audience (Anderson 2005, p.65). The main reason which made dramas very popular among television audience was its feature for allowing the audience to feel satisfied by trying to predict how the storyline would evolve or analyzing the characters to figure out their functions (Chandler 1997, p.9). Before the invention of videotape, dramas were being broadcasted live on television. With the technology of videotape arrived in 1956, live dramas were abandoned and pre-recorded dramas conquered the screen which allows editing and deletes the mistakes. Television drama as a genre has always evolved during its history, however, it has always been debated for its quality and popularity (Casey et al. 2008, pp.89-90). When the loyalty of audience which is vital for the television industry, is considered, serial dramas have been a convenient way to keep the audience in front of television every week. Two different forms of television drama which are the series: based on episodes with independent storylines, and the serial: based on a continuing storyline through episodes, had a definite division in the early years of

television. However, this division started to blur since the 1970s and some hybrid forms started to emerge (Self 1984, p.2).

As Chandler (1997, p.13) explains, in order to analyze the genre of a television series or film, the similarities in its textual properties are evaluated. The way of storytelling basically defines the text's intention on orienting the feelings of the viewer such as fun, fear, or excitement. Using the same 'formulas' while constructing the narrative is common in television and film industry, especially in mainstream production. The representation of the characters is also evaluated in genre analysis according to their "personal qualities, motivations, goals, behavior". Most of the genres have very clear stereotypes, such as heroes, villains or victims. Moreover, the subject matter of a text helps to identify its genre, even some of the genres are classified according to their themes like crime dramas. The filming location can also define the genre of a television series or film like Western. On the other hand, production design which shapes the visual characteristics of a text that is also named iconography consists of images, decor, and costume, and sound design which shapes the way of music and sound using, and style of photography and lighting and, finally post-production work consists of editing and color design can also be evaluated as second step tools in genre analysis.

For the analysis of genre, Feuer (1992, p.109) offers to use three different approaches which are the aesthetic, the ritual, and the ideological. While the aesthetic approach focuses on the characteristics of the author's work, the ritual approach considers the features of the content including plot, characteristic, and themes which are based on the relations between industry and audience. She notes that, according to the ritual approach, genre is "an exchange through which a culture speaks to itself". Finally, genre is a tool for control if the approach is ideological. It functions to "reproduce the dominant ideology of the capitalist system" and the way of interpretation relies on how the audience is positioned.

3.2 GENRE IN TELEVISION SERIES

Television drama had adopted most of its genres from literature and cinema, besides radio dramas which were highly demanded before the audiovisual technologies arrived. *Melodrama* can be given as an example of one of the oldest genres. According to Arslan (2005, p.10), the first addresses of melodrama were theatre, novel, and film, followed by derivative addresses as graphic novels, photo-novels and television. As Casey et al. (2008, pp.170,171) emphasize melodrama which has characteristics as romance, overdramatization and excessive feelings, can be defined as a style that can exist in different genres. Television drama has a melodramatic style in general. Popular dramas use the elements which are related to melodrama in genres such as hospital dramas or crime shows. Melodrama also includes family as an instrument to maintain patriarchy and capitalism by representing definite gender roles. *Soap operas* which are mostly based on domestic settings and subjectivity of the female, also involve melodramatic elements. (Pearson & Simpson 2001, pp. 384-385) Roots of soap opera are from commercial radio in America, and as a genre it became popular in 1930, owing to its name of soap to sponsorship system in radio which was supported by companies Procter and Gamble and Colgate-Palmolive (Gripsrud 1995, p.157). Characters in soap used to face traumatic events in their lives, however, they can overcome it much more quickly than a real person who might even not get well again. What does soap do is exaggerating, by using definite feelings and moral conflicts, which make it a melodrama (Ellis 2007, p.106). Soaps had reached their golden era in the late 1970s by reaching worldwide with *Dallas* and *Dynasty*. The end of the 1990s was when the teen soaps such as *Dawson's Creek* and *The OC* started to be globally popular. Due to not requiring high budgets for production, soaps had been preferred by television companies and became a significant part of the business, the soap from America, Britain, Mexico, Brasilia and Australia started to reach audiences of other countries all over the world (Casey, et al 2008, p.262). Different from soap opera, the dramas from this genre which are produced in South American countries are named *telenovella*, once started as radio novellas in 1940 in Cuba. Telenovellas differs from soap operas for having clear beginnings and endings, despite they can continue for long periods. Since the 1960s, the time slot of telenovellas had changed and they became a prime-time genre in order to attract wider part of audience (Havens 2005, p.272).

Another genre that was transferred from commercial radio and had been very popular in the early years of television was *sit-com* (situation comedy). Sit-com as a genre has very definite characteristics, by focusing on ordinary people who have not exceptional features, mostly living regularly, facing only unimportant problems which can be solved by a little effort. Characters in the sit-com do not experience essential changes in their lifestyle which causes them to move from their locations such as home or workplace, because the locations are stable due to being shot in studios. Audience visits them every week in the same place as if the characters are imprisoned there. The gender roles are very traditionalist in sit-com which represents the women more supportive. Different from the 'classic' sit-coms of the pre-digital era, sit-coms of the recent era which are on premium channels or pay-tv channels focus on more 'provocative' issues, as a result of being freed from the constraints of advertisement companies which targets the mass audience (Kispal-Kovacs and Mirrlees, 2012, p.102). Besides the characters of the sit-coms are used to be middle-class people whom the audience can identify with easily. The main characters are definite who maintain the action with the assistance of supporting characters who are connected to socially or professionally (Pearson and Simpson, 2001, p.568). In addition, canned laughter/laugh track is used in sit-com as a tradition that reminds the live performance sit-coms with the spectators. The effect of laughter creates the audience as if s/he is watching the show in a crowd even if s/he is alone in front of the television.

Police / Crime Shows had not been a common genre in television until the 1970s, even though its popularity in Hollywood at the beginning of the last century and popularity of detective novels which are the subgenre of crime fiction. Police dramas depend on the concerns of crime and punishment, and law and order, within the space where the individual and society come across (Rogers 2008, p.82). As all the genres do, police/crime shows also evolved through time. Even though there were clear distinctions between the good and the bad; while the criminals were all bad while the police were good, in the police shows recent era the line between this opposition has been blurring with "bent cops" and "sympathetic villains". The narrative which positions the police and the criminal closer than before creates a new way of conflict which makes punishment of the evil indefinite (Casey et al. 2008, p.59). It can be argued that dramas are related to the existing ideology of society. The ways of representation in the fiction cannot be separated

from the world it is produced in, which might result in the transformation of police show genre (Clarke 1992, p.252). As the television industry has been competing in the post-television era due to the decreasing share of viewers, police, detective or crime dramas are getting popular again. The nature of the genre allows its creators to apply different versions of the narratives which are about the maintaining of status quo by law and order (Cooke 2008, p.29). Contemporary police/crime dramas tend to have noir elements that are derived from film noir. Talking about the exact definition of 'Film Noir' is not possible. There are two different approaches to noir, which accepts it as a genre or as a style (Park 2011, p.2). Noir, with its theme and style, has been on television since the 1980s and used in various genres such as police procedurals, detective dramas, crime thrillers, and espionage and science fiction series, to depict its own era and lives of the people who are surrounded by the circumstances of that era (Sanders 2013, p.440). Noir as a genre can be identified in two ways: stylistically which means using specific camera angles, lighting techniques and production design which creates the feeling of isolation, and thematically which means lack of clear distinctions between good and bad, right and wrong (Skoble 2006, p.41). Film noir is much more than a drama that is built upon the direct or indirect battle between good and evil, it focusses on the contradiction in the understanding of morality which creates psychologically impacted individuals (Mayer 2007, p.6). People's way of evaluation of film noir is mostly related to their evaluation of life itself. Noir functions as a mirror which reflects their mind. How they react and make judgments about noir is based on their "traditional aesthetic and psychological patterns" (Park 2011, p.126). The key element which should exist in noir is "inescapability", it is more significant than the other common features (Abrams 2007, p.19). Characters in noir are always unprotected. They are open to risk to lose their mental health, some of them already did. The ones who try to solve the case face the probability of being murdered. Victims who suffer amnesia might totally forget their identities. Even ordinary people might find themselves in the middle of trouble, be accused of a crime or be attacked by criminals and be deceived by their friends or family members (Seale 2000, p.159). How neo-noir differs from the classic noir depends on the representation of evil. Criminals in classic noir are always punished, law defeats them sooner or later. However, neo-noir depicts a world where the victims are not only the ones targeted by the criminals.

Everybody is impacted by the crime more or less and having no chance to escape creates the feeling of paranoia (Park 2011, p.28).

When they are compared with others, *science fiction* and *fantasy* have not been one of the genres which were dominating the television dramas for prime-time. However, the post-television era reversed the destiny of these genres. Narrative of science fiction is built upon the relation of society with science and technology. Dramas of this genre always have a definite look towards the change of its world has to face, which makes it a utopian or a dystopian drama (Kispal-Kovacs and Mirrlees, 2012, p.104). Starting point of the plot in this genre is used to be based on technological development or scientific experiment and most likely has negative consequences that are going to impact the earth and/or humankind. The unique feature of science fiction which differs from fantasy is being about a fact which is reasonable and has scientific explanations (Casey et al. 2008, p.245). On the other hand, main feature of the fantasy genre is challenging the perception of reality. An ordinary person gains power with inexplicable happening and becomes a superhero or s/he might find out her/his extraordinary heritage which brings magical powers. What the protagonist in fantast genre experience is “metamorphosis” which results in the “awakening” (Fowkes 2010, p.54). After the awakening, the journey starts for the hero or heroine to save the planet or a country. What is supernatural in the content of the fantasy used to be related to mythology or legends (Laetz and Johnston 2008, p.167).

4. TELEVISION IN TURKEY

4.1 TRT

The first television broadcast in Turkey was carried from the studio founded in Maçka Campus of Istanbul Technical University, in March 1952. There were no televisions in the houses in this period, and those who wanted to watch İTÜ TV should go to the halls prepared for themselves in Maçka campus. Names such as Halit Kıvanç, Erkan Yolaç, Fecri Ebcioğlu and Altan Erbulak, who would be important television faces in the following years worked in İTU TV those years. The first television broadcasts of the new year evening and a football match were made by İTU TV and broadcasting of the channel continued for twenty years until it was transferred to TRT in 1971.

The world's first television broadcast took place in 1936 in England. Despite the rapid popularization of television all over the world, its arrival to Turkey has not been as fast as radio. This was because the priority was given to make the radio accessible throughout the country, before focusing on television. However, in the middle of the 1960s people had information about television and started to demand that technology in Turkey. Soon after in 1964 Turkey Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) was founded. The era before the first test broadcast was made, used for the education process of the technical crew. At first the montage of technological devices was made which were brought from Germany. Later the staff was assigned, mostly chosen among radio staff of TRT. The first closed-circuit television broadcast took place on August 14th, 1966 (Cankaya 2015, p.76). The contents of this broadcast: '*Poems and Music*' and '*News*' were prepared by Gülseven Güven, Bülent Varol and Ünlen Demiralp, the employees of Ankara Radio who were sent to abroad to have education on television.

About one and a half years later, on January 31st, 1968 at 19.30, the first test broadcast was made, which was announced before for a long time from the radio. That year, the majority of people did not have a television in their house. They got together in cafes and restaurants which have television or in front of the stores which sell television, to watch the first broadcast. The first announcement, made by the announcer Nuran Emren Devres

was like: “*This is Ankara Television making the test broadcasting from the third band of the fifth channel. Dear spectators, today is 31 January 1968 Wednesday, we are starting broadcast of Ankara Television.*” During this test which lasted until 20.51, a documentary about the Turkish revolution history, news, weather, a cartoon and a documentary about Antalya forests was broadcasted. After the closing announcement, the broadcast ended with the National Anthem (Serim 2007, pp.51- 52).

4.1.1 Monopoly Era: 1968 – 1990

In 1968, the first broadcasting year of TRT, national productions which would leave their superiority to foreign productions in the following years, stand out. These were programs such as *TV Halk Okulu (TV Public School)*, *Cumartesi Gecesi (Saturday Night)*, *Şehzadebaşı 1918*, *Gençler Bilmek İstiyor (Youth Wants to Know)* and *Televizyonun Penceresinden (From the Window of Television)* (Cankaya 2015, p.83). The first television play which was shot and broadcasted live was the play of Şinasi, *Şair Evlenmesi (Marriage of Poet)* (Serim 2007, p. 58).

Next year, on the 19th of July, one of the most important events in human history, the first step of Neil Armstrong on the Moon was broadcasted in TRT. Before that day, on April 27th, the first live broadcast was made from the Ankara concert of Zeki Müren. It was rumored that the broadcast of the concert watched by more than one hundred thousand Ankara citizens. The October 12th another first event in TRT history occurred and the first continuous broadcasting until morning was made to share results the election made that day (Ibid., pp. 58, 59). Besides, the daily content of 1969 was based on TV series and educational programs mostly from Germany. Moreover, French music programs, language education programs and documentaries about different countries were the content of the broadcast which didn't get a proper guide yet (Cankaya 2015, p. 83).

As Mutlu (2005, p.76) notes, the main purpose in the early years of television in Turkey was development. Different from the radio, which only allows verbal communication, it would be possible to teach via visual content of television. Due to the scarcity of high

educated population, the difficulty of perceiving verbal communication as needed could be overcome with audiovisual communication. Educational programs on agriculture were produced for the citizens living in rural areas. In 1970, in addition to the majority of foreign films, educational programs continued to be included. One of the most prominent productions of the public education was *Köye ve Köyden Kente*, (*The Village and From Village to City*). However, this production, which should reach the rural areas, did not achieve the aimed success, because television had not yet come out of the city centers (Cankaya 2015, p. 84).

The first live sports broadcast was made on October 3rd, 1971 in Izmir from football match among teams Karşıyaka and Istanbul. Then on October 6-17, the Mediterranean Games were broadcasted live. On the New Year's Eve in 1971, the *New Year Special Program* was on television between 19.28 and 01.30 (Serim 2007, p. 69).

Between 1968 and 1971, test broadcasts were only available for Ankara and close area. In 1972 broadcasting began to reach the whole country (Mutlu 2008, p.145). During those years which were highly stressful due to political conflicts, TRT broadcasts were also in the focus of all political parties. This situation, which caused different interpretations, resulted in the abolition of the autonomy of TRT in 1972 following the March 12th, 1971 Memorandum. Another important aspect of the year 1972 is that the first commercial broadcasting was started on television. The new medium which is highly effective on consumers attracted various sectors, and television suddenly gained a transformative function of the consumption habits of the people and thus the culture. In the same year, in the contest program *Bildiklerimiz, Gördüklerimiz, Duyduklarımız* (*The Ones We Know, Saw and Heard*) hosted by Halit Kıvanç, was used a hostess. (Serim 2007, p.40) In those years, foreign series had become highly popular throughout the country. Among these productions, there were *Görevimiz Tehlike* (*Mission Impossible*), *Uzay Yolu* (*Star Trek*) and *Kaçak* (*The Fugitive*) which are still remembered.

In 1973, the 50th year of the Turkish Republic, programs about Atatürk and republicanism were broadcasted throughout the year. The first full day broadcast of the television was made on May 13th, when the general census took place (Cankaya 2015, p. 139). The opening ceremony of the Bosphorus Bridge in Istanbul on the 30th of October was on television live (Serim 2007, p. 71). That year the first Turkish TV series *Hayattan*

Yapraklar (Leaves from Life) was made in 13 episodes and presented to the audience. Its director was *Gürol Gökçe* and leading actors were *Yıldız Kenter* and *Şükran Güngör*. In 1973, the dominance of foreign productions ended and their rate fell to 29.95 percent (Ibid., p. 141).

The first television broadcast on daytime was made in 1974 with a sports program named *Telespor* on March 3rd. The adaptations of classic novels prepared by the BBC such as *Sefiller (Les Miserables)*, *Define Adası (Treasure Island)*, *Karamazov Kardeşler (The Brothers Karamazov)* and *Goriot Baba (Father Goriot)* were broadcasted in Turkish. In addition, adaptations from Turkish literature belong to *Aziz Nesin* and *Sait Faik* were also on television (Cankaya 2015, p. 144). In May, the first Turkish sitcom TV series *Kaynanalar (Mothers in Law)* was made. The series attracted the audience easily and it became one of the series which continued very long years in Turkey.

The year 1975 was the year when Turkey participated in the *Eurovision Song Contest*. On the night of March 22nd, Turkish audience got together in front of the television with great enthusiasm, and popularity of *Eurovision* continued for years. That year first Turkish production was sold to foreign countries. It was the adaptation of a Turkish novel named *Aşk-ı Memnu (Forbidden Love)* into series with six episodes and directed by *Halit Refiğ*. This series got the attention and appreciation of the audience with its production quality and it made a start for other Turkish adaptation series (Cankaya 2015, p. 148). Mutlu (2008, p.149) defines the first mini-series of the Turkish television: *Aşk-ı Memnu* as the milestone of Turkish television drama. The same year, the first time on TV, the censorship claims came up. TRT decided that director *Metin Erksan* would adapt five different Turkish literature under the name of *Beş Hikaye (Five Stories)*. First story: *Müthiş Bir Tren (A Magnificent Train)* written by *Sait Faik Abasıyanık* was the first episode. It was different from the style which the audience is familiar with. Secondly, *Sazlık (Reeds)*, the adaptation from the book of *Kenan Hulusi Koray* and *Bir İntihar (A Suicide)* were broadcasted. However, these three episodes caused negative critics, and broadcasting of the rest two episodes was quitted.

After the administration of TRT changed at the beginning of 1976, the two episodes of *Beş Hikaye (Five Stories)* which were quitted, *Hanende Melek (Singing Angel)*, the adaptation from the story of *Sabahattin Ali* and *Geçmiş Zaman Elbiseleri (Old Time*

Dresses) written by Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar were broadcasted. (Serim 2007, pp. 96-97) In 1976, the popularity of foreign TV series such as *Küçük Ev (Little House on the Prairie)*, *Komiser Columbo (Columbo)*, *Üç Silahşörler (The Three Musketeers)*, *Pasaklı Sally (Dirty Sally)* was going on. In addition, this year, iftar (evening dinner during Ramadan) programs started to be made for the first time. They were lasting twenty minutes every day during the whole month of Ramadan, including Turkish explanations of Quran and religious music. This beginning created a tradition that would continue in the following years (Cankaya 2015, p. 153).

Next year, adaptations of masters of Turkish literature like Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar and Necip Fazıl Kısakürek met the audience. However, when the whole contents considered, the dominance of foreign production was clear in 1977. If the genres were compared according to their duration, TV series were dominating one (Cankaya 2015, p. 159). Kesirli-Unur (2016, pp. 68,69) contributes by emphasizing the Turkish audience's familiarity with foreign content, especially the ones from the U.S.A. due to imported American movies which had been on movie theaters of Turkey before the arrival of television. Moreover, as Mutlu (2008, p.57) explains the number of U.S.A. based programs were very high in Turkish television as it had been in the televisions of many other countries which were being used to fill the gaps in the schedule and these were the programs which were also produced by considering their marketability as a product to be imported.

In 1978, television in Turkey celebrated its 10th year. Most popular of the year were American series such as *Charlie'nin Melekleri (Charlie's Angels)*, *Kapalı Kapılar Ardında Washington (Washington: Behind Closed Doors)*, *Aşk Gemisi (The Love Boat)*. Despite the interest of the audience, some negative critics were rising especially about *Aşk Gemisi*. In a newspaper named *Bayrak*, a critique that was claiming that the lives that the series brought to the screen were corrupted and its broadcasting should be quitted. In addition, in 1978, the genre of arabesque in music had been on television for the first time. On December 23th, the famous Turkish arabesk singer Orhan Gencebay met the audience which meant that the arabesk ban was ended (Cankaya 2015, p. 167). As Özbek (1997, p.211) defines, arabesk music is a hybrid genre that emerged as a mixed form of Turkish classical and folk music including the elements from the music of West and Egypt. However, the term arabesk also started to be used for the definition of "entire

migrant culture formed at the peripheries of Turkish cities” which made it to be “seen as a threat in its so-called impurity, fatalistic outlook, and degeneration. It is said to ruralize and contaminate the urban environment”.

The year 1979 was the year when TRT International *April 23 Children's Festival* started. The festival which would continue in the following years had 133 children and 31 personnel in its first year. Another important point in this year was elections speeches which were carried to television from radio. Every day for twenty minutes, politicians met their voters via television (Cankaya 2015, pp. 173,174). That year literary adaptation series like *Kiralık Konak (Mansion for Rent)* of Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu and *Seyahatname (Travel book)* of Aziz Nesin were also on television.

If the year of 1980, including the period before and after the military coup of 12 September, is evaluated, it can be seen that the domination of TV series was continuing. One of the most popular television series of all times: *Dallas* which was a soap opera about the wealthy Ewing family based in Texas living complicated affairs and business wars, met the Turkish audience in 1980. It was rumored that streets were getting empty in the evening of the weekday it was broadcasted. As Çelenk (2005, p.102) argues television provides the material to be used for public communication, helps its audience to become social, the characters of *Dallas* had widely known among people, the predictions about the following episodes were being made when people got together. Even it had an impact on fashion. For instance, hairstyles of female starts of *Dallas* were imitated by Turkish women. According to Mutlu (2008, p.255) The Ewing family had shaken the image of the typical American family. A rich, respected and luxurious family against the outside world is experiencing incredible problems and collapses behind closed doors. Besides *Dallas*, English TV series like *Madam Bovary*, *David Copperfield* and *Kaptan Onedin (Captain Onedin)* were other foreign series of 1980. Turkish series of the year were adaptations which are Tarık Dursun K's *Denizin Kanı (Blood of The Sea)*, Müsahipzade Celal's *Balaban Ağa*, Ahmet Soner's *İş İştir (Work is Work)*. The study on the audience preferences was made for the first time and questionnaires were used. It is aimed to make more qualified production by exploring the ideas of audience. On the last day of the year, another first in the history of television occurred and TRT added a Turkish belly dancer *Nesrin Topkapı* at New Year's Eve program. It was the first time a belly dancer appeared on Turkish television. In addition, programs for children such as *Heidi*

and *Şeker Kız Candy (Candy Candy)* were on television in 1980. The educational programs which were continuing as a TRT tradition were mostly for students and people living in rural areas (Cankaya 2015, pp. 182-184).

The 100th anniversary of Atatürk's birth, 1981 was '*Atatürk Year*' which also effected the contents of TRT. Besides, Turkish literary adaptations Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *Bağdat Hatunu (Woman of Bagdat)*, Sait Faik Abasıyanık's *Kayıp Aranıyor (Lost Wanted)* and *Baba ve Oğul (Father and Son)*, Tomris Uyar's *Sarmaşık Gülleri (Rambles)* and Mahmut Şevki Esendal's *İki kadın (Two Women)* were continued to be made. The quality of the adaptations of TRT was increasing and they had functioned as a bridge between people and literature. The most popular foreign series of the year was *Kökler (Roots)*, the adaptation of Alex Haley's 1976 novel *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*. Its main character *Kunta Kinte* it is still remembered by the audience who are not young today. Another important point that should be mentioned about 1981 is the test broadcasts of color television. *23 April Children's Festival* and *European Basketball Championship* had been on television in color. Another broadcast in color was made on July 29th, for the wedding of *Prince Charles* of England (Ibid., p. 194).

In 1982, different from the literary adaptations, a series named *Sekiz Sütuna Manşet (Headline to Eight Column)* written by Atilla İlhan for television was made. The '90 seconds rule' was used in this series for the first time which is based on using different scenes or events every 90 seconds to keep the attention of the audience (Serim 2007, p.121). In that year another program that was broadcasted and got popular especially among the young audience was a music program named *Teleskop (Telescope)* hosted by İzzet Öz.

Next year, the legendary soap opera *Dallas* ended after getting the highest level of popularity among the whole series in fourteen years of Turkish television. 1983 was a fruitful year for national productions. Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *Avukat (Lawyer)* and *Eski Hastalık (Former Illness)*, Memduh Şevki Esendal's *Komisier (Commissioner)*, Cevat Fehmi Başkut's *Paydos*, Orhan Asena's *Tohum ve Toprak (Seed and Soil)*, Behçet Necatigil's *Emekli (Retired)*, Haldun Taner's *Fotoğraf (Photograph)* and Orhan Kemal's *Yalancı Dünya (Lier World)* were adapted as dramas. In that year a competition program

named *Bir Kelime Bir İşlem* (*One Word One Calculation*) was broadcasted and continued for long years (Ibid., p.122).

In 1984, Mithat Cemal Kuntay's novel *Üç İstanbul* (*Three Istanbul*) was adapted in eleven episodes, then Tarık Buğra's novel *Küçük Ağa* became a series with eight episodes. TRT started to cooperate with private production companies in 1984 for the first time with *Bay Alkolü Takdimimdir* (*Introducing Mr. Alcohol*). Another series of the year was *Kartallar Yüksek Uçar* (*Eagles Fly High*) written by Atilla İlhan were also made, as the audience started to show interest in local content (Cankaya 2015, p.257). By spanning 12 episodes, it had been the series having the highest number of episodes since that year. It had also come up with its high budget: 52 million liras. However, being praised by the audience and defined as “local Dallas”, paved the way for the following series again written by Atilla İlhan (Yağcı-Aksel, 2011).

Figure 4.1 Frame from *Kartallar Yüksek Uçar* E.1



Source: trtarsiv.com *Kartallar Yüksek Uçar* Episode 1. (accessed 06 April 2019)

Figure 4.2 Frame from *Kartallar Yüksek Uçar* E.7



Source: trtarsiv.com *Kartallar Yüksek Uçar* Episode 7. (accessed 06 April 2019)

For Yılmaz (2018), this series which represents the mobilization of classes is a socio-economic analysis of Turkey, a republic evolved from an empire. Besides, the concept of ‘conglomerate’ has been used in a television series for the first time. *Kartallar Yüksek Uçar* is a revenge story between a wealthy man Banazlı İsmail (Sadri Alışık) who got his fortune by illegal ways and Telli Hanım (Selda Alkor) whose husband was a bandit and killed by Banazlı İsmail. The transformation of Telli Hanım from a housewife living in the province to a businesswoman who rules a big company and mafia relations was a highly new experience for the Turkish audience.

On May 4th, 1984, the ads started to be broadcasted completely in color, which increased the income of the channel gained from advertisings (Cankaya 2015, p. 258). And since the July 1st, whole broadcasting became colorful.

The first series of 1985 was *Parmak Damgası (Finger Stamp)* adapted from the work of Halikarnas Balıkcısı. It followed by an original series *Parkta Bir Sonbahar Günüydü (It Was an Autumn Day in The Park)* written for television by Recep Bilginer. In the same year, another series *Kuruntu Ailesi (Kuruntu Family)* started, having Gazanfer Özcan and Gönül Ülkü as leading actors, and it quickly got the interest of the audience. A new genre in television series, ‘soap opera’ was arrived at Turkish television for the first time in 1980. *Köle İsaura (Isaura: Slave Girl)* was broadcasted in day time every day, mostly watched by women (Serim 2007, p.135, 136). Another popular foreign series of the year was *Kara Şimşek (Night Rider)*. Series, telling the adventures of a black car which can talk named *Kitt* and its owner *Michael Knight* got very popular among the young audience.

The foreign channels aiming for Turkish citizens living abroad were preferring to buy Turkish content. In 1986, TRT sold 52 programs to 9 different countries. Among these programs, there was *Çalikuşu (The Wren)* adapted from Reşat Nuri Güntekin’s novel and directed by Osman Seden. Another series of the year was *Mardin Münih Hattı (Mardin Munich Line)* having an original screenplay written by Ünal Küpeli (Ibid., p.137). The story of this series was about the happenings after the marriage of a young Turkish man from Mardin and a German woman from Munich. Different from *Mardin Münih Hattı* which was not appealing for the majority of the audience, *Perihan Abla (Sister Perihan)* was the series started in 1986 and targeting the mainstream audience. Having a story

belongs to comedy genre and based on small troubles of ordinary people living in a neighborhood, attracted the attention of the audience easily and became a well-known Turkish series of all times which inspired the following productions about neighborhood life. Despite the first TV series *Kaynanalar* made in 1974 and the following film and series made by popular directors of Yeşilçam, the domestic series became the focus of the taste of masses with *Perihan Abla* in 1986 (Tanrıöver 2011, p. 47).

Turkey met its second television channel TRT-2 on October 6th, 1986, which is the anniversary of Istanbul's salvation. At 19.45, broadcast started with an opening announcement and continued with news and concert of Turkish singer Emel Sayın (Serim 2007, p.138).

In 1987, *Perihan Abla*, transferred to TRT-2. In addition, the new channel was broadcasting music and magazine programs and documentaries in its first year. The competition program hosted by Halit Kıvanç which would be on television with the name of *Çarkıfelek (Wheel of Fortune)* for long years later, started that year. In TRT-1, the series *Elif Ana Ayşe Kız (Mother Elif Daughter Ayşe)* directed by Bilge Olgaç, broadcasted. Other series of the year were *Gönül Dostları (Soul Friends)* having Fatma Girik and Tamer Yiğit as leading stars, *Yalnız Efe* adapted from the book of Ömer Seyfettin and a science fiction series named *Kavanozdaki Adam (Man in the Jar)* (Ibid., p.139).

Television in Turkey celebrated its twentieth year in 1988. One year before TRT decided to make a high budget series about the foundation years of the Ottoman Empire. After a long pre-production process, the series having twelve episodes was completed in 1988 and started on TRT-1. However, the mistakes made about the historical dates were criticized and the production couldn't get the targeted success. The adaptation series of the year were Halide Edip Adıvar's *Ateşten Gömlek (Ordeal)*, Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *Yaprak Dökümü (Fall of the Leaves)*. Among the foreign series, the most popular ones had been *Altın Kızlar (The Golden Girls)* and *Cosby Ailesi (The Cosby Show)* (Ibid., pp.141,142). In addition, the series named *Uğurlugiller*, adapted from the skits which were on the radio for years, having Yıldız Kenter, Şükran Güngör and Tefik Gelenbe as leading actors started and continued for three years.

The year 1989 is important due to the foundation of the third channel of Turkey. Broadcasting of only foreign productions was aimed for the first years of the channel. In the evenings, TRT-3 broadcasted movies and series, opera, ballet, and music programs (Cankaya 2015, p. 274). In TRT-1, *Susam Sokağı* (*Sesame Street*) a TV show for children which was bought from America three years ago and adapted to Turkish children and language, started. The content of the show was mostly on learning to read letters, counting numbers, basic information, child songs and various skits with puppets. The year of 1989 is important due to being the beginning years of series *Bizimkiler* (*Ours, Our People*) which had been one of the longest-running series in Turkish television series history. The story of the series was based on the relations and personal lives of people living in the same building. Written by Umur Bugay and directed by Yalçın Yelence, *Bizimkiler* had been the common entertainment for three generations on Sunday evenings for thirteen years. The other series of the year were: *Samanyolu* (*Milky Way*) adapted from the book of Kerime Nadir, Orhan Kemal's *El Kızı* (*Stranger's Daughter*) and Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *Dudaktan Kalbe* (*From the Lips to the Heart*). The series of the year which wasn't an adaptation was *Uzaylı Zekiye* (*Zekiye: The Alien Girl*) played by Seden Kızıltunç, about a weird young girl who can change the places of the stuff and take the time back by using her mind power or sending light from her eyes. (Ibid., p.273) In 1989, a TV show named *Bir Başka Gece* (*A Different Night*) hosted by Çetin Çeki, including music and comedy skits started to meet the audience (Serim 2007, pp. 152,162).

Next year, the domination of series on television was going on. In the first months of 1990, a Turkish crime-action series named *İz Peşinde* (*Searching the Trace*) started. After the series had success, the other crime-action series named *Kanun Savaşçıları* (*Warriors of The Law*) was broadcasted in October. One of the series with original screenplays in 1990 was *Kantodan Tangoya* (*From Kanto to Tango – Kanto is a dance used in Turkish theatre*) which was representing the modernization process of Turkey from the aspects of a father and his son. The other series was *Geçmiş Bahar Mimosaları* (*Former Spring Mimosas*) which was a psychological drama. The popular foreign series of the year were *Hayat Ağacı* (*Generations*), *Sahil Güvenlik* (*Baywatch*) and *Alf* (Ibid., p.159-160). Alf had been a popular comedy among children with its funny story based on the adventures of an alien covered with fur and having a big nose and ears who came from space and settled down in a family's house. In TRT-2, the American soap opera *Yalan Rüzgarı* (*The*

Young and The Restless) which was being watched by women all over the world, was started in 1989 and had been broadcasted for years in different channels.

When the TRT's more than twenty years of television broadcasting before the arrival of private television channels, is considered in general, it can be said that the national and foreign series stand out as the dominant format. In the first years, foreign series, which were much more cost-effective than the national production, have been replaced by national productions in which the audience saw a resemblance with their culture and therefore showed more interest. In these years when the television began to enter houses, the fact that citizens with different ideologies in the country exposed to the contents of a single channel every night caused various discussions. The American series *Dallas*, though its popularity lasted for long years, was reflecting lifestyles that were very different from the lifestyles of Turkey in that era. As a result, it was highly criticized as *Aşk Gemisi (The Love Boat)*. In addition, the series such *Küçük Ev (Little House on the Prairie)*, *Kökler (Roots)*, *Charlie'nin Melekleri (Charlie's Angels)*, *Altın Kızlar (The Golden Girls)*, *Cosby Ailesi (The Cosby Show)* were liked by the Turkish audience. However, the audience couldn't make a bond with these series which belongs to different cultures. When the national productions are evaluated, it can be seen that literary adaptations had been preferred to bring on the screen for years. Original screenplays written for television was less in the first twenty years of television in Turkey. Even though the adaptation series such as *Aşk-ı Memnu (Forbidden Love)*, *Yaprak Dökümü (Fall of Leaves)*, *Hanımın Çiftliği (Farm of The Lady)* were liked by the audience, series such as *Kaynanalar (Mothers in Law)*, *Perihan Abla (Sister Perihan)*, *Bizimkiler (Our People)* were much more preferred by the audience due to their representation of daily life with ordinary characters which create the feeling of sincerity. In general, as Çelenk (2005, p.145) mentions, the stories of local dramas of TRT mostly depend on solidarity, wisdom, being satiated and have modest messages.

One of the first Turkish original television series which broadcasted for long years and/or was remembered by the audience today is *Kaynanalar (Mothers in Law)* from 1974. The relationship between two families after the marriage of a merchant man's daughter and the son of a lawyer man, reflects the relationship between the traditional and the modern by using humor. According to Mutlu (2008, pp. 213, 214) *Kaynanalar (Mothers in Law)* clearly takes the side of the traditional ones, and does so by representing the modern

family as ridiculously, despite the realistic presentation of the traditional family. He supports this comment by giving examples of two women who are married to a merchant and a lawyer. When the wife of the merchant man, the traditional one, stays behind her husband and be supportive to him, the wife of the lawyer is represented as oppressive and whimsical.

Another series that is still being remembered is *Perihan Abla (Sister Perihan)*, one of the legends of the 1980s. This series had also given inspiration to the series in the future based on neighborhood life. Here, a district takes the place of family and it reflects the world of ordinary people living simple lives. The main character *Sister Perihan*, who was a helpful woman, used to take care of everybody and their problems, then try to solve them. The emphasis on solidarity is very strong in the series. Mutlu (2008, p.219) defines *Sister Perihan* as “the conscience of the neighborhood and us” and argues that the series promotes solidarity by covering the necessity for questioning the reasons of the problems. In the series, while men were filling the public spheres, women including *Sister Perihan* stay in indoor places, private areas mostly the house. If all these details are evaluated it can be concluded that the series was mostly traditionalist.

The series which met the audience at the end of the 1980s and continued for thirteen years was *Bizimkiler*, and it is still in memories of different generations today. The story of the series was based on the relations of families who were living in the same building in a well-situated part of Istanbul. Even if new characters were added to the cast in the following years, the main characters were always *Mr. Şükrü*: a businessman, *Mr. Sabri*: the administrator of the building, *Mr. Yavuz*: a merchant, *Mr. Cemil*: an unemployed and drunk man and *Mr. Cafer*: the serviceman of the building. In *Bizimkiler*, the neighborhood was replaced with a building. For Mutlu (2008, p.223), theme of the series had two bases: “relationship of dominant and dependent” and “the necessity of the protection of the existing conditions and positions”. The prominent relations of the series were between ‘father and son’ and ‘elder brother and little brother’. In addition, when the position of woman is evaluated, it can be seen that all of the women are housewives, who are supportive and stay behind their husbands who provide their life standards. The dominant worldview which the members of the building share do affect young boys and girls in different ways. For instance, Ali: the son of *Mr. Şükrü* who was a university student had right to go out with her girlfriend, but *Aslı*, the daughter of *Mr. Sedat* who rented the

house of Mr. *Şükriü*, had no right to go out with boys. When she broke the rules and started to go out with her boyfriend, people of the building made gossip about her, even mentioned the risk for her to be a prostitute if she acts in that way. When all these differences are compared, it can be argued that *Bizimkiler* was also traditionalist.

In conclusion, the average television audience who exposed to foreign series for years, reflecting cultures of the western world, preferred the safety of traditional Turkish series which offered them similar contents to consume with all family members during long evening hours.

4.1.2 In the Shadow of Private Channels: 1991 – 2000

1991 was the year when TRT had to share its audience with a private channel for the first time. The TV-series which are literary adaptations were continued to be on TRT screen in 1991 such as *Fatih Harbiye* from the novel of Peyami Safa and *Deniz Gurbetçileri (Sea Migrants)* from the novel of Halikarnas Balıkcısı. *Köroğlu Destanı (Legend of Köroğlu)* had been television in 10 episodes (Cankaya 2015, p.301). There were also TV-series with original scripts on TRT screen this year such as *Çiçekler Açmak İster (Flowers Want to Blossom)* which was ordered by the Ministry of State to be produced and was about homeless kids and broadcasted in four episodes. Another series named *Issızlığın Ortasında (In the Middle of Desolation)* with its leading actors Fikret Kuşkan, Haluk Kurtoğlu and Suna Selen was broadcasted, another one was *Yıldızlar Gece Büyür (Stars Grow at Night)* which was about social and economic changes after the coup made in 1980. Competition with the new private channel had resulted in an unexpected step of TRT. On the evening of 31 May, *'The Best Model of the World'* had been broadcasted live for the first time in the channel's history. However, this attempt had been highly criticized especially by the conservative audience of TRT (Serim 2006 p.164). The Best Model of The World indicates the end of TRT tradition against commercial television. As Çelenk (2005, p.193) points out, TRT had never positioned its audience as 'consumer' or 'customer' until the years when the competition with private channels started.

In the first month of 1992, a new TV-series *Suyun Öte Yanı (Other Side of Water)* directed by Tomris Giritliođlu, having Nur Sürer, Halil Ergün, Meral Çetinkaya as leading actors was broadcasted. It was about Turkish and Greek people living on two different sides of the Aegean Sea (Serim 2006, p.165). A Tarık Buđra novel *Yađmuru Beklerken (Waiting for the Rain)* had been adapted into series for six episodes with the same name. Directed by Tunca Yönder, series was about life in a small town of Anatolia during the transition to multiple political party era. In the first years of the private channels era, the competition shows which offers various prizes were very popular. Another attempt of TRT for audience hunting after the 'Best Model' trial was a competition show named *Turnike*, hosted by Güner Ümit. It was broadcasted in three evenings of a week and winners had the car which was the great prize.

The daily series *Ferhunde Hanım ve Kızları (Mrs. Ferhunde and Her Daughters)* started to be broadcasted in 1993. It was produced in Ankara and had Beyhan Saran, Baykal Saran and Güven Hokna as leading actors. The story of it was briefly about a woman in her sixties and her three daughters. The daily life and ordinary troubles they had to face were being told in a humorous way. The eldest daughter who had problems with her husband, pretend to be in depression to make other care her, the middle one who had a small son and a lazy husband and the smallest daughter who was engaged, were keeping their mother with their unending problems needs to be solved. TRT had broadcasted a TV movie this year named *İşgal Altında (Under Occupation)*. It was written by North Cyprus Turkish Republic prime-minister Rauf Denктаş, telling the massacre made by Greeks in a Turkish village in 1974 was broadcasted (Serim 2006, p.175). Another series of TRT was *Bizim Mahalle (Our District)* produced by the company of Osman Yađmurdereli, who was a former Turkish singer. With its leading actors Üstün Asutay, Neriman Köksal and Osman Yađmurdereli, the series was about the daily life of middle-class people living in the same district. Bizim Mahalle continued for 9 seasons with its 510 episodes.

With their remakes, the two sitcoms: *Kaynanalar* and *Kuruntu Ailesi*, which both started in 1984 and continued for years were, were on television again after ten years, in 1994. *Sonradan Görmeler (Nouveau Riche)* written by Tekin Akmansoy who was known as Nuri Kantar from *Kaynanalar* was on screen of TRT. Akmansoy was also the actor of the series, besides Nevra Serezli, Erol Kardeseci and Toprak Sergen. *Kuruntu Ailesi* was remade with the name of *Hüsnü Bey Amca (Mr. Hüsnü, The Uncle)*. Gazanfer Özcan was

again Hüsnü Kuruntu as he was in the previous one and the director was Ülkü Erakalın. TRT had a new sitcom this year *Gülşen Abi (Brother Gülşen)* having Haluk Bilginer and Nilüfer Açıkalın as leading actors. It was about a man named Abidin who writes for newspaper and answers the questions of the readers as a problem solver under the nickname of Gülşen which is female name in Turkish. *Yaz Evi (Summer House)* was another series of the channel, having Yıldız Kenter, Şükran Güngör, Müşfik Kenter and Hande Ataizi in leading roles. It continued for 3 seasons with 100 episodes. TRT had broadcasted the series named *Kurtuluş (Independence)* which had been one of the greatest projects of the channel. Having six episodes, the series was written by Turgut Özakman and directed by Ziya Öztan. The story of *Kurtuluş* was about a period of Independence War from 1 April 1921 to 27 October 1922. In the series Rutkay Aziz was as Mustafa Kemal and Savaş Tuncel was as İsmet İnönü. TRT never limited the budget during the production of the series which lasted two years and provided huge budget with the help of Turkish Armed Forces.

A family drama *Bizim Aile (Our Family)* started on TRT in 1995 which was about a couple who has seven children. The series was directed by Kartal Tibet and had Serpil Tamur, Mehmet Çerezcioglu and Mine Çayıroğlu as leading actors. The film named *80. Adım (80. Step)* was also broadcasted. It was directed by Tomris Giritlioğlu having a story about the life of a group of people who were activists during the coup of 1980 and met years later. Haluk Bilgiher, Zuhale Olcay, Levent Ülgen and Derya Alabora were the main cast of the movie.

In 1996, *Olimpic Games* made in Atlanta, USA was broadcasted live. Turkish weightlifting sportsman Naim Süleymanoğlu who was competing in the Olympics, had been followed by the audience with great interest and he had the gold medal. *Yaban (Stranger)* novel of Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, adapted into a television movie by Ziya Özkan, with Sanem Çelik, Aytaç Arman and Tomris Oğuzalp as leading cast. *Solgun Bir Sarı Gül (A Pale Yellow Rose)* was another TV movie of the year. It was adapted from the story of Ayla Kutlu, named *Mekruh Kadınlar Mezarlığı (Cemetery of Reprehensible Women)* which was about a young man who tries to cope with his traumas made by his step-mother. Ege Aydan, Meral Çetinkaya, Zuhale Gencer and Sermin Hürmeriç were the actors of the movie and it was directed by Canan Evcimen. In addition, a series which had been more popular in the following years after it was finished: *Şaşıfelek Çıkmazı*

(*Cross-eyed Fate Street*) started this year. In the first two years, the series had a particular audience but after it finished its audience started to insist to watch the rest of the story and three years later *Şaşıfelek Çıkmaızı* continued from its 38th episode as if one year had passed in the lives of the characters. The episodes from 1996 to 1998 are written and directed by Mahinur Ergun until the 37th one. In 2001 the story continued with director Çağan Irmak until the 63rd episode: the final. *Şaşıfelek Çıkmaızı* differs from the traditionalist series of TRT for being a modernist example among them. The main characters: Aysel (Derya Alabora) and İnci (Zuhal Gencer) were two women at the end of their thirties and childhood friends. Aysel had lost her husband in an accident and İnci was recently divorced. They both had children and had no higher education to find a proper job to be able to live on their own and raise their children. However, they became real estate agents by chance and overcome their financial problems. The main aspect of the series was being woman-sided. The way of Ergun's storytelling proves this in every episode. Besides these two women, other female characters of the series are all dominant ones in their private lives and do not hide their feelings. Aysel was a woman who was fed up with the rules of the patriarch and she demanded her own freedom by taking the risk of fighting with her father. She was more passionate than İnci. She left the house of her father where she had lived with her two sons and had two relationships during the whole story, which were not approved by others around her. İnci on the other hand was a controlled woman, who was afraid of ruining her life once again. In the 37th episodes - the final of the first part – it was revealed that, Ali Rıza: a silent man who was known as a secondary school teacher had been a well-known writer who moved to the district to write his new novel. He defines Aysel and İnci in his novel as: "They were the two halves of one woman." As a local drama, *Şaşıfelek Çıkmaızı* was a very unique example for having all well-constructed characters both the females and males, whose motivation was presented at the end of the final episode with the words of Jung: "If I wish to understand an individual in real, I have to put aside the whole scientific knowledge and ignore all theories about an ordinary human, then have to adopt a totally new and unprejudiced manner."

Figure 4.3 Frame from Şaşıfelek Çıkmağı E.63



Source: trtarsiv.com Şaşıfelek Çıkmağı Episode 63 (accessed 30 May 2018)

Figure 4.4 Frame from Şaşıfelek Çıkmağı E.7



Source: trtarsiv.com Şaşıfelek Çıkmağı Episode 7 (accessed 30 May 2018)

In 1997 a new sitcom named *Etiler (Sisters-in-Law)* which was about two women whose husbands were brothers, started on TRT. Besides these two middle-aged women played by Betül Arım and Ayşen İnci, the mother-in-law who was trying to stop her third and the smallest son to marry was also one of the main characters of the sitcom. *Etiler* was transferred to TGRT one year later.

1998 was the 75th year of the Turkish Republic. TRT broadcasted the movie named *Cumhuriyet (Republic)* on the evening of 29 October. In addition, several documentaries about Atatürk and Republic were broadcasted on TRT2 during the whole year. In the series of the year: *Bir Filiz Vardı (There Was a Filiz – Filiz is a female name in Turkish)*,

the novel of Orhan Kemal, were adapted with the same name. Its leading character who was a 17 years old girl living in the periphery of Istanbul, wishing to have better life conditions. *Dostlar Pasajı (Friends Passage)* was another series of this year. It was written by Gani Müjde, had Sumru Yavrucuk, Derya Baykal and Güven Kıraç as the leading cast. *Perihan Abla (Sister Perihan)* the popular series from 1986 was broadcasted once again as daily in this year.

The year of 1999 year was the 700TH year of the foundation of the Ottoman Empire. Documentaries such as *Ottoman Lines* and *Ottoman Colors* were broadcasted. Moreover, previously produced series named *Osmancık*, directed by Tunca Yönder, re-edited as a TV movie and broadcasted in this year. In the second half of the 1990s sitcoms became a very popular genre. TRT also started to broadcast it's one of the most popular sitcoms: *Ayrılsak da Beraberiz (Divorced but Together)* this year which was about a young couple who continued to live in the same apartment after they get divorced, by dividing the house into the half with a curtain and sharing the same flat pretending to be as if they did not care each other. The series continued on TRT until 2002, then transferred to ATV. In 1999, *Sydney Olympics* were broadcasted live in September for fifteen days. In summer months, former series of the channel were once again broadcasted.

At the end of the 1990s, TRT had to cope with several problems due to competition with private channels. The decline of its income from advertisements, control over the content, and having the responsibility of the State television, made TRT fell to the bottom of rating lists. Various Turkish dramas were made during these years but they could not catch the audience, only functioned for filling of the flow.

4.2 PRIVATE CHANNELS

All of the existing television channels were belong to TRT until the year 1990 due to Law 2954 - Turkish Radio and Television Law – which hindered the establishment of private television channels (Çaplı 2008 p.132). However, in the mid-1980s, Turkish audience had met the satellite technology which introduced foreign channels to them. In addition, video cassettes offered the audience a new way of entertainment different from the content

provided by TRT for years (ibid, p. 12, 13). In the same period, the way of programming of TRT was far from satisfying the audience who demand diversity and entertainment in the contents. Its aim which was based on educating the public was being criticized for being very didactic (Serim 2007, p. 215). The era's government of Turgut Özal that was supporting foreign trade had also impacted the audience's demand for "new forms of entertainment in the new political, social, economic and cultural environment that Özal's government designed for them" (Kesirli-Unur 2016, p.54).

The first attempt for the establishment of a private channel was made by Nezhir Demirkent in the name of the Newspaper of Hurriyet in 1985. However, he could not get the required permission. In 1987, Aydın Doğan who was the owner of the Newspaper of Milliyet and Erol Simavi who was the owner of the Newspaper of Hürriyet had also tried for the same aim but could not manage (Çaplı 2008, p.13).

The beginning of private television in Turkey was the result of an enterprise based on abroad which was not included by the law of 2954. Kemal and Cem Uzan had established a company named Magic Box in Germany and the channel started its test broadcasts on 7th of May in 1990. The schedule of the Magic Box was mostly including music videos and American soap operas. On the 4th of August, the first live football match between Fenerbahçe and Galatasaray had been broadcasted (Serim 2007, pp.228,229,242).

As a result, an era was ended for TRT. The arrival of the first private channels made TRT to face new problems, different from losing its loyal audience. Magic Box had transferred the experienced producers of TRT with high salaries. Moreover, it had bought the license of football matches which made TRT not be able to compete with it. Being abroad based company was making Magic Box free from the obligation of paying taxes, which made the channel to offer low prices for advertisements to the companies (Cankaya 2015, pp.308,309).

In the new season started on the 6th of October in 1990, Magic Box which had the name of STAR 1 started to broadcast new episodes of *Dallas*, followed by other American series *All My Children*, *General Hospital* and *Super Carrier*. Star 1 had also broadcasted foreign films including violence and nudity in order to compete with TRT. The schedule of the first private channel of Turkey had included music shows which were produced by the ones who were transferred from TRT (Serim 2007, p.243).

Next year, in 1991, when the huge part of the audience all over the world had focused on The Gulf War via the live broadcasts of CNN from the war area, STAR 1 became the source of information by providing the content of CNN with Turkish translation simultaneously (Cankaya 2015, p. 311). The experience of watching a war live made the Turkish audience prefer Star 1 instead of TRT which produced their own content about the news from the war area. Another incident of the year happened with the live broadcast of a beauty contest named ‘*Miss Turkey*’ on the evening of 23rd April. When the channel had reached very high rating results, TRT broadcasted *Best Model of The World* on the 31st of May, which is had been one of the most criticized attempts of it while competing with Star 1. The first private channel of Turkey started to broadcast for 24 hours a day on 15 September 1991 by promoting their new schedule with no deduction by using the slogan of “Your screen will never go black again.” Besides the foreign content which dominate the schedule of the channel, local comedy shows and series such as *Karşı Şov* made by actor Ahmet Uğurlu, *Portatif Hüseyin* made by Hadi Çaman and Yasemin Yalçın were on Star 1 in 1991. Channel had also transferred the comedy show of Levent Kırca and Oya Başar from TRT and broadcasted in by changing its name as *Olacak O Kadar Televizyonu* (Serim 2007, p.255). The local series of the year which had great popularity in the following period had been *Ana (Mum)*, a comedy that was based on a middle-aged woman who had been mafia leader after being divorced and bullied by men living in her district. The first episode begins with the release of Ana (Ayşen Gruda) from prison who is welcomed by her ‘men’ working for her. Ana talks to the audience and tells about her story which made her become a female mafia leader. She says “I had been the hero for the ones who live with fear when I got rid of the fear inside me. I understood that cowards are the majority in the world.” *Ana* as a comedy series who has a female character represented as an extraordinary woman differs from the traditional local series in its era.

In 1992, Turkish audience had met with the second private channel: Teleon established by again Uzan Family. Teleon started its broadcasting which is based on foreign films, on 27 January and continued until August of 1994. In the fall of the same 1992, two more channels had arrived which were HBB owned by Bilge Has and Kanal 6 owned by Ahmet Özal who is the son of Turgut Özal.

The first ‘real’ competitor of Star 1 had been Show TV, which was owned by Erol Aksoy. Show TV began the first test in January from France and the regular broadcasting started

in March of 1992, promoted with the slogan of “A completely different world.” Partners of the channel were the newspapers of Hürriyet and Sabah, and technology companies Grundig and Profilo. By the contributions of the advertisements published on Hürriyet and Sabah, Show TV became the most preferred channel very soon (Çaplı 2006, p. 136). Besides having contents mostly including foreign films, news programs and entertainment shows, the channel had broadcasted erotic films in the midnight with the sign of redpoint. The concept of ‘redpoint’ which informs the audience about the nudity and sexual content had been introduced by Show TV (Cankaya 2015, p.315). After the April, Show TV had bought the license of Germany made erotic show named *Tuttu Frutti Show* to compete with Star 1. Young women on the show were getting undressed and becoming totally naked at the end of the show. The private channels which were freed from the regulations had been left totally ‘idle’ (Serim 2007, p. 278). The channels which were arrived as the result of demand for diverse content had no limits in the war of ratings. Çaplı (2007, p.145) defines the era between the years of 1990 and 1994 as “irrecoverable infancy” of television in Turkey. “More than 20 years, the masses who were used to the one-sided and boring broadcast policy of TRT, paid so much attention to new channels. This new wave which intersects the depoliticization campaign of the 1980’s, caught the audience unprepared, filled them with entertainment.”

In 1992, the name of Star 1 changed as Interstar, and American soap operas like *Bold and the Beautiful*, *Dallas*, *Santa Barbara* and crime dramas like *Miami Vice*, *Sherlock Holmes* were on its screen, while Show TV had broadcasted *Benson* and *My Two Dad*. Different from the foreign series, Star 1 had attempted to create local series. Two male stars of Yeşilçam: Cüneyt Arkın and Kadir İnanır had been preferred to attract the audience in two crime dramas *Savcı (The Prosecutor)* and *Polis (The Police)* which was on Teleon. Show TV responded to Interstar’s crime drama supply by transferring *İz Peşinde* from TRT. This year’s comedy series of Interstar was *Saygılar Bizden* which has Kemal Sunal as the leading actor and Orhan Çağman, Yavuzer Çetinkaya, Güler Ökten, Güzin Özipek, Erdinç Dinçer from the cast of *Bizimkiler*. The story of the series, which is written by Umur Bugay, was based on the relationship of a court crier with other people who works in the same courthouse. Another comedy series of the year was Teleon’s *Kızlar Yurdu (Dormitory for Girls)* which was about a dominant young woman named Müstesna (Perran Kutman) who is the stepdaughter of a retired teacher woman owning of the

dormitory, and her close friendship with the university student girls staying in the dormitory. In the year of 1992, Kanal 6 started to broadcast a comedy series named *Mahallenin Muhtarları (Mukhtars of the District)* which had great popularity and continued in the following ten years. Having a story about the simple lives of a group of people living in the same district that was written by Kandemir Konduk, has a resemblance with *Perihan Abla* of TRT, which is written by the same writer. In addition, Show TV had broadcasted a comedy series *Varsayalım İsmail* having Ferhan Şensoy as the leading actor this year.

Private channels used mostly the foreign content in their early years, which can be named as introduction years. Aiming to be different from already existing TRT has shaped their broadcasting strategies. One of the television events of 1990s in Turkey was Interstar's *Parliament Cinema Club*, which was the broadcast of popular films like *Police Academy 5, Ghostbusters, Back To The Future, Goodfellas, Scarface, The Postman Always Rings Twice, Born On the 4th of July* on Sunday nights. It is still being remembered with its opening theme song: All My Life (Karla Bonoff) and very much mentioned in online forums about the past of Turkish television. Parliament Cinema Club continued until 1997 when RTÜK had banned cigarette advertisements and sponsorships.

Another example of changing viewing habits of the audience in Turkey had been the demand for Yeşilçam's comedy films which have Kemal Sunal as the leading actor. These films were broadcasted by Show TV for about twice or three times a week in prime time and had very high rating results every time they were on the screen. The other channels had also started to broadcast these films and they had the same results (Serim 2006 p.277). A group of the audience of these films were the ones who were children or not even born yet when they were released as cinema films. Today's audience who are familiar with Kemal Sunal films is mostly the result of the trend of the early 1990s. Arslan (2011, p.218) emphasizes that Kemal Sunal's comedies are mostly the repetitions of "Yeşilçam's melodramatic conflicts between good and evil, rich and poor, and rural and urban and augment the virtuous common man's morality and innocence, despite the clumsy, foulmouthed, and disorderly aspects of Sunal's characters." According to Kesirli-Unur (2016, p.46) one of the reasons for the ban of TRT's to local comedy films of Kemal Sunal was the lack of 'proper' Turkish. Tekelioğlu (2006, p.207) estimates that the audience of Sunal's comedies were mostly "the ones who live in cities and were the ones

from lower-middle-class or lower class”. Tekelioğlu’s estimation about Kemal Sunal’s films can also be evaluated from the point of its relation with arabesk culture. For Özbek (1997, p.226) the motto of private channels was “whatever sells well gets air time’ which makes them open a space to arabesk which had been away from television until they arrived. In Sunal’s films, the main character whose name is mostly Şaban, has always been a naïve man and used to be humiliated by others due to his foolish manners. At first, he makes the audience feel smart. Soon after he gets rid of the condition which he suffers and becomes a hero. Şaban starts his journey as an anti-hero and then he has a great change and makes everybody confused, attracted by his transformation to a hero. The audience of these films who are mostly the ones who migrated to big cities in the 1980s. In Sunal’s films, the ones whom Şaban gets conflicts with are on the side of the ones who did not welcome the audience when they came to the city. And the ‘naïve’ Şaban who becomes a crafty man, gets the revenge of the audience (Tekelioğlu 2006, pp. 206,207).

Figure 4.5 Frames from Kıpıcılar Kralı (1976)



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1LnQhQcgA> (accessed 22 March 2019))

When the year of 1993 had arrived, TGRT had been the new channel of the year, founded by the owners of the newspaper of Türkiye in April. The channels were mostly targeting the traditionalist audience and it became the first example of conservative channels in the country which positions itself to far from the existing private channels. On the 12th of July, another private channel of Turkey: ATV, which was founded by the newspaper of Sabah started its broadcasting. In the last month of the year, Aydın Doğan who was the owner of newspaper Milliyet had founded Kanal D with the partnership of the conglomeration of Doğuş (Çaplı 2006, p.137).

This year, audience in Turkey was introduced with a new television genre which is reality-show. Show TV's *Sıcağı Sıcağına* was the first example which will be followed by similar programs soon after. Another genre of the year which became popular and among private channels were competition shows *Çarkıfelek (Wheel of Fortune)* or *Süper Aile (S)* which were mostly licensed from abroad, giving presents to the audience who join the show by attending physically or via telephone (Serim 2007, p. 278). At the end of 1993, Turkey had four private channels that still dominates the television industry in Turkey today.

In those years, when the inflation on local television series had not started yet, channels were introducing only a few series each year. In 1993, Interstar had broadcasted a new comedy series named *Şaban Askerde (Şaban in the Army)* including Kemal Sunal as Şaban who was a middle-aged man obliged to join to the army after delaying his military service for a long time. Show TV had tried to attract the audience by introducing series which were dramas having Yeşilçam stars as leading actors. They were: *Sevginin Gücü* with Hülya Avşar, *Tatlı Betüş* with Türkan Şoray, *Zirvedekiler* with Gülşen Bubikoğlu and Cüneyt Arkın.

The most successful series of the year had been ATV's *Süper Baba (Super Dad)* which was a family drama that had huge audience fans and continued for 137 episodes by preserving its high rating results. A middle-aged divorced man with his three kids, named Fikret a.k.a. Fiko (Şevket Altuğ) who deals with unemployment and used to have broken hearts in his relationships had been embraced by the audience, and Fiko and the people living in his district had become like the relatives of the audience of the series for years. Actually, Fiko was the first real 'loser' character in television history in Turkey. Rather than being an anti-hero, he was the hero but a hero with no powers. He always has scarcity in his income. He is a self-sacrificing man who delays all his needs and wishes for the good of others. When he has a chance to have a permanent job and a proper income, he donates all his sources to a poor man who is in a worse condition than him, despite the arguments he has with his children. In the final episode, he regrets his personality which makes him always unhappy and alone. But he cannot even decide to change his fate until he feels supported and encouraged by his children and his best friend Nihat (Sümer Tilmaç).

Figure 4.6 Frame from Süper Baba (Super Daddy) E.137



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jXPrVwImTc> (accessed 18 December 2019)

In 1994, Interstar had transferred two series: *Bizimkiler* and *Ferhunde Hanım ve Kızları* from TRT. And a new series named *Gül ve Diken* (*Rose and Thorn*) whose genre was romance had been broadcasted by the channel for 13 episodes.

Show TV had introduced modernist a family drama named *Şehnaz Tango* which differs from its similars with her female character Şehnaz (Perran Kutman) who is a very dominant woman and quits her marriage which makes her unhappy despite her love to her husband. *Şehnaz Tango* was transferred by different channels until its final with 130th episode.

Kanal D, the newest channel of television had two series which were both comedy-drama. First one was *Kızlar Sınıfı* (*Class of Girls*) having popular comedy actors of Yeşilçam as İlyas Salman and Ayşen Gruda, and the second series of the channel was *Artist Palas* having an unusual story written by Mahinur Ergun, about two women who live in the same hotel and earn from prostitution. One of the residents of the hotel was a crossdresser man who is an extraordinary character for local series of Turkey. Kanal D had also introduced one of the most popular series of the year which was a comedy named *Kaygısızlar*. Story of a carefree and selfish man with four wives and thirty-six children who migrated to Istanbul and started to live in his friend's house attracted the audience and *Kaygısızlar* continued for 126 episodes.

Next year in 1995, Interstar broadcasted a comedy series named *Süper Yıldız (Super Star)* having Hülya Avşar, another Yeşilçam star again as a leading star, who plays two different characters with the same appearance. One of these characters was Leyla who was a killer woman having a nickname as ‘male butcher’ since she cut the penis of a man she met when she was a prostitute. Then Leyla lives as a mafia leader but she changes her appearance by surgery to hide her identity. Her doctor makes her face similar to his favorite singer Zeynep who is the second character played by Hülya Avşar. With its unusual female character, *Süper Yıldız* is one of the characteristic examples of the early years of private television channels.

Kanal D had introduced a new comedy series: *Bir Demet Tiyatro* which has a stable set built upon the stage, making the series a hybrid genre by combining comedy show and sitcom. Yılmaz Erdoğan who was the writer of the series was also playing the main character ‘the macho Mükremin’, and her smart and talkative sister Lütfiye was played by Demet Akbaş. Erdoğan and Akbaş continued their successful collaboration for 156 episodes.

Another comedy series named *Çiçek Taksi* started this year on the screen of Atv which was about a group of men who work as taxi drivers. The simple lives and their ordinary problems of these men and their family members were presented in a humorous way had made the series popular for 367 episodes.

In 1996, Interstar started to broadcast a drama named *Kara Melek (Black Angel)* which can be defined as the hybrid of romance and thriller. Having the first anti-hero in television series history in Turkey, and casting two unknown female actors as leading characters differs the series from other dramas of the era, while its twisting story makes it one of the cult series of Turkish television series. Yasemin (Sanem Çelik), a young woman who seduces and marries with the father of her home mate Şule (Ece Uslu), is both the protagonist and the ‘evil. Story of a young woman who traps, blackmails, injures and kills the ones around her to reach her wishes made the audience to follow *Kara Melek* for 110 episodes.

This year Kanal D had broadcasted *Bay Kamber (Mr. Kamber)*, a comedy series in which Kemal Sunal had played an incompetent private detective named Kamber, working with his smart female assistant. Kanal D also introduced a teen drama named *Çılgın Bediş*

(*Crazy Bediř*) which was adapted from a cartoon series of Özden Öğrük published in the magazine of *Gırgır* with the same name. Yonca Evcimik who was a famous pop singer of the era had played a high school student Bediř even though she was thirty-three years old. Story of Bediř who used to have dreams about the boy she was in love with, and her friends who also suffer from love could keep the young audience, including children mostly, in front of the television for 70 episodes.

Interstar had introduced two sitcoms in 1997, which would be one of the popular genres in the following years. The first one was *Komřu Komřu* which was written by Umur Bugay and was about a family who hides in the attic of an apartment and tries to live secretly from the ones below while they were waiting for their house's construction to be completed. The second sitcom of the channel was *Baskül Ailesi (Family of Weighbridge)* which was about a family including a mother and her three daughters who were suffering obesity, and their father who was a very thin man. Interstar had also broadcasted a romance series this year. Having an arabesk music singer İbrahim Erkal as leading star, *Canısı* had its name from the song of Erkal too, was about the impossible love between two lovers from lower-class families.

Another comedy series that was adapted from cartoon series was been broadcasted by Show TV this year. *Sıdıka* was a character drawn by Atilla Atalay in the magazine of *Gırgır*, and in its television adaptation with the same name, a smart young girl Sıdıka (Hasibe Eren) had continued to live in a prison-like house with her outmoded and traditionalist family members who do not let her go outside or have friends. Sıdıka's dialogues with her mother which include sarcasm and satire about those era's agenda was very much appreciated by the young audience and the series continued for six seasons.

Böyle mi Olacaktı: the first soap opera in Turkish television series was been broadcasted by ATV this year. The series was based on the turbulent lives of three young women who were friends since high school. The bad woman in the story had managed to cause troubles and turn the lives of the others upside down in every episode while making the series had been as popular as foreign soap operas and continued for 167 episodes. Another series of the channel in this year was *Sıcak Saatler (Hazardous Hours)* which was the hybrid of romance and action. The love story between two young journalists Sedat

(Mehmet Aslantuğ) and Buket (Arzum Onan) who risk their lives while running after criminals had made the audience worry for them for 67 episodes.

In 1998, Interstar broadcasted its second singer-star series named *Aynalı Tahir*, which has a young arabesk singer Alişan as the star of the series. Different from *Canısı*, name of this series is not related to the song of Alişan, instead, Tahir: the character he played was used in the name of the series as Aynalı Tahir, which the word of ‘aynalı (having mirror) refers the function the character about maintaining the justice in his street, but as opposite of the police which is defined as ‘aynasız’ (without the mirror) in Turkish slang language.

Kanal D had joined the singer-star series trend with *Unutabilsem (Wish I Could Forget)* including arabesk singer Emrah as the leading star. However, Emrah was also the child star of the Yeşilçam era and was popular among the audience as an actor too. This year Kanal D had also introduced two comedy series. The first one was a fantastic sitcom named *Ruhsar* which was about the ghost of a young woman who used to come back to the world and visit her husband. The second comedy series was *Eyvah Babam* based on the funny story of a middle-aged man who envies her teenage daughter’s boyfriends.

The most popular of series of 1998 had been a family drama: *İkinci Bahar (Second Spring)* which was broadcasted by ATV. As Tüzün-Ateşalp (2016, p.20) points out *İkinci Bahar* had been one of the examples of quality television in Turkey. Including a vast number of characters let the series to represent different viewpoints. The struggles of lower-class people who had to overcome the difficulties of urban life construct the realism in the series. *İkinci Bahar* made two legendary stars of Yeşilçam: Şener Şen and Türkan Şoray met in a series for the first time, and presented them as man and a woman in their forties who hate each other at first but then fall deeply in love despite their conservative lifestyles and grown-up children.

In the last year of the 1990s, Interstar had broadcasted another sitcom named *Çarli* which was about a married couple with two small children who had to continue their life with a chimpanzee in their house. A real chimpanzee was used in the series which was one of the first examples using a real wild animal in the production. In addition, Interstar had tried to make the audience meet a thriller series named *Sır Dosyası (Secret Files)* which was inspired by American series *X-Files*. The adventures of two detectives working in

the Blue Bureau where the paranormal criminal cases were investigated had not attracted the Turkish audience very much and the series had continued only for five episodes.

Yılan Hikayesi (Story of The Snake) which was one of the most popular series of 1999 had been broadcasted by Kanal D. As a hybrid of crime drama and romance, the series was based on the love between a suffering young police commissioner Memoli (Mehmet Ali Alabora) whose son was killed by the mafia, and village girl Zeyno (Meltem Cumbul) who was left by her husband in their honeymoon. The way of using music in the series to overdramatize the scenes also makes the series to have features of melodrama.

Another series of the year was a crime action drama named *Deli Yürek (Crazy Heart)*, which was broadcasted by ATV. Despite the prominent romance in the series as the result of the love the hero: Yusuf Miroğlu (Kenan İmizalıoğlu), *Deli Yürek* mainly focusses on mafia relations and the world of men who wear black suits. As a result, it attracted mostly the male audience and continued for 113 episodes.

In summary, when the era between the arrivals of private series until 2000 was evaluated, it can be seen that the number of comedies among local series is higher than the other genres, while the ones which attracted the most audience and had higher rating results were family dramas like *Süper Baba* and *İkinci Bahar*, and the hybrids of crime drama and romance like *Sıcak Saatler*, *Yılan Hikayesi*, and *Deliyürek*.

4.3 TURKISH TV SERIES: 2000 – 2019

The early era of private channels had contributed mostly to the series which would be the dominant genre of mainstream channels in the following two decades. There has not been another example like the birth of the phenomenon of series in Turkey that occurred at the end of the 1990s in the television histories of other countries that had similar development processes as Turkey (Çelenk 2010, p.21).

As Tanrıöver-Uğur (2011, pp.49,50) points out, at the beginning of the 2000s, series were starting at 20.30 and continuing until 21.45 including advertisement breaks, then were followed by another series which was the second series of that night. However, from 2006

on, the duration of series started to become longer and only one series had started to occupy the prime time. She shares the results of the research made on durations of 36 series in total which were broadcasted between 13 December 2010 and 19 December 2010 in the top five commercial channels of Turkey: Kanal D, ATV, Star TV, Show TV, and Fox TV. According to the first result of the research, number of the series which last less than 80 minutes was 4, the ones last between 80 to 90 minutes were 10, the ones last between 90 to 100 minutes were 12 and the ones last more than 101 minutes were also 10. The second and more significant result was about the rating results of these series. The first four series which had the highest rating results were 'longer' ones and the ones which were less than 80 minutes had become totally invisible in rating lists. Ten years later of this research, television channels still insist on not shortening the duration of series which allow them to keep the audience in front of television for the time as long as possible and satisfy the advertisement companies. However, using only the rating results to measure the success of a series, makes the economic determinism rule the television industry and hinder the production of creative works (Tüzün-Ateşalp 2016, p.30).

The main impact of blocking the prime time with one series every evening causes the domination of particular genres and the exclusion of others. For instance, a crime drama that requires the use of violence or blood cannot be proper for prime time due to the consumption of families with children. The proper time interval for crime dramas in schedules is mostly after 22.00. However, a series which starts at 20.00 and continues until 23.30 should be 'suitable for families' which make them exclude the contents or themes only for adults.

On the other hand, Mutlu (2008, p.107) clarifies the reason which makes the television a conservative medium, by claiming that:

Television is a family medium. In the center of the narrations, there are also families in two ways; real families or television families - communities consist of people working in the same place like police station, hospital, news agency, even people living in the same district - These communities include characters functioning as the real family figures. There is always a father figure, naughty kids, easygoing kids, and someone who undertake the role of mother. If there is not a mother, lack of her is always emphasized.

Çelenk (2010, p.25) contributes to the explanations of narrations in television by emphasizing the 'romance' and argues that the main conflict used to depend on the impossible love stories in television series. Great coincidences, great betrayals, and great

sufferings get into the air and cover the other daily and political problems. As a result, melodrama owes its popularity to the characteristics of traditional television which used to reproduce conservative narratives not to take the risk of losing its mainstream audience. Şentürk (2018, p.20) clarifies that comedy, drama, and melodrama are the genres that dominate the Turkish television series. The genres of television series that were broadcasted between 2011 and 2015 distributed as drama/ melodrama for %60, comedy for %31, and the others which belong to hybrid genres combining dramas or comedies with police procedurals, historical dramas, fantasies or thrillers. In addition, issues that were involved in these series such as family, mafia, romance, revenge, youth, or historical events were all chosen due to targeting high rating results by considering already tested audience responses. In the tables below, the most popular television series from 2000 to 2020 will be shown, arranged by the year they started, including five for each. Only the year 2000 has three series, and the following years have five, which were all ranked according to their total number of episodes.

Table 4.1 Popular Series of 2000

2000	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Hayat Bağları (Life Bonds) Show TV	Drama (Family)	A divorced woman with three children moves to a district to continue her life on her own and she had a strong friendship with a man who is the owner of the market in her district.	100
7 Numara (Number 7) TRT	Comedy (Youth)	University students who came from provinces and have different lifestyles become tenants in the same building and try to get used to each other.	92
Evdeki Yabancı (Stranger in the House) Kanal D	Sitcom	A young woman had to accept a stranger as a home mate to be able to pay her rent.	55

Table 4.2 Popular Series of 2001

2001	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Tatlı Hayat (Sweet Life) Show TV	Sitcom	A nouveau riche middle-aged man and her wife try to live as a couple from the upper class in their luxurious apartment with their neighbors.	106
Dadı (The Nanny) Show TV – Star TV	Sitcom	A young woman who is very talkative and tactless becomes the nanny of three children of a rich man who lost his wife.	61
Yarım Elma (Half of The Apple) Kanal D	Sitcom	The twin sisters who were adopted by two families from different social classes reunite when they are grown up and try to live in the same house.	55
Yeditepe Istanbul (Istanbul Seven Hills) (TRT)	Drama (Romance)	A middle-aged woman from the upper class whose husband commits suicide moves to a district in the suburb where she meets friendly people that supports her and a melancholic man who falls in love with her.	47
Aşkım Aşkım (My Love My Love) Kanal D	Sitcom	A middle-aged casanova man and her envious wife have a restaurant where they work together and used to fight due to the man's attraction to women.	26

Table 4.3 Popular Series of 2002

2002	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Çocuklar Duymasın (Don't Let the Kids Hear) ATV- Show TV	Sitcom	A middle-class young couple who have opposite personalities deal with simple problems of their modern life while raising their two children.	456
En Son Babalar Duyar (Fathers are the one who hear at last) TRT – Star TV	Sitcom	A woman who has three daughters and a son used to hide the secrets of their children from her husband who works as a repairman and away from home during the day time.	200
Ekmek Teknesi (Bread and Butter) ATV	Comedy / Drama (Family)	An old and wise baker man who has five daughters and a curious wife lives in a district where everybody comes to him to consult about their problems.	106
Asmalı Konak (Maison with Grapes) ATV	Drama (Melo drama)	A Turkish young woman who lives in USA and is an art student moves to an Anatolian town after falling in love with a Turkish business that has a family continuing feudal relations.	54
Gülbeyaz (Rose White) Kanal D	Drama (Romance / Family)	A young woman who raised in the Black sea area falls in love with her old friend who has been living in Istanbul. However, their families are enemies for a long time.	26

Table 4.4 Popular Series of 2003

2003	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Kurtlar Vadisi (Valley of the Wolves) (Show TV)	Action / Drama	A young man whose face and identity had been changed by the state, gets in touch with mafia to solve important cases.	300
Hayat Bilgisi (Instruction on Life) Kanal D - Show TV	Comedy (Teen Drama)	A middle-aged woman who is an ambitious high school teacher tries to teach honesty to her students while dealing with the dishonesty of the school manager.	137
Bir İstanbul Masalı (A Story From Istanbul) Star TV	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman who is the daughter of the chauffeur of a rich family and loves the small son of that family since her childhood has a transformation which makes her attract the man she loves and also her brother.	71
Kampüsistan Kanal D	Drama (Youth)	A group of university students from the same university have emotional and financial problems while learning to be an adult.	44
Lise Defteri (High School Notebook) Kanal D	Drama (Teen Drama)	A class of student in a high school have to cope with their problems by sharing their secrets, dreams and wishes.	28

Table 4.5 Popular Series of 2004

2004	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Avrupa Yakası (European Side) ATV	Sitcom	An old bourgeois couple who live in the luxurious district, have an in-between life due to their modern daughter who is a journalist and traditionalist son who runs their bakery.	190
Cennet Mahallesi (Paradise District) Show TV	Comedy	Two gypsy families who used to fight each other had to continue their relationship when their young ones fall in love with each other.	119
Yabancı Damat (Foreign Groom) Kanal D	Comedy/ Drama	Marriage of the small daughter of a traditionalist family living in eastern Turkey and the only son of an ultra-rich Greek family caused unending struggle among families.	106
Aliye ATV	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman who struggles to get the parental right of her two children after leaving her husband due to his betrayal meets a sensitive and caring man who falls in love with her.	76
Kadın İsterse (If A Woman Wish) Show TV- Star TV	Sitcom	A middle-aged woman has surgeries and becomes a younger looking beautiful woman to take revenge from her ex-husband who left her for a young woman	52

Table 4.6 Popular Series of 2005

2005	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Gümüş (Nour) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman from lower class and a rich young man who had to marry due to their family's decision, love each other as the time goes by.	100
Ihlamurlar Altında (Under the Linden Trees) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	Two young people from lower class who love each other has to break up when they meet upper-class people due to their jobs. *	80
Beyaz Gelincik (White Weasel) ATV	Drama (Melodrama)	The four grown-up sons of a feudalist family living in south Anatolia had to struggle to protect their bond while running their family company.	74
Acı Hayat (Bitter Life) Show TV	Drama (Melodrama)	Two young people from lower class who love each other have to break up when they meet upper-class people due to their jobs. *	56
Hırsız Polis (The Police and The Thief) Kanal D	Drama / Action (Romance)	A police commissioner falls in love with a young woman who is a member of a car robbery gang.	50

* *Ihlamurlar Altında* and *Acı Hayat* have similar plots.

Table 4.7 Popular Series of 2006

2006	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Arka Sokaklar (Back Streets) Kanal D	Action / Drama (Police Procedural)	A group of police commissioners working in the same department of a police center, have to secure the city while trying to be good fathers, husbands, or lovers.	540+ ...
Yaprak Dökümü (The Fall of the Leaves) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A traditionalist couple who has five children moves to Istanbul, where their grown-up children would be mistaken by the people they had affairs and make them suffer.	174
Doktorlar (Doctors) Show TV	Drama (Hospital drama)	The tension between a group of assistant surgeons and specialists who work in the same hospital is used to be high not only because of their difficult duties, but also the romance between the couples among them.	97
Binbir Gece (One Thousand and One Night) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman who has a son with leukemia accepts the indecent offer of her boss to have the money she needs to save her son, without knowing they would fall in love with each other soon.	90
Hatırla Sevgili (Remember Darling) ATV	Drama (Melodrama/ Period)	The happiness of two lovers from families with opposite ideologies cannot last long in the shadow of the political conflicts in Turkey between the 1960s and 1980s.	68

Table 4.8 Popular Series of 2007

2007	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Arka Sıradakiler (Those at the Back Row) Fox TV	Drama (Teen Drama)	An ambitious man who was transferred to a high school where students from lower-class families study, tries to help them to get rid of the gangs in the neighborhood.	193
Kavak Yelleri (Daydreaming) Kanal D	Drama (Youth)	Four best friends since high school continue to get in touch despite the heartbreaking memories and arguments among them.	170
Elveda Rumeli (Farewell Rumeli) ATV	Drama (Period/ Costume)	The life of a naïve village man with five daughters and an aggressive wife living in the Macedonian region ruled by the Ottoman Emperor at the end of 19. Century turns upside down when the peace in the region was disrupted by the Bulgarian gangs who demand independence.	83
Dudaktan Kalbe (From Lips to Heart) Show TV	Drama (Melodrama)	A young girl who loves a famous violinist has an affair with him and gets pregnant, however, life would not bring them happiness due to the man's indecisive manners.	75
Annem (My Mother) Kanal D	Drama	A young girl learns that she was the daughter of a congressman who was married to her mother and deceived her pregnant wife which caused their divorce.	64

Table 4.9 Popular Series of 2008

2008	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Akasya Durağı (Taxi Rank Named Akasya) Kanal D - Star TV	Comedy	A group of man who works in the same taxi rank used to have troubles which are caused by their customers or just because of their mistakes.	174
Küçük Kadınlar (Little Women) Star TV- Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	Five daughters who lost their parents in a car accident, struggle to cope with the problems they had after being left alone with no supportive relatives or financing resources.	120
Aşk-ı Memnu (Forbidden Love) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman has a forbidden love affair with the nephew of her middle-aged ultra-rich husband which causes a catastrophe for the family.	79
Adanalı ATV	Action / Comedy	A police commissioner has been assigned to arrest the leader of a robbery gang who is also an ex-cop and blood-brother of the commissioner.	79
Canım Ailem (My Sweet Family) ATV	Comedy / Drama (Family)	An irresponsible middle-aged man has to look after his three orphan nephews after losing her sister and he returns to the district where he finds his ex-lover who is still single and continues to love him.	63

Table 4.10 Popular Series of 2009

2009	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Papatyam (My Daisy) Star TV	Sitcom	A middle-aged woman who marries a man she met by a television program, starts to live with her new family including her stepchildren and grandchildren.	121
Geniş Aile (Wide Family) Kanal D	Comedy	A lazy young man who returned from Germany for a while ago, decides to marry his childhood sweetheart, however, he has a competitor living in his district.	108
Unutulmaz (Unforgettable) ATV	Drama (Melodrama)	A young businessman falls in love with the small sister of her fiancé.	90
Ezel (Eternity) Show TV	Action / Drama	An innocent young man who had been prison for years due to being deceived by the woman he loves and his best friends returns to take his revenge with a new identity.	71
Hanımın Çiftliği (Farm of the Lady) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A young girl whose father forced her to marry a man different from the one she loved, accepts the proposal of the richest man of the town in order to become rich and powerful.	70

Table 4.11 Popular Series of 2010

2010	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Yer Gök Aşk (Love All Around) Fox TV	Drama (Melodrama)	Two sisters fall in love with the same man who is the son of the richest family of the town, however, one of them is more determined than others.	122
Öyle Bir Geçer Zaman Ki (As the Time Goes By) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A captain who is a married and four children in Turkey, leaves her family to marry a foreign young woman without considering the suffering he causes.	120
Fatmagül'ün Suçu Ne? (What is Fatmagül's Fault?) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A young girl who was raped by four men, was forced to marry one of them by the families of these men aiming to save their sons from prison.	79
Aşk ve Ceza (Love and Punishment) ATV	Drama (Melodrama)	A devastated young woman who became pregnant after her one-night stand has to raise her son alone for a while until she meets the father of her son who also has been looking for her since that night.	62
Küçük Sırlar (Little Secrets) Star TV- Kanal D	Drama (Teen Drama)	A group of high school students from upper-class families live in a world where is full of jealousy, intrigue, love and hate.	55

Table 4.12 Popular Series of 2011

2011	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Umutsuz Ev Kadınları (Desperate Housewives) Kanal D- Fox TV	Comedy / Drama	The lives of a group of housewives who live in the same street become complicated than ever while they are trying to find out the reason behind the suicide of one of their friends.	154
Muhteşem Yüzyıl (Magnificent Century) Show TV- Star TV	Drama (Historical)	The Ottoman Emperor Suleyman falls in love with a slave young woman in his harem, while he is continuing to expand the borders of his country.	139
Kuzey Güney (North South) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A young man who spent years in prison due to taking the responsibility of an accidental murder of his brother has to struggle for the girl he loves, who is also the love of his brother.	80
Adını Feriha Koydum (The Girl Named Feriha) Show TV	Drama (Melodrama)	The daughter of a janitor man who goes to university pretends to be rich after meeting a very rich young she falls in love.	67
Alemin Kralı (King of the Jungle) ATV	Comedy	A traditionalist man having three teenage daughters and caring wife has to live in the house of his arrogant mother in law who frustrates his authority.	67

Table 4.13 Popular Series of 2012

2012	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Karadayı (Uncle in Black) ATV	Drama / Action (Period)	A young man known with his honesty and courage struggles to save his innocent father who was accused of murder; however, he falls in love with the young woman who is the judge of the case of his father.	115
Yalan Dünya (False World) Kanal D	Sit-com	A traditionalist couple from eastern Turkey live in Istanbul with their children and grandson, however their life changes after lending the flat next to them to a group of actors who have modern lifestyles.	90
Dila Hanım (Dila) Show TV	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman who has the oath to take the revenge of her husband who was killed accidentally falls in love with the man she does not know who is actually the murderer she looks for.	62
Benim İçin Üzülme (Don't Cry for Me) ATV- Show TV	Drama (Romance)	Two young men who are the sons of well-known families living in the Black sea area, fall in love with a girl who came from Eastern Anatolia to work as a seasonal worker.	55
Suskunlar (Game of Silence) Show TV	Drama / Action	Four young men who had been misbehaved and assaulted in the prison they had been when they were small children, decide to take the revenge of their trauma from the ones who tortured them.	28

Table 4.14 Popular Series of 2013

2013	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Karagül (Black Rose) Fox TV	Drama (Melodrama)	A woman who lost her husband has to move the hometown of her husband's family in eastern Turkey, where she finds out the secrets of her deceased husband.	125
Medcezir (Tide) Star TV	Drama (Romance/ Youth)	A lawyer man takes a young man from the suburbs under his wing and takes him to his house where the young man is welcomed by the young ones but not by the others.	77
Güneşi Beklerken (Waiting for the Sun) Kanal D	Drama (Youth)	A teenage girl who moves to Istanbul with her mother has to struggle to build friendships in her new school.	54
Aramızda Kalsın (Between Us) Star TV	Comedy / Drama (Family)	A young woman with two small children moves to Istanbul, to live in her mother's blood brother woman, who has a big family running a small restaurant, where she starts a new life.	52
Merhamet (Mercy) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman who became an ambitious lawyer after having a traumatic childhood moves to Istanbul where she meets her childhood sweetheart who is engaged with her best friend's sister.	44

Table 4.15 Popular Series of 2014

2014	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Diriliş Ertuğrul (Resurrection: Ertuğrul) TRT	Drama / Action (Historical)	Ertugrul Ghazi, the father of Osman who founded the Ottoman Empire, struggles to settle down in the new lands with his people who are Muslim Oghuz Turks.	150
O Hayat Benim (That Life is Mine) Fox TV	Drama (Melodrama)	The biological daughter of a lower-class couple, who learned that her sister was adopted from an upper-class family, she introduces herself as her sister to deceive the rich family.	131
Poyraz Karayel (For My Son) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A policeman who was prisoned due to a trap he had, has to struggle to take back the custody of his son from his ex-father in law.	82
Güllerin Savaşı (War of Roses) Kanal D	Drama (Melodrama)	A young girl who is the daughter of a family working in a mansion dreams to become like the daughter of the rich family living in the mansion who is a successful fashion designer.	68
Kara Para Aşk (Dirty Money & Love) ATV	Drama (Melodrama)	A young policeman meets a young woman when he investigates the mystery of the accident in which his fiancé and the father of that woman had died.	54

Table 4.16 Popular Series of 2015

2015	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Eşkîya Dünyaya Hükümdar Olmaz (Bandit Cannot Be Emperor to the World) ATV	Action / Drama	A mafia leader who is charged by the state to support the investigations on some illegal cases has not to chance to reject this duty.	150+...
Kırgın Çiçekler (Sore Flowers) ATV	Drama (Youth)	A teenage girl who has sexual harassment from her stepfather goes to the orphanage where she has new friends who become like her sisters.	114
Paramparça (Broken Pieces) Star TV	Drama (Melodrama)	Recently born babies of two women are given to the wrong mother due to the hospital's mistake, and the truth is revealed after fifteen years with a car accident which changes the lives of both families.	97
Kara Sevda (Blind Love) Star TV	Drama (Melodrama)	Two young people fall in love with each other, however, the young woman has to marry another man who loves her for a long time and blackmail by her brother's crime.	74
Aşk Yeniden (In Love Again) Fox TV	Comedy / Romance	A single young woman with a baby meets a young man in a flight who offers her pretend to be as a married couple to save him from the woman his family insists him to marry.	59

Table 4.17 Popular Series of 2016

2016	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Payitaht Abdülhamit (The Last Emperor) TRT	Drama (Historical)	The Ottoman Emperor Abdülhamit struggles with the European countries, as well as the opponent groups inside the country.	110+...
Vatanım Sensin (Wounded Love) Kanal D	Drama (Historical)	A Turkish army major who had been held captive by the Greek Army pretends to be the supporter of Greek occupation in Ottoman lands to work as a spy for the Turkish Army.	59
İçerde (Inside) Show Tv	Action / Drama	Two police academy students who are not aware that they are brothers become two competitors when one of them had expelled from the academy.	39
Anne (Mother) Star TV	Drama (Melodrama)	An adopted young woman who works as a teacher kidnaps one of her students who is a neglected child living in improper conditions.	33
Cesur ve Güzel (Brave and Beautiful) Star TV	Drama (Romance)	A young man who plans to take the revenge of his father falls in love with the daughter of his enemy.	32

Table 4.18 Popular Series of 2017

2017	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Çukur (The Pit) Show TV	Action / Drama	In a suburban district where is famous for its criminal cases, a well-known family struggles for keeping the drug dealers away from their district.	90+...
İstanbul Gelin (Bride of İstanbul) Star TV	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman living in Istanbul falls in love with a man who offers her to marry him and live in the mansion in province where he lives with his mother and three brothers.	87
Kadın (Woman) Fox TV	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman who struggles on her own to raise her two children learns that her dead husband is living with different identity.	81
Sen Anlat Karadeniz (Lifeline) ATV	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman who lives as the captive of a psychopath man for years takes her little son and runs away with the help of a young man who lives in the Black sea region.	64
Ufak Tefek Cinayetler (Little Murders) Star TV	Drama (Romance/ Thriller)	Four young women who know each other since high school share a secret that turns their comfortable lives upside down after many years.	45

Table 4.19 Popular Series of 2018

2018	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Yasak Elma (Forbidden Fruit) Fox TV	Drama (Melodrama)	A married woman from jet-set makes a plan to get rid of her husband and offers a young woman to seduce him.	70+...
Bir Zamanlar Çukurova (Bitter Land) ATV	Drama (Melodrama / Period)	A woman who rules a feudal family in Eastern Anatolia plans to marry her infertile son with a single young woman who is pregnant from the man she is in love.	55+...
Erkenci Kuş (Daydreamer) Star TV	Comedy / Drama (Romance)	A young girl from lower class starts to work in an advertising company and she falls in love with the son of the company's owner.	51
Avlu (The Yard) Star TV	Action/ Drama	A woman who is accused of being a murderer, sent to prison where she finds herself in the middle of two groups terrorize the prison.	44
Gülperi (Gulperi) Show TV	Drama (Melodrama)	A woman who is released from prison struggles to take her three children from her dead husband's family, who are responsible for her arrest.	30

Table 4.20 Popular Series of 2019

2019	Genre	Plot	# Episodes
Kuzey Yıldızı İlk Aşk (North Star First Love) Show TV	Comedy / Drama	A man who left the woman she loves since his childhood and married another woman in Istanbul returns to his hometown with his three children where his ex-lover lives.	...
Mucize Doktor (Doctor of Miracle) Fox TV	Drama (Hospital Drama)	An autistic young man who is a successful doctor starts to work in a hospital but he needs time to prove his great capacity on his profession	...
Kuruluş Osman (Establishment: Osman) ATV	Drama / Action (Historical)	Osman I, founder of the Ottoman Empire, struggles against Byzantium and the Mongols while establishing the Ottoman Dynasty.	...
Hekimoğlu (Mr. Hekimoğlu) Kanal D	Drama (Hospital Drama)	An extraordinary doctor who is very successful on diagnosing difficult cases starts to work in a hospital where he is criticized for being too much plainspoken.	...
Sefirin Kızı (Daughter of the Ambassador)	Drama (Melodrama)	A young woman who disappears on her wedding night returns with her daughter after years to the town where the man she left still lives.	...

When the television series of the last twenty years are evaluated, the dominance of melodrama and comedy is clear for the whole era, as the data given by Şentürk (2018) about the content that was broadcasted between 2011 and 2015 shows. However, comedy with its sub-genres like sitcom or romance comedies have been evolved throughout these years, while melodrama survives without showing considerable changes.

The time-related impacts such as technological progress in production equipments which caused the rise of visual quality, or change in sense of humor with generational shifts, had resulted in the decline in sitcom's popularity all over the world in the second decade of the 2000s. Even though Turkish examples made in the first decade of the 2000s like *Tatlı Hayat (Sweet Life)*, *En Son Babalar Duyar (Fathers are the ones who hear at last)* or *Avrupa Yakası (European Side)* continued more than 100 episodes as the result of audience demand, sitcoms left their places to romance comedies like *Aşk Yeniden (In Love Again)*, *Erkenci Kuş (Daydreamer)* or comedy-dramas like *Aramızda Kalsın (Between Us)*, *Umutsuz Ev Kadınları (Desperate Housewives)* in the following decade.

Different from comedy, the genre of melodrama did not face any threats, even it was supported by the advances of the Turkish television industry in the international market.

Even though the first exported Turkish television series was *Deliyürek (Crazy heart)* in 2001, as Fırat Gülgen, the CEO of Calinos Holding, declared in his interview in 2011, the series which opened the way for the international market to Turkey had been *Binbir Gece (One Thousand and One Night)*. After the year 2006 with the impact of *Binbir Gece*, production companies and television channels preferred to increase melodramas both aiming at the local and foreign audience.

In addition, the history of television series in Turkey includes some examples which had been milestones for the upcoming series which would use similar strategies to attract the audience. The first one was *Asmalı Konak (Mansion with Grapes)* started in 2002, which has a hybrid genre combining drama, romance, and comedy. However what *Asmalı Konak* brought to television screen was not about its genre, it is about the filming location. Starting with scenes shot in New York, the series took the audience to a town in Nevşehir named Cappadocia where is known with its unusual natural beauties, since its first episode, and the series let the audience to see a different location than İstanbul which contributed to its popularity. As well as the authenticity of Cappadocia, the main location of *Asmalı Konak* was a stone mansion where the whole family members with its servants live. A community living in an isolated place according to their own rules allows constructing a tale like narrative which can be the explanation of the high rating results of *Asmalı Konak*. Soon after, the series based on Anatolian people living in big mansions under the impact of feudalism are continued to be made, which were: *Zerda* in 2002, *Kıvalı Kar* in 2002, *Beyaz Gelincik (White Weasel)* in 2005, *Sıla* in 2006, *Asi* in 2007, *Bir Bulut Olsam (Wish I was a Cloud)* in 2009, *Hanımın Çifliği* in 2009, *Yer Gök Aşk (Love All Around)* in 2010, *Karadağlar* in 2010, *Karagül (Black Rose)* in 2013, *Aşk ve Mavi* in 2016, *İstanbul Gelin* in 2017, *Yeni Gelin* in 2017 and *Bir Zamanlar Çukurova (Bitter Lands)* in 2018.

In 2003, the second milestone series of television which was a crime-action named *Kurtlar Vadisi (Valley of The Wolves)* started. As its slogan in the title sequence noting that: “This is a mafia story” shows, it was targeting mostly the male audience. Despite the complaints about the overuse of violence, it continued to reach high rating results and even inspired the decision-makers of the television industry for the new mafia series in the following years like *Ezel* in 2009, *Uçurum (The Cliff)* in 2012, *Karadayı (The Uncle in Black)* in 2012, *Suskunlar (Game of Silence)* in 2012, *Kaçak (The Fugitive)* in 2013,

Eşkiya Dünyaya Hükümdar Olmaz (Bandit Cannot Be Emperor to the World) in 2015, *Kehribar* in 2016 and *Çukur (The Pit)* in 2017.

In the era between 2006 and 2013, series which were literary adaptations had been popular after many years from the adaptations made by TRT. First, one which met the television audience was Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *Yaprak Dökümü (Fall of Leaves)* and it followed by another Reşat Nuri Güntekin's novel with the same name *Dudaktan Kalbe (From Lips to the Heart)* started next year in 2007. New adaptations that were added later were: *Aşk-ı Memnu (Forbidden Love)* of Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil in 2008, *Hanımın Çifliği (Farm of the Lady)* of Orhan Kemal in 2009, *Keşanlı Ali Destanı (Legend of Ali from Keşan)* of Haldun Taner in 2011. In the 2010 novel of Dostoyevsky named *The Brothers Karamazov* were adapted with the name of *Karadağlar*. Two of these series *Yaprak Dökümü* and *Aşk-ı Memnu* come forward among these examples with the popularity they had. Especially *Aşk-ı Memnu* was exported in the international market and had been watched in various countries, had awards and even was re-adapted in different languages. However, the popularity of literary adaptations among Turkish audience didn't last very long. In 2013 two new adaptation had been tried in Turkey *Fatih Harbiye* from the novel of Peyami Safa and *Çalikuşu* from the novel of Halide Edip Adivar. Both of these dramas could not get satisfying rating result. Different from *Fatih Harbiye*, *Çalikuşu* was a high budget period/costume drama. However, the audience did not pay attention to the quality of production and it was ended in the 30th episode. As a result, the failure of the last two series made producers hesitate to continue literary adaptations after 2013.

By having dramas like *Binbir Gece (One Thousand and One Night)* and *Yaprak Dökümü (Fall of Leaves)* makes the year of 2006 one of the most fruitful years in the history of Turkish television series. The other drama of 2006 was a period drama named *Hatırla Sevgili (Remember Darling)* which had impacted the following productions. Being a melodrama, which is constructed on the political events of recent history between the years of 1959 and 1980s had caught the great interest of the audience. Next year, the second period drama named *Eldeva Rumeli (Farewell to Rumeli)* had arrived which was about the Turks living in the west of Thrace at the end of the 19th century. Despite the comedy elements it includes in the early episodes, it turned to pure drama as it started to focus on the migration of Turks due to Bulgarian invasion. Different from most of the period dramas which were produced in studios, *Eldeva Rumeli* was shot in the rural areas

of Macedonia, preserving the century-old village buildings. In 2010 another period drama *Öyle Bir Geçer Zamanı* (*As the Time Goes By*) was released. It was a melodrama based on the breakup of a family with four children living in the 1970s. Next year, the Turkish audience had met a new period / historical drama named *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* (*Magnificent Century*) which had one of the best rating results and popularity in Turkish television history. Being based on real events of the era of Ottoman Emperor Süleyman, it could easily attract the audience from different demographics and ideologies. Special studios which were constructed in the form of Topkapı palace interiors and visual effects which were used to create the scenes of the era, such as the sailing Ottoman Navy, had made *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* the highest budget production ever. In the following years, *Diriliş Ertuğrul* (2014), *Muhteşem Yüzyıl Kösem* (2015), *Payitaht Abdülhamit* (2016), *Vatanım Sensin* (2016) and *Mehmetçik Kutül Amare* (2018), *Kuruluş Orman* (2019) had been produced as period / historical dramas.

In addition, it can be observed that the number of series which were adapted from American dramas has been rising since 2010. When the teen drama *Kavak Yelleri*, that is adapted from *Dawson's Creek* in 2007 had been popular among the young audience, two more American teen dramas had been adapted which were *Küçük Sırlar* (*Gossip Girl*) in 2011 and *Medcezir* (*The O.C.*) in 2015. Moreover, the adapted comedy - crime dramas had been *Umutsuz Ev Hanımları* (*Desperate Housewives*) broadcasted in 2011 and *Galip Derviş* (*Monk*) broadcasted in 2013. Action dramas like *Kuzey Güney* were adapted from *Rich Man Poor Man* in 2011, *İntikam* from *Revenge*) and *İçerde* from *Departed* in 2016. The latest adapted comedy-dramas had been *Bizim Hikaye* which is adapted from *Shameless* in 2017 and *Bir Aile Hikayesi* from *This is Us* in 2019. Years later than the hospital drama *Doktorlar* which was the local version of *Grey's Anatomy* made in 2006, two more hospital dramas have met the audience in 2019 which are *Mucize Doktor* adapted from *The Good Doctor* and *Hekimoğlu* adapted from *House MD*.

The adaptations of melodramas and romance comedies from South Korea had also been preferred by the Turkish television channels, especially between the years of 2014 and 2016. These were *Güneşi Beklerken* (*Waiting For the Sun*), *Paramparça* (*Broken Pieces*), *Kiraz Mevsimi* (*Cheery Season*), *İlişki Durumu: Karışık* (*Status: Complicated*), *Yüksek Sosyete* (*High Society*), *Kiralık Aşk* (*Love for Rent*), *Tatlı İntikam* (*Sweet Revenge*), *No: 309* (*Faded to Love You*) and *Anne* (*Mother*).

In conclusion, five main mainstream channels of Turkey are continuing to provide content for the audience who prefer to be kept busy for about three hours with television series. As Mutlu (2008, p.54) highlights, television has a “never-ending appetite for content” and the ongoing necessity for new productions cause the lack of creativity and originality. On the other hand, being a family medium limits the creators of television and makes them focus on particular genres and themes which become ordinary and outmoded in very short periods. As was mentioned above, some trends such as literary adaptations become popular for a couple of years and then they were abandoned by the audience who demand the newer, the ones they have never watch. The function of traditional television is fulfilling the entertainment need of mainstream audience who prefer the ‘ready to watch’ content which does not make them have to search or choose.

4.4 REASONS PAVED THE WAY FOR STREAMING SERVICES

4.4.1 Television Today

As Çelenk (2005, p.321) points out the domination of local dramas in prime-time which has been getting more apparent since 1999 and argues that being based on drama is the unique feature of Turkish television. She also emphasizes the resistance of Turkish television against the domination of foreign dramas and “tendencies of globalization such as cable TV, satellite TV or VODs” which make Turkish television became a ‘megatext’. Fifteen years later today, Çelenk’s definition of ‘megatext’ is seen much cleaner. As the Turkish news channels such as Cnnturk, Ntv, Haberturk have taken over the responsibility of news, national television channels have been released from their obligation to inform the society and evening news bulletins became a procedure which might be totally canceled in near future. Şentürk (2018, p.14) notes that Turkish television channels which are more than four hundred are can be divided into two in general as news channels or channels on series, and six of these channels which are Kanal D, Fox TV, ATV, Star TV, Show TV and TRT dominating the broadcasting of series are also leaders of the television

industry in Turkey. While the number of series broadcasted in a week in 2000 was about 36, it became 57 in 2008, and in the year 2016, the number reached to 159.

Table 4.21 Increase of TV Channels numbers - TÜRKSAT (p.33)

YEAR	# TV CHANNELS	#HD TV CHANNELS
2008	247	4
2009	260	7
2010	274	12
2011	280	27
2012	381	28
2013	454	39
2014	580	76
2015	565	95
2016	498	137
2017	437	133
2018	417	130

According to the research made by ‘Xsights Research & Consultancy’ for ‘Marketing Türkiye’ in 2018 top six national television channels distribute as Kanal D 50 %, Fox TV 48%, ATV 47 %, Star TV 45%, Show TV 43%, and TRT 29%.

The prediction of audience preferences has never been difficult as it has been in last years. In the tables below, it can be seen the numbers of television series which were canceled before their fourteenth and twenty-seventh episodes in the last five seasons.

Table 4.22 Number of TV series canceled before 27th episode

YEARS	KANAL D	FOX TV	SHOW TV	STAR TV	ATV	TOTAL
2018-2019	7	2	4	1	4	18
2017-2018	11	6	7	7	5	36
2016-2017	6	9	6	5	7	33
2015-2016	6	7	7	8	4	30
2014-2015	4	5	6	3	11	32

Table 4.23 Number of TV series canceled before 14th episode

<i>YEARS</i>	<i>KANAL D</i>	<i>FOX TV</i>	<i>SHOW TV</i>	<i>STAR TV</i>	<i>ATV</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
2018-2019	6	2	3	1	4	16
2017-2018	11	4	7	4	4	30
2016-2017	5	5	4	3	5	22
2015-2016	3	6	5	5	2	21
2014-2015	5	3	7	4	8	27

In Turkish television, mini-series is totally abandoned, especially in the last two decades. The common aim and strategy of production companies of television series are to maintain the series during the whole season which means it is expected to continue more than twenty-six episodes in a season. If a television series is canceled before the twenty-eighth episode, this means that it has not succeeded in rating results. Canceling before the thirteenth episode means total failure for a production company and the channel of that series. Signing a contract between production companies and channel administration for the first thirteen episodes which was a standard application, had been totally left in today's circumstances. Channels give chance to their new series for three or four episodes to reach an acceptable rating rate which could satisfy the advertisement companies, and if the result could not be satisfying, the series is canceled. When the total cost of these productions was considered, it is obvious that economic circumstances on traditional television broadcasting both for production companies and TV channels are very complicated for a while. A TV channel prefers to cancel the broadcasting of a TV series if it gets low rating results even though there are already produced following episodes. TV channels hesitate to block further weekdays and lose potential advertising income which might be gained with a different project. Bulut (2016, p.86) clarifies that television channels do not undertake the cost of the failure of the project and convey the risk to production companies. Besides the relations in the television industry is based on a great hierarchy and television channels prefer to work with experienced production companies which make these companies dominate the others. On the other hand, Tüzün-Ateşalp (2016, p.28) points out the negative impact of the early finals of the series on producers, directors, scriptwriters and the leading cast which make them lose their 'brand value'. These ongoing strategies of the channels also result in an increase of similar productions

in every season in which about 70 series were broadcasted, and exclusion of the reformist projects which could satisfy the group of audience who demands diverse content.

For Bourdieu (1998) the rating system is the “sanction of the market and the economy” and TV channels are the slaves of audience ratings, reflect the impact of economic conditions to the audiences who believe that they have a chance to make choices. However, specifications of rating systems which are “age, gender, income level, family composition, urban or local location, ethnic character, ownership of home, automobile, credit card status, social class” (Symthe, 2006) have always been the focus of discussions among television professionals about difficulties on reaching the reliable data collected from relevant audience. Bulut (2016, pp. 88,89) highlights the function of the state on the regulation of television which is not limited to censorship. The first rating measurements in Turkey started in 1989 and continued to be made by the same company: AGB Nielsen. However, TRT left the measurement system of this company in 2009. Two years later the rating system in Turkey had an economic and political transformation and the contract with AGB Nielsen was terminated, and a new company named TNS was assigned for national rating measurement. AGB Nielsen which was accused of leaking the data about the measured sample had declared that termination of their contract had a political background that aims to transform the television in Turkey ideologically. What TNS made later was expanding contains the respondent group by changing the conditions of defining AB group from education status which was ‘being at least graduate’ to income level. Besides, the areas being measured were expanded by including the locations which have a population below two thousand. As a result of the transformation that Bulut explains, the change in the construction of audience measurement had resulted in ambiguity for predicting the preferences of the audience which was somewhat clear in the last decade.

Kesirli-Unur (2016, p.199) evaluates the politically transformed Turkish television by emphasizing the censorship of RTÜK which became stricter as a consequence of JDP’s mixed performance in relation to democratization. Representation of smoking on television which was banned by RTÜK in 2008 is followed by constraints of alcohol in 2013. The scenes including the images of cigarettes and/or alcohol are being blurred still not to encourage the public to consume these materials (Ibid., p.202). As Şentürk (2018,

p.12) notes, television in Turkey had always been the medium to fulfill the propaganda necessities of dominant political ideology since it had been founded firstly in 1968.

In 2010, the television industry had faced a protest under the name of '*Yerli Dizi Yersiz Uzun*' organized by the actors and members of the creative crew of the series who complain about the duration of episodes that reach to ninety minutes. The working conditions which became exhausting for everyone who works for the production were highly criticized and demanded to be get shortened. However, the protest did not succeed and even the durations of the series got longer in the following years. Today television series all start at 20.00 and with the summary part at the beginning of the episode and advertisement breaks, they continue until 23.30 even sometimes 23.50. It means the whole evening is occupied by one series every evening which makes the audience have to sit in front of television for more than three hours. For an ordinary family, all evenings including weekends, their way of entertainment is determined by television and it is decided to be represented in various forms of fiction with similar celebrities and similar stories again and again. Production companies hesitate to take the risk and do not prefer to try which was not been tried and continues to invest in projects familiar to the audience. *İstanbullu Gelin (Evermore)* broadcasted between 2017 and 2019 by Star TV has a similar plot with *Asmalı Konak (The Mansion with Grapevine)* which was a very popular series of the season of 2002-2003. It also has the same male leading star Özcan Deniz who is once again the eldest brother of a famous and rich family based in the province, whose father had died years ago and has a very dominant mother controlling her every children's lives. A man falling in love with a metropolitan young woman, then fascinating and taking her to his city, and soon after the bride's learning of her husband's child from another woman can be a brief summary of both these two TV series. Despite the similarities on the screenplays, the same actor who was presented as a new character can be evaluated to summarize the current strategies of traditional television seem to be a vicious cycle.

As King (2002, p.162) points out "stardom as an institution helps the majors to maintain their dominance of the industry" However television industry has been experiencing the failure of stardom for a while. Creating the cast with highly popular actors by taking the risk of their expenditures which consist of the major part of the production budget cannot guarantee high ratings for a while. After the great success of series of *Aşk-ı Memnu* (2008-2010) and *Kuzey Güney* (2011-2013) the leading actor of these series Kıvanç

Tatlıtuğ appeared in a high budget period drama named *Kurt Seyid ve Şura (Kurt Seyid and Shura)* in 2014. The production quality of the series was also very high, but nothing could prevent its unpredictable cancellation due to low rating results. Another series named *Çalığışu (Lovebird)* broadcasted in the same season, which has two very popular stars like Burak Özçivit and Fahriye Evcen could not also succeed among its competitors.

The recent examples are also proving that stardom is not a reliable factor to minimize the risk of failures. An action-drama named *Muhteşem İkili (The Spectacular Duo)* having Kerem Bürsin & İbrahim Çelikkol as stars who are two police officers not liking each other and had to deal with the same case could only reach 12th episode in last season. The cancellations are continuing in the ongoing season too. Another early final was for a romance: a contemporary adaptation of an Anatolian legend *Ferhat ile Şirin* having Cansu Dere was canceled in the sixth episode. A high budget period drama which had been promoted to be one of the major works of the new season was *Kurşun (Bullet)*. Engin Altan Düzyatan, the star of popular historical drama *Diriliş Ertuğrul* was its leading character and the series also has Burçin Terzioğlu and Berrak Tüzünataç, the two popular female stars. Despite being written by Kerem Deren, the scriptwriter of *Ezel* which had been one of the most favored Turkish series, *Kurşun* was canceled after the seventh episode.

According to the results of the research made by Tüzün-Ateşalp (2016, p.33) on the quality of Turkish series by interviewing of television professionals who function as gatekeepers for the television drama, television channels aim to reach the broadest number of audience by addressing the average tastes and to provide the maintenance of audience by attracting them every week by television series. However, considering only the rating results to define a series quality is the main cause of the lack of creativity in recent works. Besides, the pressure for completing the production of each episode in a week which lasts between 90 to 120 minutes, and scarcity of time spent for the pre-production processes do also impact the level of quality of the Turkish television series.

On the other hand, a few attempts had been tried with different contents having shorter durations and unconventional stories. In 2012, a TV series named *Açayip Hikayeler (Peculiar Stories)*, adapted from Galip Tekin's comic books in 11 episodes were released by Star TV. The duration of the episodes was around 30 minutes and they start on Sunday

midnights. In the week when it was broadcasted, the audience who do not prefer to watch television normally watched *Acayip Hikayeler*. The same year, Star TV released another TV series *Çıplak Gerçek (Naked Truth)* whose episodes were lasting only 45 minutes. This series belongs to the genre of crime drama and its story which was based on the disappearance of an 18 years old young girl, was completed in 16 episodes. It was directed by experienced movie director Ümit Ünal which resulted in having a cinematic aesthetic when it was compared with ordinary television series which look like each other. Another unusual TV series that should be mentioned is '*46, Yok Olan*' (*46, The One Vanishing*) was Star TV's another attempt for short time series, released after primetime in 2016. Its leading character who is a genetic professor seeking ways to save his daughter from a long-time coma by a medicine discovered by himself was played Erdal Beşikçioğlu who was also favored by the fans of *Behzat Ç.* Besides, it was a miniseries having only 13 episodes, lasting about one hour. However, the rating result wasn't satisfying. Even though its date was changed from Sunday to Friday, it couldn't manage to get the attraction of the audience as *Behzat Ç.* could.

Figure: 4.7 Frames from '*46, Yok Olan*' (*46, The Vanishing One*) E.1



Source: netflix.com (accessed 13 January 2020)

Tekelioğlu (2017, p. 301) explains the failure of '*46, Yok Olan*' by emphasizing that the audience of this series prefer to watch it on the internet and he claims that such a reformist work does not have a chance to survive in a mainstream channel which provides 'free' content. He also adds "In a world where the screens getting multiple, behaving as if there is only one screen at home, standing in the living room is meaningless" (Ibid., p. 265).

Audience in Turkey had witnessed the transformation of a TV series. In 2008, Turkmax - a channel in Digiturk, broadcasting only Turkish series or movies - released a sitcom named *Bir Kadın Bir Erkek (One Woman One Man)* which was an adaptation of a French sitcom. It was about the relation of an unmarried young couple who were sharing the same flat. Due to its unusual characters and stories that were told in each episode, audience found it very brave even provocative and it had a huge fan during all its 416 episodes. After this series became very popular especially among the young audience, the national TV channel Star TV bought it and started to broadcast it under the name of *Bir Erkek Bir Kadın (One Man One Woman)* for three seasons, after prime time. However, the series started to become conservative very soon. The couple got married, their adventures which make the audience have fun started to become ordinary. After three seasons in Star TV, it was transferred to Fox TV with the name of *Bir Erkek Bir Kadın İki Çocuk (One Man One Woman Two Children)* and the couple had twins. Unsurprisingly its audience did not find adventures of these inexperienced parents interesting anymore and the series had canceled. Kesirli-Unur (2016, p.189) points out the vanishing of alternative voices as a result of authoritarianism which became clearer in the last decade, and the definite borders which were drawn have been impacting the ways of production TV series in Turkey.

Nevertheless, broadcast television which has always been defined as the medium for mass entertainment could never go beyond the limits of being a domestic medium. Lack of information about the audience who are in front of their screen, made the gatekeepers stay away from being marginal on the choices of content which makes the result average that means lack of originality. Ellis (1992, p.115) explains how the television content was determined as below:

For broadcast TV, it has certain specific effects because TV tends to orient its programmes towards its presumed audience, to try to include the audience's own conception of themselves into the texture of its programmes. Hence broadcast TV gives central place to the series of cultural preoccupations that accompany the nuclear family: to heterosexual romance, to the stability of marriage, to the notions of masculine careers and feminine domesticity, to the conception of the innocence of childhood, to the division of the world in public and private spheres. In addition, this conception of the family-as-audience determines a series of attitudes to what is legitimate material for broadcast TV. Any specialized interests are avoided, especially those which divide across generations. 'Youth' as a specific audience is not catered for by broadcast TV to any appreciable extent. No sexually explicit programmes before 9 p.m. because children will be watching; no disturbing programmes about death because old people may be watching on their own. TV programmes are

addressed to a generalized audience which is conceived in a very specific way: as isolated nuclear families in their domestic settings.

According to the research of Konda (2019) the ratio of the young audience between the ages of 18 and 32 had declined for all six leading television channels: Kanal D, Fox TV, ATV, Star TV, Show TV, and TRT in last ten years.

Table 4.24 Konda Report Results on Changing age intervals of TV audience

Kanal D	18-32	33-48	49+	Fox TV	18-32	33-48	49+
2010	50 %	34 %	16 %	2010	46	37	18
2011	51 %	28 %	21 %	2011	46	41	14
2012	46 %	34 %	21 %	2012	45	34	21
2013	46 %	34 %	20 %	2013	43	37	20
2014	43 %	35 %	22 %	2014	38	35	27
2015	43 %	35 %	22 %	2015	37	34	29
2016	43 %	35 %	22 %	2016	35	35	30
2017	39 %	36 %	24 %	2017	32	34	34
2018	37 %	36 %	28 %	2018	32	34	33
2019	33 %	38 %	29 %	2019	33	35	31
Star TV	18-32	33-48	49+	ATV	18-32	33-48	49+
2010	35	36	28	2010	33	42	25
2011	36	34	30	2011	37	38	25
2012	44	33	23	2012	37	37	25
2013	41	37	21	2013	35	39	26
2014	45	37	19	2014	33	40	27
2015	43	38	19	2015	32	38	30
2016	43	37	20	2016	32	38	30
2017	43	35	22	2017	29	37	35
2018	38	39	22	2018	26	38	36
2019	34	39	26	2019	23	38	39
TRT	18-32	33-48	49+	Show TV	18-32	33-48	49+
2010	29	39	33	2010	48	36	16
2011	25	35	39	2011	49	31	20
2012	26	36	38	2012	48	33	19
2013	26	37	37	2013	47	34	20
2014	24	36	40	2014	45	33	21
2015	24	33	42	2015	46	37	17
2016	25	36	39	2016	44	36	20
2017	23	37	40	2017	43	36	21
2018	23	34	43	2018	42	36	22
2019	19	36	45	2019	35	38	27

Unsurprisingly, the young audience who consume audiovisual content via their personal devices have been abandoning the domestic medium in their houses staying in the living room as an old family member for years and used to tell similar stories they know since

they were children. The rest of the audience who still get on well with the senior, continue to spend hours for watching, perhaps by complaining from time to time but never pressing the switch off button. According to Ümmü Burhan who is the former director for dramas in Star TV, people prefer the series which make them feel relax. They have television as an entertainment source which is not expensive and they wish to follow something which flows slowly without making them have to think much about it (Coşkunarda 2016).

Even though the broadcasting strategies are determined according to the demands of advertisement companies, the recent researches are showing that the domination of television is being threatened by digital services. According to the research of Deloitte made on the 'total investments of media and advertisements' for the first half of 2019, the ratio of television had declined 7 percent while digital services are increased 10.8 percent when they are compared with the results of the previous year.

As the television industry in Turkey struggles for protecting its throne, Turkish television dramas are still being highly demanded in the international market of televisual content. Started with the exportation of *Deliyürek* in 2001 and followed by *Gümüş* (2007) and *Binbir Gece* (2009) foreign audience got familiar with Turkish dramas. Then *Muhteşem Yüzyıl (Magnificent Century)* exported to 86 countries in 2011 became a milestone and accelerated the rise of demand which still continues today. (Şentürk 2018, p.15) The point that should be underlined here is the necessity for re-editing of the episodes of exported series which last mostly about two hours perhaps more, which make them impossible to be broadcasted as an episode of a series in another country. In the August of 2019, it had been declared that a crime - action drama of TRT named *Halka (The Circle)* which was released in 19 episodes and about 130 minutes long each, are planning to be re-edited into fifty-minute episodes which would make the narrative more dynamic, in order to be broadcasted in digital services. (Türkyılmaz 2019) The news about the plan of TRT for attracting the audience on digital services with a re-edited dynamic version of *Halka*, can be evaluated as the confession on broadcasting of an action drama in an indolent, stagnant way.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the recent circumstances of television in Turkey which result in the loss of a group of audience who demand more dynamic narratives is the main reason for the fragmentation audience.

4.4.2 Previously on Television: Behzat Ç. & Leyla ile Mecnun

At the beginning of the last decade, two extraordinary Turkish TV series: *Behzat Ç.* and *Leyla ile Mecnun (Leyla and Mecnun)* had managed to attract a group of audience who were not loyal television audience. Their popularity had resulted in the discovery of a new type of audience that had emerged in the post-television era in Turkey for a while ago. And it can be argued that these two unique works had impacted the emergence of Turkish streaming services which do aim to attract a group audience who share similar characteristics with their fans.

Behzat Ç. (19 September 2010 - 17 May 2013, 96 episodes) was released by STAR TV in primetime II -after 22.00- due to its genre which was crime drama/police procedural. It was directed by Serdar Akar, who was also the director of two crime movies *Barda (2007)* and *Gemide (1998)*. The main character Behzat (Erdal Beşikçioğlu), the chief police commissioner, was an unusual character for television, always depressed and confused 'anti-hero'. He was mostly drunk, using bad language, does not hesitate to use violence against people whom he believes that they worth it, and sometimes comes to the verge of craziness. Actor Beşikçioğlu, who has been on the stage for years in Nikolai Gogol's theatre play '*Diary of a Madman*', perfectly characterized Behzat who tries to keep his mind in the middle of a crowd. Issues the police department in the series had to deal with were also unusual for traditional television such as murders about the member of the LGBT community, problems caused by gentrification policies in cities or political issues related to up-to-date cases. On the contrary to its huge fans who had a bond with the characters of the series, a group of conservative audience started to make complaints about *Behzat Ç.* for promoting the immoral life of unmarried couples, using swear, alcohol, and cigarette very often. The polarization among audience got bigger and RTÜK started to keep *Behzat Ç.* under surveillance. Finally, the series had been punished several times during its three seasons. Censorship which silences the swear words and blurs the alcohol and cigarette images on the screen had been overcome by sharing the episodes without censorship on the website of the series TV channel Star TV. The audience of *Behzat Ç.* had shown great interest in these uncensored episodes on the website. They tend to watch it totally online. According to Tekelioğlu, (2017, p.101) this break up

created a great impact on the rise of its fans. Even its audience started to create an online community based on *Behzat Ç.* in Ekşisözlük which is a popular website especially among young people in Turkey, functioning as a forum but designed as a dictionary (in Turkish: sözlük) which let users make comment on specific titles. During the years *Behzat Ç.* was being broadcasted, the number of entries about the series in Ekşisözlük become one of the top topics of all times. Tekelioğlu claims that the success of *Behzat Ç.* was based on the “feeling of real” it created, using very natural dialogs, even black comedy among young policemen. He also mentions ‘conscience’ which the series make audience believe that *Behzat Ç.* has it (Ibid., pp.188,189). On the contrary of other Turkish crime drama TV series rarely made before, the narrative of this series was mostly based on real-life, reflected the soul of streets of the city. Actors who were not very handsome men were like any stranger that can pass by someone in a hurry. Rather than actors faking a policeman, these actors were much like policemen in people’s minds even if for the ones who do not know a policeman personally. The reality that was represented is the result of including noir elements besides being a police procedural. There are two different approaches to noir, which accept it as a genre or as a style (Park 2011, p. 2). Noir in *Behzat Ç.* is seen in its tone and style which defines the characteristic of it. As Holt (2006, p.33) names, noir can be explained as “stylized crime realism”. The protagonist *Behzat Ç.* is a middle-aged man who has suspects about the death of his daughter and his suffering makes him purposeless man trying to silence his mind with the help of alcohol. Sanders (2008, p.15) highlights that protagonist of noir in film or television used to suffer from nihilism, loss of meaning, and joy of life makes him think and act as if he does not care anything and have no aim to change his condition. Moreover, ambiguity which is also a noir element is very clear in the series. Conard (2006, pp.1-2) summarizes the characteristics of noir as “the inversion of traditional values and the corresponding moral ambivalence; the feeling of alienation, paranoia, and cynicism; the presence of crime and violence; and the disorientation of the viewer”. Despite being a police procedural, which makes it be obliged to show the distinction between right or wrong, the universe of *Behzat Ç.* had not been represented in black and white. The line between the ones who commit the crime and the ones who had to apply the law used to get blurred (Kesirli – Unur 2016, pp. 309,310).

Different from the characteristic of its genre, Yörük (2012, p.250) relates the quality of the series with being a literary adaptation which makes it a writer-structured narrative. Ercan Mehmet Erdem: the scriptwriter of *Behzat Ç.* had adapted the series from the book of Emrah Serbes who is the writer of underground literature. Serbes' detective novel: *Her Temas İz Bırakır* was published in 2006. Dependable data about the readers of the book can be reached from the page of the book in 1000kitap.com which is a Turkey-based web site functions as an online book club, allowing its subscribers to note the books they read, make comments about them and interact. The data about *Her Temas İz Bırakır* shows it was read by 1948 subscribers and 37.7 percent of them are between the age intervals of 25-34, 26 percent of them are 18-24 and 21.7 percent of them are 35-44, besides 52.8 percent of total readers are male. Serbes' next book: *Son Hafriyat* which is also the sequel of the story and published in 2008 was read by 1280 people whose age interval distributes as between 25-34 are 36.4 percent, between 18-24 are 26.4 percent and between 35-44 are 22.2 percent. Besides, the novel of Leyla ile Mecnun written by Burak Aksak, based on a new adventure of its characters, was published in April of 2018. On the page of the novel in 1000kitap.com, the number of its readers is 5884, and the age intervals distribute as 33.7 percent for 25-34, 26 percent for 18-25, and 9.1 percent for 35-44. When the age intervals of the audience of *Behzat Ç.* and *Leyla ile Mecnun* are considered, it can be predicted that members of Y Generation (born between 1981-1999) dominate the audience.

According to Tekelioğlu, (2017, p.283) *Behzat Ç.* and his crew are the members of "loser's club". They are adults who are still adolescents, not able to communicate with women, do not have control over their lives, so flying in the wind like a leaf, while they believe they are providing justice. The difficulty of being an adult is also the problem of the series fans in their private lives. Tekelioğlu, (2017, p.284) defines the fans of *Behzat Ç.* as: "late youngsters, listen to Turkish rock music, drink only beer and rakı, familiar to football, connected to the university, follow Ekşisözlük and other dictionaries on the web and know provinces or suburbs". Kesirli – Unur (2016, pp. 310,311) evaluates *Behzat Ç.* in terms of gender and points out its masculine discourse. Not only *Behzat*, but also the other major male characters do perform masculinity in the way of language using consisting sexist swears very often and also with their physical gestures. On the contrary of Tekelioğlu's (2017, p. 189) criticism on using the violence in a strange way of

indifference which makes it normalize, Yörük (2012, p.254) points out that the series aims to attract the audience who are educated people living in urban areas and have the capability of reading violence in fiction text without being impacted from it. She also emphasizes that if *Behzat Ç.* would be broadcasted on a premium channel targeting niche audience like HBO, instead of a mainstream channel it would prefer to settle on the ground of aesthetic realism which is closer to the cinema.

The first episode of *Leyla and Mecnun* (*Leyla ile Mecnun*) was released by TRT on 9 February 2011 and continued until the 103rd episode on 17 June 2013. *Leyla ile Mecnun* was a comedy-drama written by Burak Aksak, got the attention of its audience quickly. Its fame spread by word of mouth and made it popular on the internet. For Tekelioğlu (2017, p.32) giving a chance to absurd comedy for TRT is very surprising, while mainstream channels promote traditional comedy. Here Tekelioğlu makes a significant emphasis on the background of the humor this series uses. He mentions Turkish humor and satire magazines such as ‘Leman’, ‘Penguen’ and ‘Uykusuz’ and argues that their way of humor has shaped the comedy perception of the young generation for years. *Leyla ile Mecnun* is directed by Onur Ünlü, who wrote poems for a while under a nickname of Muhsin Ünlü, and later made movies for cinema before shooting this series. He is still continuing to make movies with unusual screenplays, mostly black comedies and protect his own way of storytelling. Onur Ünlü’s way of directing which has its own characteristic had very well combined with young scriptwriter Burak Aksak’s extraordinary narration which had been unique in the television history of Turkey due to its ability to catch a group of young audience who share the same ‘blood’. In *Leyla ile Mecnun*, the main characters were three young men: Mecnun (Ali Atay), İsmail (Serkan Keskin) and Yavuz (Osman Sonant) who actually have no success in their life yet: no higher education, no job, no stable relationships with women, so they don’t feel loved or confident. At this point, they are the members of the ‘loser’s club’ too, which makes its audience create a bond with them. Different from an identification, these men make the audience remember something they miss like friendship, solidarity, hopefulness, protecting the innocence. İsmail, the best friend of the leading character Mecnun, is an unemployed man who used to look for a job but couldn’t find it, but he is always optimistic. He is an adult but actually, he is still a child. Also, he waits to see his father who left him when he was a child. His great hope to reach his dream makes the young audience feel sorry for him and love him

more than other characters. Even in some comments on social media, people declare that if they have a friend like him, they won't need another friend for their whole lives. According to Tekelioğlu (2017, p.41), this series make us remember the human values which are vanishing in city life and it recommends us to resist the material culture which the city promotes. When the feedback on the internet belongs to this series are evaluated, the reaction it has in Ekşisözlük follows *Behzat Ç.* in numbers. Two days later its first episode was released, a user with nickname 'Avroma' in Ekşisözlük, defines *Leyla ile Mecnun* as: "A TRT series which is going to be a legend by leaving the whole worthless series surrounding all around." The prediction about being a legend had been real and *Leyla ile Mecnun* created its own unique audience type who had to deal with people around them asking the same question: "What is funny about it?" Akınerdem (2013, p.43) explains the popularity of *Leyla ile Mecnun* especially among young men by claiming that it constructs its narrative on "male suffering". She emphasizes the changing of leading female characters every season and Mecnun could not be able to have a proper affair with any of them since its three seasons. Even though it looks strange to relate a comedy-drama with suffering it turns to an attractive point for the male audience.

Leyla ile Mecnun also differs from other mainstream comedies on television by using fantasy themes which becomes the source of humor with its way of representation. First of all, one of the main characters of the series is Aksakallı Dede -Grandpa with White Beard- (Köksal Engür) who first meets Mecnun in his dream then joins his life as a living human. Besides the series uses fantasy elements mostly made by mimicking the artists, scientists, discoverers, inventors, philosophers of the history, even including Greek gods or goddesses: such as Dostoyevsky, Shakespeare, Pisagor, Nostradamus, Christophe Colomb, Graham Bell, Mimar Sinan, Leonardo da Vinci, Descartes, Picasso, Themis. Fantasy genre has never been popular among Turkish TV series without few exceptions such as *Ruhsar* which was a sitcom about a ghost of a young woman who can visit her husband, and some others: *Acemi Cadi*, *Sihirli Annem*, *Selena* and *Bez Bebek* which were series for children including characters who has magical powers. The way of using fantasy in *Leyla ile Mecnun* was very unique. Instead of creating a superhero or heroine who is obliged to save a country or a kingdom, the series uses various historical characters independent from the main plot which appears for a few scenes, mostly in the made-up stories of Ismail Abi. By using the advantage of comedy genre, their introduction should

not be coherent with the screenplay. The series had also overcome the censorship of alcohol and cigarette with the help of its peculiar narration and using of these materials were replaced by fruits, which made people feel dizzy soon after they were eaten, and chewing gum which was consumed when someone was feeling anxious or upset.

In addition, arabesk music used to be emphasized in this extraordinary television series which also has the representation of arabesk culture in the lives of its characters. Mecnun has a lower-class family and his two close friends: a long-time unemployed man and a thief, are also from the lower class. However, Leyla (Ezgi Asaroğlu), the girl Mecnun loves, is from an upper middle class, who has a father used to scorn Mecnun at the beginning of the story. After Leyla's father Metin (İştar Göksever) identifies himself as the king of Metonya and starts to live in a castle, he calls Mecnun and his friends to hoist the flag of his castle which has the drawings of most popular three Turkish arabesk singers on it: Ferdi Tayfur, Müslüm Gürses and Orhan Gencebay. Metin declares his aim as

Metin: We will be the last castle of arabesk. Represses and threats cannot frustrate us. Viva arabesk!

Mecnun: Brother Metin, you do not even listen to arabesk music? Why did you embrace it this much?

Metin: We are against the prohibitions.

Figure: 4. 8 Frame from Leyla ile Mecnun E. 76



Source: netflix.com (accessed 04 February 2020)

Leyla ile Mecnun will be remembered as one of the most exceptional series in Turkish television history in the future not only for being the postmodern adaptation of a middle eastern love story but also for hoisting the flag of arabesk on the screen of TRT after more than thirty years of TRT's arabesk ban. Characters of the series use arabesk music as a way to express their resistance to capitalism which ignores them, to the city which does

not accept them to its center. Arslan (2011, p.96) explains how the arabesk culture transformed and became mainstream as:

In its ambivalent relation to the West, arabesk culture grew with migration from rural areas to shantytowns or squatter settlements (gecekondu) that popped up in urban peripheries and then started to infiltrate urban centers. However, though the form initially responded to internal migration and protested urban culture, it later came to be associated with and even incorporated aspects of urbanism. Slowly becoming mainstream, arabesk culture eventually came to be incorporated into the upper-class urban practices. The increased visibility of arabesk, initially a protest about the conditions of urban life, did not succeed in producing much change in class positions and patterns. The lower classes of Turkey still reside in the peripheries of urban centers and commute to the center for work.

It can be argued that the way of using of arabesk had been embraced by the audience which makes the characters of the series more ‘real’ than other ones used to appear on television. Arabesk culture was also very apparent in *Behzat Ç.* Behzat himself was not a man whose family is from the lower class. However, he prefers to live a modest life, especially after he divorced. On the other hand, his team including young policemen: Harun (Fatih Artman), Akbaba (Berkan Şal) and Hayalet (İnanç Konukçu) were coming from lower-class families and the way they continue living is away from luxury unsurprisingly. The mood of all these men is always ‘arabesk’, as if they are suffering all the time, even if they do not remember the reason, always ready to drink and blame someone or the life itself for their dissatisfaction which proves their problem was about being an adult. The two series sharing the same ‘blood’ made a surprise to their audience with a cross episode which was the 32nd episode of *Behzat Ç.* and 12th episode of *Leyla ile Mecnun*. This cross episode had contributed to the increase in audience numbers for both series by informing the ones who were already following one of them but were unaware of the other.

Figure: 4. 9 Leyla ile Mecnun E.12



Source: netflix.com (accessed 04 February 2020)

However, through the end of the third season of these two reformist series, Star TV decided to end *Behzat Ç.* at its 96th episode and TRT decided to quit the *Leyla ile Mecnun* at its 103rd episode due to political reasons, which made their fans very disappointed. Soon after, there had been a rumor about a web series of *Behzat Ç.* which will be produced and shared on Youtube. This rumor made its loyal audience very much excited. The experience of audience reactions of these two series had been very much inspiring for the media industry in Turkey, especially for the ones who intend to create local content for this new kind of audience of the post-television era.

In the following years, attempts for series with unusual characters and screenplays were made. First one was Start TV's comedy series: *İşler Güçler*, directed by Selçuk Aydemir who also made a comedy movie named *Çalgı Çengi* with the same cast in 2010. *İşler Güçler* was about three actors who cannot succeed in their career. The story was again based on loser characters. Tekelioğlu (2017, p. 42) summarizes the story as "having fun while losing". Different from other mainstream TV series, it was 75 minutes long and continued for one season. As an alternative to *Leyla ile Mecnun*, it created also its own audience who were not happy about traditional television content. Next year, the same crew made another comedy series named *Kardeş Payı (Brother's Share)* and it continued for 35 episodes.

One year later than the end of *Leyla ile Mecnun*, its crew, including the director, the scriptwriter, and the main cast made another work named *Ben de Özledim (I Missed Too)* released by Star TV. The story was based on what the crew had experienced when *Leyla ile Mecnun* was suddenly finished by TRT. The characters were the actors themselves and they were trying to cope with the idea of being unemployed.

In 2015, Onur Ünlü, as a director and scriptwriter, made a comedy series named *Beş Kardeş (Five Brothers)* for Kanal D which was about five brothers who live in the same house together. If it is compared to *Leyla ile Mecnun*, this series was closer to traditional television comedies. The audience who know Ünlü from his movies and follow his works from different sources other than the television might have preferred to watch this series online. However online consumption of content could not contribute its success on ratings and *Beş Kardeş* couldn't survive very long in the jungle of traditional television.

In conclusion, the spell had been broken by the unexpected cancellations of *Leyla ile Mecnun* and *Behzat Ç.*, and a group of audience, who were offended by the policies of traditional television left it completely.

4.4.3 Turkish VODs and Globally Popular TV Shows

In 1993, Cine5, the first subscription-based channel of Turkey with its slogan “*Change your world*” was founded by Erol Aksoy, who was also the owner of Show TV. The price of subscription for Cine 5 was very high and it was only affordable for a privileged class of society. Marketing strategy of the channel was broadcasting the first five minutes of program without encryption, then the view on the screen was changing to an encrypted version which would be available only for subscribers. Besides, the broadcasting of erotic movies after midnight was another strategy of Cine5 to increase its income. The content that Cine5 provided was mostly based on foreign movies and series. Moreover, programs on news, magazine, music and documentaries were also included. In 1996, the rights of broadcasting the Turkish Super League matches were bought and soon after the number of its subscribers increased and reached to 700.000. The monopoly of Cine5 on football matches continued until 1999. In 1997, Playboy TV started to broadcast content for adults as a subchannel which has an extra price in the subscription system. Later, sub-channels on sports and children were added. The end of its monopoly on football resulted in an economic collapse for Erol Aksoy and the channel was transferred to TMSF (The Savings Deposit Insurance Fund of Turkey). Soon after, the quality of the channel’s contents changed and became ordinary which make the subscribers quit. (Serim 2007, p.309) Cine5 abandoned its encrypted broadcasting in 2006. Then it was bought by Al Jazeera Turk in 2011 and was closed down in 2015.

Digiturk, the satellite television provider was launched in April of 2000, owned by Mehmet Emin Karamehmet who was also the owner of Çukurova Group until 2013, then it was transferred to TMSF and sold to beIN Media Group from Qatar in 2016 (“TMSF, Digiturk’ün satışını onayladı” 2016). Digiturk uses Turksat and requires set-top box for its encryption technologies: Cryptoworks and Irdeto software. In addition to national

television channels, with its sub-channels and specific channels on movies, series, sport, children music, entertainment or documentaries, the number of channels being provided is more than 200. Digiturk is the current owner of the broadcasting rights of Turkish Super League, so offers its subscribers to choose for a different package having sports channels or not. Most of the popular foreign movies and series are legally reachable by Digiturk.

In 2007, Doğan Group, the previous owner of Kanal D, was found D-Smart, as the second satellite television provider in Turkey. Including national and international ones, the number of its channels has reached 270 in 2018. D-Smart also uses Turksat and encryption technology named VideoGuard which requires a set-top box. By its four packages offering specific channels according to different consumer demands such as movies or sports, D-Smart is another option for Turkish audience who demand service not limited to traditional television's content.

Before the Turkish audience met streaming services, satellite television providers Digiturk and D-Smart had been examples of services for premium content. As Kesirli-Unur (2016, p.98) highlights, global television channels had been accessible for the television audience in Turkey via these VOD services. Besides foreign films and series were released in their original language with Turkish subtitles.

A group of audience who are not satisfied with mainstream channels, still prefer these VODs. However, their prices are not affordable for the majority of the citizens. The number of their subscribers is less than 4 million in total. When it is compared with the whole population of Turkey, it can be predicted that these numbers cannot represent all of the audience who are not satisfied with traditional television.

On the other hand, the Turkish audience had one more option to reach foreign content in original languages by the channel named CNBC-E, which was an open-access private channel, broadcasting economy news until 18.00 and then foreign TV series and films. During its fifteen years of the broadcasting period from 16 November 2000 to 6 November 2015, several popular TV series such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Dawson's Creek*, *Ally McBeal*, *24*, *The Sopranos*, *ER*, *Gossip Girl*, *Heroes*, *Desperate Housewives*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Dexter*, *Doctor Who*, *The O.C.*, *Mad Men*, *Nip/Tuck*, *Arrested Development*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *South Park*, *The Simpsons*, *Smallville*, *Two and a Half Men*, *Chuck*, *Breaking Bad*, *Prison Break*, *Rome*, *Seinfeld*,

Shameless, Spartacus, Six Feet Under had been watched with great interest by the audience. It can be argued that watching foreign series or films requires being familiar with the English language or as Tanrıöver (2015) emphasizes, the habit of reading subtitles which is required to follow the dialogs also requires being a ‘good reader’. (p.28) CNBC-E due to its content based on popular American serials and foreign films is preferred by educated and socio-culturally ‘higher’ audience (Çelenk 2005, p.259).

Gripsrud (1995, p.25) explains how the contents of American television manage to dominate the world as below:

Not only is an effective distributional apparatus at hand, the US has through the work of its cultural industries also long been established as a common ‘mythic universe’ to people all over the world. The cultural heterogeneity of the US domestic market has probably also helped to make the marketing of almost any American cultural product quite easy. They are from the outset constructed for audiences with a wide range of cultural backgrounds. All of these things contribute to an explanation of American television’s international dominance.

In addition to being culturally heterogeneous, the language factor which makes U.S. based series and films dominate the world should also be mentioned at this point. English is the most preferred language to be learned as a foreign language all over the world. Having a common language as its original language, make the audience find the content more familiar. According to the results of the research made by Tanrıöver (2015, pp.38,39) on ‘lifestyles and viewing habits of young people who watch foreign series in Turkey, watching a series in its original language help them to improve their English skills, especially for the ones who use English in the school or job. Other results of the research also show that young people prefer to watch foreign content due to having diverse narratives, multiple options for the genre and creative plots. Watching of American series also makes these young people feel privileged by joining the discourse in international media on these series.

When the globally popular American series are evaluated, it can be argued that *Lost*, which was a fantasy drama released in 2004 by ABC, had been the milestone for television industry in the new era. According to Broe (2019, p.15) the change in “the scope and scale of television series” started with *Lost*, and the change which had begun in cable channels was carried to network television. Indeed, with its extraordinary plot, the survivors of the mysterious plane crash had attracted the huge parts of the audience in every country during its six seasons which continued until 2010. Pearson (2007, p.248)

points out that *Lost* has roots in literature, film, and television and gives examples as: “the desert island stories (*Robinson Crusoe*, *Mysterious Island*, *Swiss Family Robinson*, *Lord of the Flies*, *Gilligan’s Island*); science fiction/fantasy television (*The Twilight Zone* in particular); and reality television shows (*Survivor*).

One year after *Lost* ended, HBO released its fantasy drama: *Game of Thrones*, which would be one of the most popular series of all times. The legendary fight for the land of Westeros had finally finished in 2019 and the series became itself a legend for the television industry. The prequel of *Game of Thrones* under the name of *House of the Dragon*, which will be based on the beginning of Targaryens’ history 300 years ago, is planning to be released in 2022 (Gartenberg, 2020).

Çelenk (2010, p.27) predicts that the success of foreign series on attracting the Turkish audience, would force the television industry in Turkey which has already been improved technologically, to improve the contents in thematically too. Consequently, the popularity of global series among Turkish audience can be interpreted as the demand for diverse content having creative and dynamic plots which had inspired the foundation of streaming services in Turkey to fulfill this demand.

4.4.4 Progress of Digital Technology and Dark Side of the Internet

At the end of 20th-century technology of CD (compact disk) became popular, promising new way of data storage after floppy disk. This technology deeply impacted the entertainment industries. Music and film industries found a new medium to sell their content and the result in terms of consumer demand didn’t disappoint them. After VCR technology which dominated the 1980s and created new a market for movies, VCD (video compact disk) was the second challenge for theatres on losing their audience. The technology company Sony presented the first portable CD player named Discman which had spread to the world quickly, functioning as the Walkman of analog years in the previous century. At the beginning of the 2000s, VCD technology was transformed into a more developed version named DVD (digital versatile disk), providing more qualified use. The resolution of images was higher which made the watching of motion pictures more comfortable. People who spend on cassettes a few decades ago had started to buy

DVDs which were being added to technology garbage of today. As Lotz (2014, p.54) points out, audience's control over television had increased with these technologies "first in, then out of home", the time and space to consume the content could vary with different options "digital video recorders (DVRs), DVDs, electronic programming guides (EPGs), digital cable boxes, and laptops, smartphones, tablets expanded convenient uses of television."

As the data storage technology progresses in a hypnotizing speed, the high prices of these technologies caused the emergence of illegally copied versions of licensed content which are named as 'pirate'. Pirate consuming attracted especially young people who have less money. In Turkey, pirate VCDs or DVDs were being sold in the street market or illegal stores with very little prices and it continued for years which actually did harm for the industry at the beginning of the 2000s. In the years 2005 and 2006, the Turkish State had started a struggle to end the 'pirate'. In January of 2006, Yalçın Uçar the owner of a firm named Uçar CD licensed from Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism to copy CDs in an illegal way, was arrested due to his firm's pirate CD production. He was the first manufacturer who sentenced to jail about pirate. The police found more than 1 million pirate CD in the warehouse of the firm ("Korsan CD'ciye ilk ceza" 2006).

The popularity of CD and DVD technology ended when online streaming and downloading became possible in the following years.

The possibility of streaming media really only started in the 1990s with the proliferation of personal computers. A further step arrived with the technology that offered enough CPUs (central processing units) and bandwidth (a speed minimally of 2 Mbit/s or bit rates) to keep the video or audio from buffering. Then Adobe Flash standardized the streaming formats as well as the method of delivering commercial media to personal computers connected to the internet. And HTML5 – the central markup language used for constructing and displaying web content – was adopted. (Shattuc 2020, p. 145, 146)

Those years, foreign movies and TV series used to be reached in an illegal way. For instance, *Lost*, a TV series of American Broadcasting Company channel (ABC) was released by Digiturk in Turkey. People who are not subscribers of Digiturk mostly reached the series by pirate DVDs. The other way to watch *Lost* was downloading it from internet which was also illegal. According to Kesirli-Unur (2016, p.102) one of the reasons for illegal downloading in Turkey can be explained with the delay on the official

release days of popular television series in Turkish VODs which they make the viewers have to wait for months. On the other hand, VODs in Turkey do broadcast these contents after regulating / re-editing them according to censorship of RTÜK which make the audience prefer to stay away from VODs and download the shows illegally. Strangelove (2015, p.49) clarifies the two forms of television and film piracy via internet as:

Downloading a movie typically takes a few minutes or longer while streaming a movie has the movie begin within a few seconds. Both methods tend to use peer-to-peer (P2P) systems such as BitTorrent. These two modes of accessing legitimate and illegal sources of content generate the majority of Internet traffic. Files range in size from approximately 700 megabytes for a movie to 10 or more gigabytes for files that contain an entire television series. The two most pirated shows of 2011, Dexter and Game of Thrones, saw higher levels of piracy than the actual number of legitimate television viewers. Sometimes piracy can create an illegitimate audience that is larger than the actual television audience.

Managing control over illegal content consumption is harder than it seems. Besides being free, easy and fast, the popularity of piracy can also be explained by providing the way of socialization for the users of piracy services (Ibid., p.49,50). Besides the interaction provided by P2P services, Lobato (2019, p.21) points out that young audiences used to share the downloaded content with their friends via USB sticks, cloud storage, and Bluetooth transfers. They also follow the posts of each other to learn about the recommendations.

Another illegal way to reach the movies and series are the pirate web sites which provide users the content free. These websites have various names, whose financial sources are mostly on digital advertisement shown on the pages, including illegal bet games. In hundreds of these kinds of websites, movies, and series from all over the world are being shared without the permission of their production companies. In 2017, Nabi Avcı, former minister of Culture and Tourism had declared that the ones who watch movies from these illegal websites would be punished. (“Bakan açıkladı! İnternette film izleyenlere kötü haber” 2017) However, any effective sanction was not applied to close the websites yet. They are still open for the audience who do not prefer to pay for the content they demand. Turkey-based pirate websites is using the gaps in the application of Law No: 5651 which is ‘Law for Regulating the Publications on the Internet and Suppression of Crimes Committed on such Publications’¹. Law No 5651 includes crimes such as “incitement to suicide, sexual abuse of children, facilitation of the use of narcotics, provision of

¹ <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2007/05/20070523-1.htm>

substances harmful to the health, obscenity, prostitution, facilitation of gambling, the crimes against Atatürk, betting/gambling”. Obligations of users declared by Law No 5651, differ for content providers and host providers. According to the law, host providers have no obligation to control the content of the website, but they are obliged to remove the content if they are informed that the content is against the law. Content providers are more responsible when they are compared with the host providers, and they again have to remove the illegal content if they are informed with legal orders.

The copyright declaration of two Turkey-based pirate content provider websites are shown below. While *hdfilmcehennemi* defines itself as a content provider and claims that their contents are being uploaded by the members of the website, *unutulmazfilmler* defines itself as a host provider which makes it seem less responsible. In both of these declarations, it is mentioned that, if they are informed that the content has copyright and it is being shared illegally via legal orders, these contents would be removed in the following two days.

Figure 4. 10 Copyright note of hdfilmcehennemi

hd film cehennemi 5651 sayılı kanuna göre içerik sağlayıcıdır. Sitemizdeki videolar üyelerimiz tarafından yüklenmektedir. Sitemizde yer alan videolardan herhangi bir telif hakkına ihlal ettiğini düşünüyorsanız, bize tasohas@yandex.com adresinden gerekli yasal belgelerle müracaat etmeniz halinde 2 iş günü içerisinde söz konusu içerik kaldırılacaktır. | If you think some videos is copyrighted, send us email and allow us 2 working days to delete the video. | hdfilmcehennemi | Hd Film İzle - Film izle - hdfilmcehennemi - hdfilmcehennemi1 - hdfilmcehennemi2 |

Source: <https://www.hdfilmcehennemi.com/> (accessed 23 March 2020)

Figure 4. 11 Copyright note of unutulmazfilmler

TELİF HAKKI
unutulmazfilmler.pw, 5651 sayılı yasada tanımlanan yer sağlayıcı olarak hizmet vermektedir. Telif hakkına konu olan eserlerin yasal olmayan bir biçimde paylaşıldığını ve yasal haklarının çiğnendiğini düşünen hak sahipleri veya meslek birlikleri, **iletişim** sayfasından bize ulaşabilirler.

Source: <https://unutulmazfilmler.pw/> (accessed 23 March 2020)

The most significant technological progress which leads these pirate websites was about the speed of internet. Technology which increased the internet speed and decreased the file size without losing the quality of resolution (small bandwidths), made streaming a movie or a series possible. As a contradictory consequence, this improvement had also paved the way for streaming services and it can be predicted that the demand for illegal downloading which requires internal or external data storage had diminished. Moreover, being able to consume content via internet saved the audience from the dependence of physical components such as DVD or Blu-ray, etc.

Strangelove (2015, p.55) mentions that audiences all over the world wish to reach the contents recently released in foreign countries instantly. With the impact of social media or online forums, people learn about a popular movie or a series at the same time with the citizens of the country where that particular content was produced and as a result, they want to access it as soon as possible as the local audience of that content and use VPN (Virtual Private Network). VPN is defined in the official website of Cisco as “an encrypted connection over the Internet from a device to a network. The encrypted connection helps ensure that sensitive data is safely transmitted. It prevents unauthorized people from eavesdropping on the traffic and allows the user to conduct work remotely.” Before the Netflix TR met the Turkish audience in January of 2016, it was possible to subscribe to Netflix U.S. by using VPN technology. However, Netflix had interrupted access by using VPN by the end of February 2016. “Netflix’s new proxy detection system was building up a dynamic database of IP addresses it determined were associated with VPNs and then blocking them all” (Lobato 2019, p.104). Netflix’s strategy of blocking access by VPN can be explained with the licenses of contents that change from country to country.

As a result, it can be argued that illegal downloading or using of VPN by the audiences who want to access foreign content had been inspiring for the foundation of streaming services in Turkey.

4.5 STREAMING SERVICES IN TURKEY

Viewing habits of the audience in Turkey have changed with the introduction of streaming services in 2016. These services which offer foreign films and television series were embraced by a group of audience who demand content having diversity and complexity in their narratives as well as providing cinematic aesthetic. As Pearson (2007, pp. 244, 245) notes, “narrative complexity” is the “hallmark of the quality television” in the post-television era, which made the television and cinema inseparable. Ellis (1992, p.224) explains the reason why television and cinema need each other as below.

Cinema needs TV to provide a certain general basis from which its particular creations can be understood. TV needs cinema to provide it with prototypes, to incite new kinds of work. The industrial production of TV tends towards repetition at the expense of innovation. One of the roles that Cinema and broadcast TV have developed, over the last quarter century, both forms of coexistence and forms of divergence. Within cinema, traditional mass entertainment forms have continued to operate, some with considerable financial success. Overall, however, cinema work has become more fragmentary, offering possibilities that broadcast TV cannot or will not provide. Sometimes, it is precisely because cinema has pioneered a means of representation that broadcast TV can then take it up. In this sense, cinema is rather more on the side of innovation than broadcast TV can be.

When the local contents of Turkish streaming services are evaluated, directors of the series which were appreciated at most like *Masum (Innocence)* and *Şahsiyet (Persona)* are the ones who have a background as art-house directors. However, it is not possible to say that these services adopt completely new production methods. For instance, they mostly work with production companies which also dominate television industry for a long time. According to Lotz (2014, p.275) the production companies and media moguls are still important due to their functions as gatekeepers in the post television era. However, they need to readjust their “relationships and control of cultural production” to guarantee their survival in the upcoming years which will be shaped by the audience whose viewing habits and tastes are changing. Kesirli-Unur (2016, p.66) contributes by pointing out the impact of globalization on the local media systems which make them have to fulfill the required reforms and technological improvements.

Last year, streaming services in Turkey had been threatened by RTÜK about possible censorship for the use of nudity, alcohol, and cigarette that would limit their freedom on storytelling which is their only bullet while they are competing with television and cinema industry. Media professionals reacted negatively and criticized such an attempt that would harm the industry by hindering the efficient use of a new medium and possible investments.

Figure 4.12 Cem Yılmaz teasing with censorship for internet



Source: [instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com) (accessed 03 May 2020)

As the rumors continue about upcoming restrictions, a new regulation had been declared in August of 2019 and these services became obliged to buy a license to continue streaming which costs 100.000 Turkish Liras (“İnternet televizyonlarına RTÜK denetimi geldi” 2019). Besides buying license, streaming services begin to use ‘viewer age range smart signs’ for each content, however, a kind of censorship that the industry member had worries about has not been applied until today.

If the change in the post-television era is evaluated in terms of the generational shift in the audience, it can be concluded that young viewers who have been familiar with computer using, do not aim to relax by consuming audiovisual content, as the traditional broadcast television audience do. The way they prefer to relax is making their mind busy with a different subject than the ones belong to their life. What they wish is not peace

which is offered by the flow of broadcast television which mostly have smiling faces, instead, they wish excitement, to experience extraordinary experiences via the characters of the series or films.

When the most popular foreign series of last two decades among Turkish young audience like *Criminal Minds* (2005–), *Prison Break* (2005–2017), *Dexter* (2006–2013), *Breaking Bad* (2008–2013), *The Mentalist* (2008–2015), *Sherlock* (2010–), *Person of Interest* (2011–2016), *True Detective* (2014–) are considered, it can be seen that the most popular genre is crime drama, which is followed by fantasy dramas like *Lost* (2004-2010), *Supernatural* (2005-), *The Walking Dead* (2010-), *Game of Thrones* (2011-2019). Sitcoms like *How I Met Your Mother* (2005-2014) and *The Big Bang Theory* (2007-2019) had also been very popular among Turkish young audience, but the number of series from comedy genre are not high as crime dramas or fantasies.

The impact of the genre distribution of the most popular foreign series mentioned above can be related to the distribution of genres local contents of streaming services in Turkey. The presence of young audience who had been unhappy with the content provided by the traditional television in Turkey had been visible with the release of *Behzat Ç.* in 2010 and it became clearer when the series begin to use internet as an alternative medium while dealing with the censorship of RTÜK on alcohol or swears. Unsurprisingly the same group of audience who knew Dexter, Walter White (*Breaking Bad*) or Behzat, then became the users/subscribers of streaming services had shown the greatest interest to the crime drama genre.

Table 4. 25 Genres of the Streaming services series between 2017 - 2020

	Crime	Comedy	Drama	Fantastic	Horror
BLU TV	<i>Masum (Innocent)</i>	<i>Dudullu Postası (Dudullu Post)</i>	<i>7 Yüz (7Faces)</i>		<i>Sahipli (Possessed)</i>
	<i>Bozkır (Steppe)</i>	<i>Bartu Ben (It's me,Bartu)</i>		<i>Yaşamayan lar (The Ones Who Do Not Live)</i>	
	<i>Sıfır 1 (Zero 1)</i>	<i>Aynen Aynen (Exactly)</i>			
	<i>Behzat Ç.</i>				
PUHU TV	<i>Şahsiyet (Persona)</i>	<i>Jet Sosyete (Jet Set)</i>	<i>Fi (& Çi)</i>		
	<i>Dip (Base)</i>				
NETFLIX TR				<i>Hakan: Muhafız (The Protector)</i>	
				<i>Atiye (The Gift)</i>	

4.5.1 BLU TV

In January 2016, the first streaming service of Turkey named: Blu TV had been launched by Doğan Media. Before Blu TV became an independent service, it was the online service of D-Smart, the VOD platform of Doğan Media, which allows subscribers to reach the content via internet under the name of D-Smart Blu (Kuburlu, 2016).

In its first period until the release of its first original series *Masum (Innocence)*, Blu TV offered foreign films and series with Turkish dubbing and subtitle options, besides the archive of Kanal D which is also mainstream TV channel owned the same media

company. It is an SVOD (Subscription Video-on-Demand) based on monthly subscription including the first one-week free-trial, whose price was 6.90 TL in the year 2016, and it's up to date price is 19.90 TL and the free trial is for one month. Subscribers of Blu TV can reach the whole content without ads.

One year later it's launching, Blu TV released its first original local content named *Masum (Innocent)*. The service did not adopt the release strategy of Netflix which allows binge-watching and released the eight episodes of *Masum* week by week. The genre of the series was crime-action and it made the audience wait for the next episode with great curiosity and keep their attention to the series and also to Blu TV. *Masum (Innocent)* was adapted from a theater play named Bayrak written by Berkun Oya. Oya was again the creator of the series. The cast of the series including very popular and experienced names as Haluk Bilginer, Nur Sürer, Ali Atay, Okan Yalabık and Serkan Keskin contributed to the interest of the audience to the series. The director of *Masum* was Seren Yüce who also made art-house movies like *Çoğunluk (Majority)* and *Rüzgarda Salınan Nilüfer (The Swaying Waterlily)*.

After its first series *Masum (Innocent)*, Blu TV did not wait too long and released the second series named *Sahipli (Possessed)* which belongs to the horror genre and has eleven episodes. ("BluTV'den korku dizisi" 2017) It was directed by Alper Mestçi, known with his popular horror movies like *Musallat (2007)* and *Siccin (2014)* having sequel films. However, *Sahipli* could not achieve popularity as *Masum* did. It can be argued that the result it gained had impacted the following contents to exclude the horror genre.

A web-series named *Sıfır Bir (Zero One)* which was a local project produced in Adana, having inexperienced cast from local people of the city, and was broadcasted on Youtube had been transferred to Blu TV since its third season (Erdal 2018). As Arslan & Tetik (forthcoming) highlight, the transformation that the series had experienced as "the switch from a loyal lower-class young male audience demographic to BluTV's more educated upper-middle and upper-class demographic forced the showrunners to revise the series." Visually speaking, it lost its "authentic visual vocabulary" when it was filmed more professionally with a higher budget.

The next project of Blu TV had been *7Yüz (7 Faces)* which has seven independent episodes from different genres. It was released in September of 2017 (“7 Yüz'ün yayın tarihi belli oldu!” 2017). The themes of these episodes like a medicine that can erase the pain of love, or making the self-confidence a buyable thing made the series be compared with Netflix’s *Black Mirror*.

The fifth local series of Blu TV had been a comedy, named *Dudullu Postası (Dudullu Post)* that was directed by Onur Ünlü who also directed *Leyla ile Mecnun*. The first one of its thirteen episodes was released in February of 2018. The series was adapted from the cartoon series of Serkan Yılmaz, published previously in the humor magazine Penguen. Despite the popularity of its director and its cast among the young audience, *Dudullu Postası* could not manage to become popular as expected.

The first fantasy series named *Yaşamayanlar (The Ones Who do not Live)* which is based on the fight among vampires and humans living in Istanbul had been the next project of the service and released in September of 2018 (Ceylan 2018). The two leading actors of the series were television stars Elçin Sangu and Kerem Bursin. However, the series had been the second disappointment of Blu TV with the audience’s negative response to local vampires.

In October of 2018, the sixth series: *Bartu Ben (It’s me, Bartu)* was released (“Bartu Küçükçağlayan'ın Bartu Ben dizisi başlıyor” 2018). The series was a self-reflective comedy, including Bartu Küçükçağlayan as the leading character, and was directed by Tolga Karaçelik who is the director of art-house films like *Kelebekler (Butterflies)* (2018), *Sarmaşık (Ivy)* (2015). The series was criticizing the television industry in Turkey via a minor celebrity’s worries about his career. Different from traditional television, it involves sexuality and realistically constructed LGBT characters. However, series director Karaçelik notes the self-censorship mechanism he had to deal with as a result of producer’s anxieties about provoking governmental institutions and being punished, which hinder total freedom (Yörükoğlu, 2019, p.35,36).

Next month, another crime drama named *Bozkır (Steppe)* met the audience of Blu TV for the first time. Due to belonging to a non-risky genre, focusing on child abuse and murders, the series had managed to attract the audience. The writer of *Bozkır* was Levent Cank

who is an experienced cartoonist, and it was directed by Bahadır Ince who has a background as director of the television series.

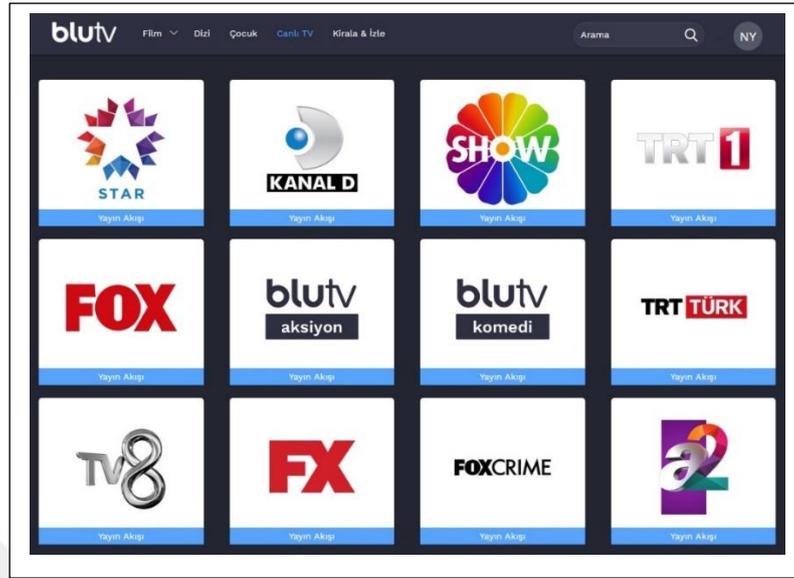
The second transfer of Blu TV from Youtube had been *Aynen Aynen (Exactly)* which is a sitcom, based on daily conversations of a couple mostly on relationships. Having a duration about ten minutes makes the series differ from the other contents of the services (“Youtube’da yayınlanan Aynen Aynen, BluTV’ye transfer oldu” 2019).

Moreover, Blu TV had made a transfer from television by releasing the fourth season of *Behzat Ç.* which has been rumored to be produced as a web series since it was ended in 2013. The first episode of the nine was met the audience in July of 2019 and as soon as the fourth season finished, the arrival of the fifth season has been a riddle which was then clarified by the declaration of Blu TV. It was announced that a new series named *Saygı (Respect)* which will have the evil of *Behzat Ç.*: Ercüment Çözer (Nejat İşler) as the protagonist is planning to be made rather than the fifth season of *Behzat Ç.* (Papuççıyan, 2019).

Blu TV has been offering more local content in number when it is compared with Puhu TV and Netflix TR. The most preferred genre is crime dramas among these contents. The first series released at the beginning of 2020 was *Sokağın Çocukları (Kids of the Street)* which is again a crime drama made by the team of *Sıfır Bir*, and a new crime drama named *Alef* was released in April. It can be argued that Blu TV has discovered the demand of its audience for crime dramas and prefers to follow a non-risky way in its early era.

Different from the original/local contents, Blu TV has been updating itself as a service functioning as digital television. It has been offering ‘Live TV’ option including Turkish mainstream channels, besides news and music channels. In addition, two channels: Blu TV Action and Blu TV Comedy, do offer films both foreign and local from its archive in a flow which makes the audience get rid of the obligation of choosing among various options.

Figure 4.13 Live TV interface of Blutv.com



Source: blutv.com (accessed 16 March 2020)

As mentioned before in the second chapter, Ellis (2000) discusses the ‘choice fatigue’ caused by the ‘time famine’ of the human of the digital era. He points out the therapeutic role of broadcast television which provides the viewer a time to feel relax in front of it, without taking any responsibility. What Blu TV aims with these two channels: Blu TV Action and Blu TV Comedy to satisfy its users who wish to reach the contents that are not on broadcast television but being released in a flow.

Finally, the last option of Blu TV that should be mentioned here is the option of ‘Rent & Watch’ to rent the films which were lately released in theaters. While its subscribers can reach these contents by renting them for 4.90 TL, the viewers who are not can rent the content for 5.90 TL.

4.5.2 PUHU TV

The Turkish second streaming service: Puhu TV, owned by the Doğuş Media, which also owns Star TV, had been launched in December 2016 (“Doğuş Grubu’nun online kanalı Puhutv yayın hayatına başladı” 2016). On the contrary to Blu TV, Puhu TV is an AVOD

(Advertisement Based Video on Demand) asking no payment or subscription from their users, instead, it shows ads during the content which user has no option to choose free ads format. Joining as a member allows users to make their own lists according to their preferences and they can continue to watch a film or series from the minute they abandoned to watch.

The first original series of Puhu TV had been *Fi*, which was an adaptation of a Turkish best-seller book written by Azra Kohen. *Fi* was a drama which also shows characteristics of romance and thriller. Its twelve episodes were released week by week, starting at the end of March in 2017. The series had reached a very high number of audiences. According to the data shared, it reached 50 million play, by 8 million unique users, with its first nine episodes which means that it has been watched more than most of the television's rating champion series ("Fİ 50 milyon izlendi!" 2017). Director of the series is Mert Baykal, who also has experience on film and television series, and the leading cast includes popular actors Ozan Güven, Mehmet Günsür and Serenay Sarıkaya. Different from the stereotypes in television, the leading character Can Manay, who is a psychologist but has psychological problems which makes him lose control is welcomed by the audience. In the days its first episodes were released, +18 scenes which were not possible to be broadcasted on television had a great impact on the series' popularity. Nevertheless, relating the success of production to these scenes would be not fair. The second season of *Fi* was released under the name of *Çi* which had also final episode.

One year later than the release of its first series, Puhu TV released its second original content *Şahsiyet (Persona)* which is a crime drama and has Haluk Bilginer as the leading actor who was also in *Masum* of Blu TV. Director of the series is Onur Saylak who started his career as an actor and then made his first cinema film *Daha (More)* in 2017, adapted from the book of Hakan Günday which has the same name. Hakan Günday is also the writer of *Şahsiyet*, which makes the series second co-working of him with Onur Saylak. *Şahsiyet* as a series had a unique experience when it is compared to other series made for online television. It became popular after it was completely released and the audience had appreciated its creative narrative and high-quality production, which brought it international popularity. In the 47th International Emmy Awards, its leading actor Haluk Bilginer had won the best performance by an Actor ("Haluk Bilginer, Şahsiyet dizisiyle Emmy ödülü kazandı!" 2019).

Puhu TV had released its third series named *Dip (Base)* which is a crime drama, one week after the release of *Şahsiyet*'s first episode. The series having eight episodes was directed by Uygur Kutlu and written by Başar Başaran.

After the release of *Dip*, Puhu TV did not continue to offer new original series, since it transferred a sitcom named *Jet Sosyete (Jet-set)* from TV8. The third sit-com of Gülse Birsell as a writer, *Jet Sosyete (Jet-set)* started on Star TV in February of 2018 and it changed its channel due to low rating results it had on Star TV. However, it could not manage to survive among the television series which last more than three hours despite the change of channel. The characteristics of the sitcom genre do not let it last more than an hour. Due to having definite locations and being based on dialogues, sitcom can not catch the attention of the audience longer. Unsurprisingly the series had reached the right medium for it when it was transferred to Puhu TV, which allows it to be released in 50 minutes and has a more dynamic narrative (“Jet Sosyete Puhutv’de hızlı başladı” 2019).

4.5.3 NETFLIX TR

Netflix met the audience in Turkey in January of 2016 as Netflix TR, without the options of Turkish subtitles or dubbing which were added in the following period (“Netflix Türkiye’de yayına başladı” 2016). Before Netflix has arrived officially to Turkey, audience who has familiar with VPN could manage to reach the service of Netflix in the United States. However, Netflix interrupted the use of VPN at the time when it started to become global.

According to Jenner (2018, pp.193,194) who defines Netflix as a “transnational broadcaster”, it functions as a “vehicle for cultural exchange” by positioning itself between the national and the transnational, and focusing on the “grammar of transnationalism”. The number of non-English ‘Netflix Original’ series had increased since Netflix adopted the policy of widening its scope all over the world. The company “has invested more than \$1.75 billion in 90 original European productions, including licensed programming, original content, and co-productions by 2017”. (Shuttuc 2020, p.159)

Release of Netflix TR's first original content *Hakan: Muhafız (The Protector)* made the audience wait for a while after the information about the production was announced, and the first episode was released in December of 2018 ("Netflix'in Türkiye'deki İlk Orijinali Hakan: Muhafız, 14 Aralık'ta Yayınlanacak" 2018). This fantasy drama which was not a common genre among Turkish television series and cinema films was a new experience for the Turkish audience. However, talking about a great admiration of the audience in Turkey to *Hakan: Muhafız* is not possible. After the first season, Netflix announced that the audience in the countries of South America and Africa had been the ones who watched the series mostly ("Netflix açıkladı: Hakan: Muhafız en çok hangi ülkelerde izlendi?" 2019). When the narrative and production design of the series, especially the preferences for its cast are considered, it is pretty clear that Netflix mostly considers the international audience, rather than the audience of its own country. Creating a superhero from Çağatay Ulusoy who is an ex-model actor is a strategic decision to attract the international audience who are familiar to him from his television series *Medcezir*, which was sold in many countries in the previous years.

Netflix had released the second Turkish series named *Atiye (The Gift)* one year later than *Hakan: Muhafız*, in December of 2019. It was again a fantasy drama that was offered to the Turkish audience. However, it managed to become more popular among the local audience due to its story based on Göbeklitepe: a lately discovered archeological site in southeastern Turkey. Netflix's strategy about reaching to the most audience as possible can again be seen in the preference of its leading actor as Beren Saat, who had been one of the most famous Turkish female stars in the countries in the Middle East, Asia and South America by the television series *Aşk-ı Memnu* and *Fatmagül'ün Suçu Ne?*

Lobato (2019) points out that the preferences of audience about local contents vary from country to country. He gives the examples of India, where the audience would probably not demand local content which is already being offered in maximum amount, while the Anglophone countries take the advantage of language factor. In addition, Netflix is "a mainstream middle-class product" in the United States, only requires an internet connection that can be bought by a large part of society. On the other hand, it becomes a privileged service for the ones who live in other countries. Use of it is "limited to cosmopolitan upper classes whose tastes may not be indicative of those of their fellow citizens." At this point, Lobato asks that if a niche service that is reachable only for a

small part of the society should provide local content based on the culture of that country. According to him “calls for Netflix to behave more like a national television service may be somewhat naive, and possibly counterproductive.” (p.95)

Different from the arguments about the necessities or the demand for local contents provided by Netflix, Broe (2019, p.242) emphasis the role of series made in the United States on shaping impacting the way of production and narration in the works of other countries. According to Broe:

This mature period of American seriality, though, has seen the form spread across the globe, with Netflix itself now available in the majority of countries. The result has been a blending of established patterns of cultural history and storytelling in each of these countries with aspects of the American model with which they now attempt to compete. Each “takes what they like and leaves the rest” from that model, modifying, contesting, and disrupting it to produce their own distinctive series.

On the contrary, Shuttuc (2020, p.156) underlines the strategy of Netflix on considering the underrepresented groups based on race and gender, which result in diversity in its library. Netflix’s strategy can be an example for other countries to adopt wider perspectives while creating their narratives. For instance, Blu TV took the risk and tried different subgenre in its first year by releasing a vampire series based in Istanbul but then quit focusing on globally popular genres and began follows its own path and produce series having highly ‘local’ discourses and documentaries reflecting the culture of subaltern groups in Turkey.

5. CASE STUDIES

In this chapter six local series produced as the original contents of Blu TV, Puhu TV and Netflix TR (two from each) will be analyzed. When the genres of the contents of Turkish streaming services: Blu TV and Puhu TV are studied, it can be seen that crime drama comes forward as the dominant genre among the whole contents. The four of the series produced by Turkish streaming services, were selected according to their genres which are both crime drama. On the other hand, Netflix TR had released only two series until the end of 2019, and these two series that were selected as the cases, are both belong to the fantasy genre. The feature that these six series selected as cases, do share is having ‘one hero / single protagonist’ and ‘an omnipotent evil’.

In order to identify the genres of films, the similarities are considered which are “comparable plots or formulaic narrative structures; typical situations; stereotypical characters; analogous themes and patterns; repeated iconography; characteristic music; stylistic or formal conventions of mise-en-scène, cinematography and editing.” (Andrews 2014, p.9) In the analysis of these series, first of all, their genres will be identified, and their generic conventions will be studied in three sections. ‘*Plot & Characters*’ section includes a summary to give a general outline of the series, and an analysis of the main characters (as stereotypes of their genres). ‘*Style and Setting*’ section gives details about editing (such as chronology in narration), cinematography (camera work, lighting, etc.) filming locations and the use music. Finally, ‘*Themes and Ideology*’ section identifies the main themes of the narratives, discusses gender and / or class conflicts, and the distrust in the police and juridical system.

5.1 MASUM (INNOCENT) (BLU TV)

“It’s this big, dark cloud that doesn’t seem like it’s going away.”

Blu TV has introduced its first original content *Masum (Innocent)* on 27 January 2017, one year after its launch (Çakar 2017). The series spanned eight episodes by weekly releases – each has durations from 44 to 59 minutes. The creator of the series was Berkun Oya, who is also the writer of a theater play named *Bayrak (Flag)* which *Masum* was adapted from. *Bayrak* had been a popular play throughout the years it was performed: from 2009 to 2012 and three actors from the cast of the play: Okan Yalabık, Ali Atay and Bartu Küçükçağlayan had also participated in the cast of the series too (Sönmez 2017).

Berkun Oya has also experience as a scriptwriter on television before *Masum* and wrote series like *Son (The End)* in 2012, *İntikam (Revenge)* in 2013, and *Analar ve Anneler (Moms and Mothers)* in 2015. Director of *Masum* is Seren Yüce who is known with art-house movies he made like *Çoğunluk (Majority)* in 2010 and *Rüzgarda Salınan Nilüfer (The swaying Waterlily)* in 2016. It can be claimed that Yüce’s directional career which has no relation to television resulted in *Masum* having cinematic aesthetics. Production of the series was made by D-Productions which has been a part of media establishments of Conglomeration of Doğan.

5.1.1 Generic Conventions

In terms of genre, *Masum (The Innocent)* can be categorized under crime/detective drama genre, while its subgenre is psychological thriller which makes the series differ from a classic ‘whodunit’. In *Masum*, the criminals, victims, and their folks all suffer from emotional dilemmas which create a moral ambiguity, and all of them are stuck in between situations which create a great inescapability for them. Moreover, *Masum* uses flashback scenes frequently which means its narration does not have a chronological storyline. All these features of the series make it have noir elements both in its style and theme. As

Neale (2000, p.164) points out, flashback, voiceover, and highly contrasted lighting are stylistic the features of noir, while the concerns in noir narratives are constructed upon:

the focus on mentally, emotionally and physically vulnerable characters, the interest in psychology, the culture of distrust marking relations between male and female characters, and the downbeat emphasis on violence, anxiety, death, crime and compromised morality.

The word: ‘masum’ means ‘innocence’ in Turkish and the name of the series refers to the lack of a purely innocent character in the series, even in the world it depicts. The tension between the parents and children, or between wives and husbands is always high, and to love or being loved becomes a risk. *Masum* also underlines the impossibility of a rescue from its nightmarish world by not punishing the evil in the end, despite punishing all victims. The protagonist of the story is a retired police commissioner who helps his two sons on covering the crime they committed and get rid of the evidences. As Cobb (1992, pp.207,209) points out, noir characters used to be constructed as “unsympathetic”.

Audience feels little sympathy for the characters and their situations because they are nor likable personalities and they do forbidden things. If movie audience cannot feel sympathy for the characters, then they care little about what happens to them and cannot connect to the story on an emotional level. So, the keys to linking the audience to Noir characters are understanding and intrigue. A viewer may not especially like a Noir protagonist, but if there is enough understanding of why a character is the way he is, of how he got to this wretched place to his life, then the audience will be interested in what happens in the end.

On the other hand, in film noir criminal used to be an “ordinary citizen” instead of a “professional” criminal. This person is “drawn into crime by accident or some strange, unforeseen combination of factors” (Fluck 2009, p.289). *Masum*’s criminal does not plan to commit a crime, however, everything happens all of a sudden when he meets an unexpected situation. Furthermore, the unrest created in film noir mostly depends on plot twists rather than violence (Borde & Chaumeton 1955, p.23). In the surprising final of *Masum*, the real identity of a secondary character is revealed and the viewer’s opinion about the criminal is affected at the last minute.

5.1.1.1 Plot and characters

Plot

The police commissar Yusuf Namlı (Ali Atay) is sent to his hometown by his chief Selahattin (Mehmet Özgür) to investigate the case of a traffic accident resulted in the death of two. One of these dead people was Yusuf's childhood friend Taner (Serkan Keskin) however his body could not be found in the sea where his car had fallen from the cliff in the accident, while another body which belongs to the wife of Taner's brother, was found. Yusuf meets Taner's brother Tarık (Okan Yalabık) in the town as a result of coincidence and Tarık takes him to his father's house. Tarık and Taner's father Cevdet Bayrakçı (Haluk Bilginer) was a police retiree and also Yusuf's teacher from Police Academy. Cevdet gets surprised when he sees his old student and welcomes him. However, her wife Nermin (Nur Sürer) behaves coldly towards Yusuf and talks as if she wants him to go away. Yusuf realizes that Cevdet and Nermin are hiding a secret. Yusuf and Cevdet chat all night long, and Cevdet mostly speaks about Tarık's difficult situation due to his wife's and brother's death. He tells that Tarık used to drink to cope with his suffering. Actually, Tarık has schizophrenia and is having hallucinations. When Cevdet and Nermin learn that Yusuf was investigating a homicide case about Emel Bayrakçı (Tülin Özer) who was Tarık's wife, Nermin calls her son Taner who is actually alive and hiding in the woods and tells him to run away. Later, the story continues mostly with flashbacks to reveal the mystery of the traffic accident which was already a plan to hide Taner's murder of Emel that occurred before the accident.

The pasts of Tarık and Taner brothers are full of traumas. Firstly Tarık, the smaller one has to cope with his mental illness throughout his life. He experienced psychotic episodes in his military service which resulted in his early discharge and diagnosed schizophrenia in the mental hospital. However, he hides the truth about his mental illness from his wife Emel which causes problems soon after they married. Tarık shows paranoid behaviors especially about other men as if they want to seduce Emel. He starts to use violence to these strangers which makes Emel feel very worried and talks to Tarık's parents to help her. However, Cevdet and Nermin prefer to deny their son's illness and reject Emel's request. In these days Emel tries to stay away from her husband and she has an affair with

a young man named Selim (Bartu Küçükçağlayan) working in her office. Selim has also an elder sister who is a psychologist and helps Emel about Tarık's illness. Beside Tarık's story, his brother Taner has problems in his marriage with his wife Rüya (İrem Altuğ). Rüya has an affair with another man which Taner is aware of but does not know. Rüya is severely beaten by this man and used to live with bruises on her body which other people think that Taner beats his wife. It is revealed that Taner had accepted the presence of this man before he was married to Rüya and Rüya warned him about the psychopath man whom she could not get rid of. Taner loves his wife, admits this unbearable situation, and hides the truth from everybody including his parents. One day Tarık goes to his brother's empty house and meets with Selim. They start to quarrel and all of a sudden Taner pushes Selim and makes him hit the wall and faint. Taner thinks that he killed Selim accidentally and puts him in his car's luggage and goes to see his father Cevdet and ask for help to get rid of the body. Taner takes the body to bury in the woods, but Selim wakes up and runs away when Taner is digging the grave. In the following days, Emel looks for Selim but cannot find him. She starts to suspect her husband due to his envious manners. Emel and Tarık start to quarrel about Selim's disappearance, but Tarık denies Emel's accusations. He starts to peck at Emel, then Emel falls and hits her head to the TV unit and faints. Tarık thinks that he killed his wife and runs away. He arrives at his father's house in despair and regret. His brother Taner goes to take Emel's dead body. However, Emel starts to cough and wakes up when Taner was trying to carry her out of the house. After an argument, they calm down and talk about Tarık's illness. Emel tells about her boyfriend Selim's disappearance to Taner and mentions her decision about going to the police to make her husband get arrested for Selim's murder. Taner gets confused and all of a sudden chokes Emel to make her silence and save his ill brother. He takes the body and meets his father in the woods. They put Emel's body to the front seat of Taner's car and let the car fall from the cliff. Before he was found by the police commissioner Yusuf, Taner finds Selim and kill him too. He visits his father's house before running away and going abroad. However, Tarık comes out with a gun in his hand and shoots Taner, then his mother and father, and finally himself. Yusuf arrives at the house and only manages to save Cevdet who does not have deadly wounds. Soon after, Yusuf realizes that the psychopath man who has an affair and beats Taner's wife was his chief Selahattin, and he charged him to find Taner to get rid of him forever.

Characters

Cevdet Bayrakçı, the protagonist of *Masum*, is a retired police commissioner who had a successful career for forty years. He is married and has two sons. As a result of his profession, he is a strict person, however, he is a loving father. Despite his anger due to the troubles his sons made, he cannot give up them and tries his best to save them, even by committing a crime. Film noir questions the concept of guilt by changing the position of a simple citizen into criminal and asks in what kind of conditions a person can be named as 'guilty' (Fluck 2009, p.313). Cevdet admits his crime in a conversation he had with the police commissioner Yusuf working on the case of his son.

Cevdet: "Do you know what a father will do for his kid?"

Yusuf: "Everything."

Cevdet: "Everything."

The ethical problem which is very clear in the answer of Cevdet's question creates the moral ambiguity in the story. Cevdet is a very disappointed and hopeless old man who says about his situation: *"it's this big, dark cloud that doesn't seem like it's going away."* Even though he worked to maintain law and order for years, he became the father of two criminals in the end. Definition of film noir narrative should not be limited to a war between good and evil, and the conflict which is based on "the contradiction in the understanding of morality which creates psychologically impacted individuals" should primarily be considered (Mayer 2007, p.6). Cevdet suffers from the moral dilemma he felt into. He tries to convince himself that he made the right as a father, but he could not manage completely. He needs to drink very often to cope with his anxiety. He tells Yusuf *"Welcome to the madhouse!"* when Yusuf came for the first time and heard the argument between his wife and his small son. As a policeman, he assumes himself and his colleagues exceptional and defines the ones who are not working for the police forces as 'normal' people. He tells Yusuf: *"People cannot handle the pain. Pain is our job, our profession. The ones who give pain, the ones who feel pain... They are all our clients. But it is not like that for normal people."* Cevdet ignores the mental illness of his small son Tarık since his childhood. He believes that having a sick son might harm his reputation as an experienced police chief which means he loves himself more than his children. If he would dare to lose his reputation and let his son have an effective treatment, Tarık would manage to maintain a normal life. It is revealed that he made Tarık's diagnosis

report disappear after Tarık was discharged from his military service. However, his denial affects everybody around him and causes an end for all his family members and two more strangers. His punishment is being the only survivor from Tarık’s massacre and having to continue living as a person who lost all loved ones and his reputation. His wife Nermin is a housewife who used to do housework to keep her mind busy. She mostly has opposite manners towards her husband and son. She does not wear a scarf in her daily life but she performs prayers which means she is a religious person. Nermin’s prayer is shown two times during the eight episodes. Her first prayer scene is followed by Cevdet’s drinking alcohol which underlines the contradiction between the couple.

Figure 5.1 Parents of Bayrakçı Family



Source: Blutv.com Masum Episode 1 (13 March 2020)

They used to argue about their children’s situation and have conflicts that interrupt them to have the right decision, and alcohol is the most common reason which starts their quarrel. According to Nermin, Tarık drinks too much because he takes his father as the role model. She believes that the reason for her son’s misery is alcohol and blames her husband. She tells Cevdet *“You made me the mother of a drunkard.”* When her elder son Taner gets lost, Nermin talks to herself and says *“God, please help my son. Please forgive us. God, we are not bad people.”* On the other hand, she neglects her small son Tarık and ignores his despair. Despite being a religious person who is afraid of her family members’ sins, she does not change her behaviors towards Tarık. Upon Cevdet’s accusation about her motherhood, Nermin does not hesitate to confess her regret about having a son who is mentally ill and she says *“I do not have such an illness in my genes”*.

Yusuf Namlı, the detective of *Masum*, is a police commissioner working in Istanbul who is recently divorced and has a teenage daughter. He wants a second chance from his ex-

wife Feride to get together again. However, he used to be rejected. Actually, he is an honest man who tries to be fair and has kind manners even towards the policemen in a lower rank than him. On the other hand, he has a childhood trauma that haunts him still and causes hallucinations. When Yusuf had to work on the case of Taner and Emel Bayrakçı case, he had to face his unending remorse caused by an accidental murder which he and his close friend Taner Bayrakçı committed when they were small kids. As Sanders (2008, p.98) points out as the examples about the concerns which character formation in noir is based on, “the central issue of troubled past, alienation, rootlessness, and angst” define Yusuf’s personality. As he tries to forget about his crime, he erases his whole childhood memories: the places, the folks, the joy and gladness he had for years, and in the end, he becomes a rootless man who alienated himself. His trauma impacts his whole life and he cannot become the husband and the father as he dreams to be.

Tarık, the small son of Bayrakçı couple, is a man who suffers from schizophrenia since his childhood. He easily gets stressed if he feels himself under pressure or takes responsibility and starts to behave improperly. In the flashbacks, it is revealed that his illness is triggered by his chief commander in the military who has despotic manners. He still has hallucinations and most of the time he assumes himself as if he is still in the military. He reports to his commander he sees or peels potatoes in his room.

Figure 5.2 Hallucinations of Tarık



Source: Blutv.com Masum (13 March 2020)

In addition, he has hallucinations where he sees his mother as a caring and warmhearted woman. He even tells his mother’s face “*I wish I see you only in my dreams*” at a moment when he felt unloved again. After his early discharge from his service, Tarık continues his life and gets married. However, he hides the truth about his illness from his wife Emel.

In the early period of his marriage, he has worries about losing his mental health again but he also worries about turning into a ghost if he starts to use medication for schizophrenia. He confesses his father about losing his sexual potency due to the side effects of the pills. Besides his mental health problems, his confession about an affair he had with another woman also puts his marriage into danger. As a result, he deceives his wife in two ways: by pretending to be a mentally healthy man and a loyal husband. However, the main reason which ruined Tarık's life is his father and mother's denial of his illness. Noirish inescapability used to be provided by the feeling of surrounded by the enemies and there is no safe place left. The most difficult situation for a person is being harmed by the ones from his/her loved ones. In *Masum*, Yusuf becomes the victim of his own family since his childhood. As Dixon (2009, p.4) explains below:

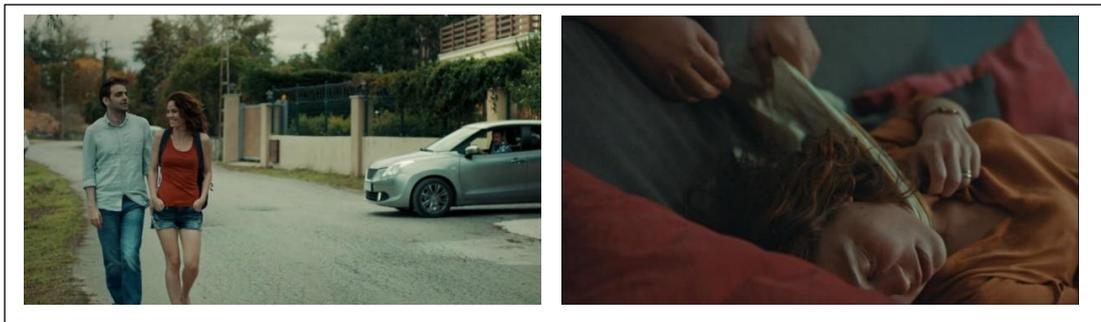
People who are trapped in the world of noir have nobody to trust, not even themselves. The peace in this world can easily vanish and this can be the result of only one wrong decision. People always have to choose the right person, to protect their reputation, not to be cheated or murdered. Even their family members might be dangerous for them and their home cannot provide them a shelter to escape from the enemies outside.

Taner, the elder son of Bayrakçı couple, is a man who lost his self-confidence due to his unusual relationship with his wife Rüyâ. Rüyâ has an affair with another man whom she has known since she was single. Taner also has known their affair before he got married to Rüyâ, He tells that he falls in love with her very much and he patiently waited for the moment that his wife would quit seeing this man. Actually, Rüyâ is in a more complicated situation in which she is beaten severely by the other man and gets bruises all over her body, even on her face. When Taner wants to find the other man and threat him to stop seeing his wife, she used to interrupt Taner which proves that she is afraid of the outcomes of this confrontation. However, he behaves as if he cannot comprehend the abuse Rüyâ had and he reacts as if Rüyâ has a desire for the other man. Instead, Rüyâ lives as the victim of a bully and the probability of being threatened and abused is very clear in her mood and talking. When Taner could not manage to make her wife end her affair, he becomes a man who feels hostile for all women. In the end, he kills his brother's unfaithful wife Emel as a result of his instinct for revenge.

Emel is the femme fatale of *Masum*. Actually, she is an alone young woman in every aspect. She is grown up without a family and she used to miss her father she lost years

ago. When she asked for help about the violent manners of her husband caused by his illness, she is also left alone by her husband's family. Moreover, she is manipulated by a young man named Selim, working in her office who is obsessed with writing a novel about her. Selim abuses her despair and loneliness, manages to make her love himself. In general, femme fatale character, one of the stereotypes of noir, used to have an affair with the hero and ultimately makes him get in trouble (McMahon 2008, p.118). Furthermore, "film noir's constant alignment of the audience with the male point of view becomes problematic in understanding female characters; they remain enigmas to both the male protagonist and to the audience" (Chin 2015, p.35). The Femme fatale of *Masum* is a victimized woman rather than a troublemaker at first. However, her position shifts, when her affair with Selim begin to impact the lives of Taner and Tarık. Even though she has never been aware of Selim's insidious plans and does nothing on purpose to harm anyone, she becomes the classic femme fatale figure, in Taner's aspect, when she confesses her affair with Selim and her decision about reporting her husband Tarık to the police as the suspect for the murder of him. Emel's position in the story remains unclear as a result of instability in the way of her representation. And as Ulusoy (2017, pp.108,109) points out, "in film noir, the only way to dominate the femme fatale is by destroying her" and *Masum* eliminates its femme fatale too, at any cost.

Figure 5.3 Femme Fatale of *Masum*



Source: Blutv.com Masum Episode 7 (13 March 2020)

Selahattin, the evil of the series, is the chief of police in Istanbul, who assigns Yusuf to the Bayrakçı Family case. He is a usual crime drama police chief who used to have aggressive behaviors. However, the final scene reveals that the mysterious psychopath who beats Rüya was him. Actually, some clues about his sadistic manners are mentioned before by Cevdet who worked with him for a long time, knows him very well. Cevdet

calls him once “*Selahattin, the Viagra guy!*” in an interrogation scene when Cevdet was arrested for assisting a crime. These two old friends have an argument and Cevdet insults him by telling: “*You are only good at locking up Russian girls in hotel rooms and beating them!*” Cevdet’s words help Yusuf to discover Selahattin’s secret which made the case come to a deadlock and caused the death of five people.

5.1.1.2 Style and settings

The narration of *Masum* mostly depends on flashback scenes which make it have a complex chronological order. According to Schrader (1972, p.11) as the complexity in chronology rises in noir narrations, the emphasis on the lack of hope and wasted time rises too. Indeed, the parts of flashbacks telling about Taner’s hiding in the woods for a long time explains how much time he wasted before he was found by Yusuf. Besides Taner’s mistake, all characters used to make wrong decisions in their past which cause the loss of time and make their problem get bigger. On the other hand, Tarık’s parents who deny their son’s illness for years and their irresponsible behaviors towards Emel, explain how they lost all chances and hope to have proper lives and to interrupt their terrible end. “The how is always more important than the what” is a noir principle and it is provided by flashbacks that manipulate time. The aim of *Masum* is not making the viewer guess the identity of the murderer by trying to solve the case with a detective in front of the screen, instead, it tries to make the viewer forget about the crime and tell about how a group of people carried on lives which resulted in an end with a massacre.

“Chiaroscuro, expressionistic camera work, dark city, and night settings” are used to be mentioned as the stylistic features of noir (Park 2011, p.26). Different from most of the classic noir dramas which use darkness as the key to create their main atmosphere, the distribution of night and day scenes is balanced in *Masum*.

Figure 5.4 Loy key lighting in *Masum*



Source: Blutv.com *Masum* (13 March 2020)

Furthermore, low key lighting used in night scenes of *Masum* evokes the feeling of being trapped in a nightmarish world that underlines the inescapability of characters. As Ulusoy (2017, p.110) explains, “noir aesthetics have a character that stops action through the use of low-key lighting, makes the character as unattractive as possible, and thus enables the precedence of composition over the player.” In addition, unusual filming methods such as underwater shooting used in the scenes in which Tarık has hallucinations while he was swimming and talking with his dead wife, whose body was found in the car felt to the sea. What *Masum* does not involve is crime scene investigation or forensic examination details which are frequently used in crime dramas. Filming locations were Istanbul and Kocaeli, which are possible to be recognized due to using of key locations of Istanbul like Beyoğlu or Bosphorus, or license plates of Bayrakçı Family’s vehicles belong to Kocaeli. Finally, when the use of music in *Masum* is evaluated, it can be said that background music was not used as a tool to emphasize the mood of the characters. The depiction of the tension in the atmosphere is not required to the assist of music which makes *Masum* have resemblances to an art-house movie that does not lean on music instead of acting and/or composition. However, there is an exceptional sequence at the beginning of the

first episode where a song named *Sevmek İstiyorum* (I Want to Love) is used as the background music while Yusuf was driving to his old home town to solve the missing details of the Bayrakçı Family case. The song which is written by Mehmet Teoman and performed by Erkut Taçkın has lyrics as:

“Where I am coming from? Where I am going to? Where I am? I want to know. I am looking for love. I adore to the beautiful. Am I human? I want to know. I am suffering. I shed tears. Am I in love? I want to know.

Yusuf is a middle-aged divorced man who has childhood traumas still haunting him. His trauma is related with his home town and the memories he wishes to forget makes him feel rootless and lost, he is like a leaf on the wind who cannot able to control his movement which makes the playing song his inner voice while he was returning to the place where he lost his innocence. In addition, the song named *Katip Arzuhalim Yaz Yare Böyle* (Write My Request to My Love) used in the opening credits of *Masum* had contributed to the popularity of the series when it was released. Actually, this song was a well-known folk song written by Pir Sultan Abdal, the Turkish Alevi poet who lived in the 16th century (Gümüş, 2017) and the version used in *Masum* was revised by Okan Kaya from the performance of Turkish female singer Selda Bağcan who has a very unique vocal.

5.1.1.3 Themes and ideology

As a crime drama, the storyline of *Masum* is built on the reopening of a car accident case due to a ‘missing body’, while its theme focusses on male violence against women. The misery of a married woman who is forced to be the mistress of a chief of police, begins to impact others around her indirectly, and her husband who has been innocent in the beginning becomes a man full of hatred towards all women and he turns into the murderer of two.

In terms of gender, *Masum* adopts a patriarchal discourse, by representing the mother as a woman who does not like the wives of her two sons due to their lack of housework skills. Besides the mean mother-in-law figure, the two young women: Emel and Rüya

have a distant relationship and there is no solidarity between them. On the other hand, these two women are victimized in the male-dominated world, they are manipulated, threatened, deceived, hurt, and in the end, one of them is killed, the other one captured by a torturer.

Film noir “narratives structured by a patriarchal logic in which women are always framed as less than men” (Tasker 2013, p.355). Men of the series used to perform masculinity both physically and verbally. When Cevdet has a quarrel with her wife, he humiliates women by complaining about women’s unending speaking. He tells her “*Even we didn’t use such a method like your way of speaking in the tortures.*” Especially Cevdet and Yusuf use swearwords very often. Yusuf uses slang words in his daily conversations and he is warned by his ex-wife Feride not to use them when he is talking to her and their daughter. At the beginning of the first episode, a friend of Yusuf who is also a policeman tells him that he would be the father of a son soon and Yusuf congratulates him by telling “*Well done!*” to emphasize the gender of the child.

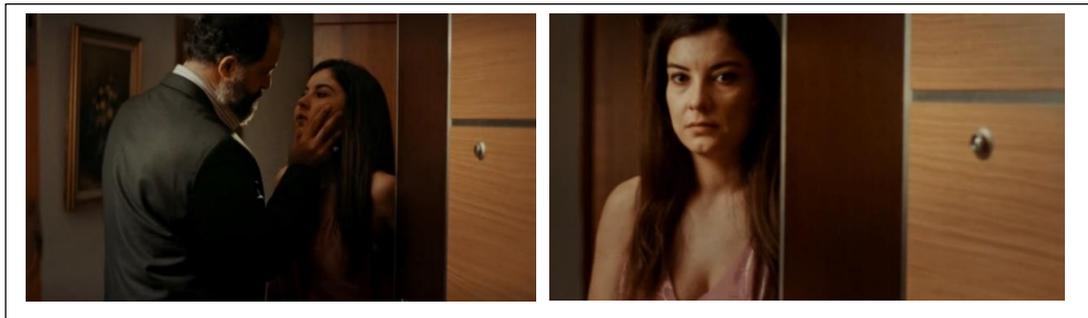
The reason which triggered Taner to choke Emel all of a sudden was not only to silence her about the disappearance of Selim. They had a conversation a few minutes before the murder, and he makes a confession about his wife Rüyâ’s affair with another man. He says “*I’ve become the wife of my wife*” to explain how insufficient he feels as a man and a husband. When Emel confesses her affair with Selim and says “*One can love two at the same time*”, he faces the probability of Rüyâ’s love towards the mysterious man and his instinct for revenge turns to Emel instead of Rüyâ and chokes her to get rid of his pain which is caused by not being a man enough. Taner’s description as being the wife of his wife reflects Taner’s way of thinking about women and necessitates of being a man and husband which requires absolute authority.

Ideologically, *Masum* questions the police legitimacy. Cevdet who is a retired policeman trying to save his two sons from being arrested due to the murders they committed, and he uses all the experience he had as a policeman to get rid of the evidence. Cevdet defends himself by uttering an excuse about ‘being a father’ which creates a moral ambivalence. It can be argued that the more questioning of police legitimacy is made over Selahattin: the chief of police who is the real ‘evil’. As Woodhouse (2001, p.148) explains:

Fictional representations of the police offer a means for society to understand the conflicts and contradictions that involve the upholding of the law and the relationship between the police detective, the criminal and society as a whole. This inevitably raises ideological issues: the conflict between villain and hero can be perceived as conflict between contrasting ideological positions.

Despite his failure in the case, detective Yusuf fulfills the position of a hero in *Masum*, due to both working for maintaining the law and order while being manipulated and employed by the villain Selahattin, who is also responsible from the maintenance of law and order. When Yusuf works on the investigation, his chief Selahattin warns him to be “*more sensitive*” if he is on a case related to someone from the police forces. Yusuf realizes that Cevdet had used his influence on the police and warned Selahattin to close the case. However, Cevdet and Selahattin meet soon after in interrogation room where they argue and Cevdet insults Selahattin about by revealing his dangerous desires which are beating and assaulting women. His words reveal that Cevdet knows Selahattin’s sadistic personality for a long time. However, Selahattin had no punishment since he had started his abuses to women because his power made him untouchable and even, he became the chief of police. The man whose crimes are ignored by Cevdet becomes the main reason for his family’s end. However, Selahattin can save himself in the end once again, moreover, he gets rid of Taner who was trying to save Rüya.

Figure 5.5 Break of 4th wall in the final scene of *Masum*



Source: Blutv.com *Masum* (13 March 2020)

Masum breaks the fourth wall in the final by letting Rüya look at the viewers’ eyes to make them feel guilty about her despair and even share the responsibility of the ones who help ‘evil’ by ignoring his crimes.

5.2 BOZKIR (STEPPE) - BLU TV

“Living here is like sleeping in a grave.”

Blu TV released the first episode of *Bozkır (Steppe)* in 30 November 2018 and it spanned ten episodes, with duration of 55 to 60 minutes each (“Blu TV'nin polisiye dizisi Bozkır, 30 Kasım'da seyirciyle buluşuyor” 2018). It is directed by Bahadır Ince who had experience as director of television series like: *Aşk Laftan Anlamaz* (2015), *Bugünün Saraylısı* (2013), *Eski Hikaye* (2013) and written by scriptwriter and cartoonist Levent Cantek with Ali Demirel and Barış Erdoğan. The producer of the series is Fatih Enes Ömeroğlu from ARC Film, who made television series to TRT previously.

5.2.1 Generic Conventions

Bozkır (Steppe) is a whodunit crime drama that is close to classic noir with its definite stereotypes: the detective, femme fatale, and the evil. When it is compared with the previous noirish crime drama of Blu TV: *Masum (The Innocent)*, the difference between the good and the evil is clearer in *Bozkır (Steppe)* which makes its moral ambiguity less. The protagonist of the series is a police commissioner in a small town whose despair does not end during the story and he has to live on without expecting a positive change in his life. He suffers both isolation and alienation as a typical noir protagonist (Cobb 1992, pp.211, 212).

Bozkır is based in a small town where the crime hides beyond a false peace appearing in daylight. The protagonist used to wander around in quiet places of the town. He used to eat sandwiches in his car or while he is sitting on a bench or under a tree. As Dyer (1977) notes:

For films noir set in the country, the country is as desolate in its way as the city landscapes. Settings tend to be in the public world rather than domestic. For the hero, a basic domestic ritual like eating is transferred from family to public eating place. In this way the hero is denied an environment of safety, coziness, or rootedness.

Finally, the protagonist of the series is seduced by the femme fatale who is the “provocative agent of her desires”, intrudes the other’s lives to satisfy of “her own nefarious, neurotic desires” (Greven 2011, p.68).

5.2.1.1 Plot and characters

Plot:

The police commissioner Seyfi (Yiğit Özşener), working in a small town of Anatolia as the head of the homicide bureau, had to deal with the trauma of shooting a young girl by mistake while trying to get a criminal in the past. After working many years in big cities like Istanbul and Ankara, he wanted to be transferred to this town to be close to the young girl who is in coma and being kept in the hospital of the town. In the homicide bureau, there is a young police officer named Nuri Pamir (Ekin Koç), who assists Seyfi. All of a sudden, the peace is broken with the murder of a small boy who was assaulted before being killed. The local people of the town suspect the Syrian workers who were in the town for a while to work in the construction site. Seyfi and Nuri try to calm these angry folks down, however, they cannot interrupt the murder of a Syrian worker by a local man for revenge. Father of the murdered boy does not believe that the Syrian worker was the real criminal and he kills a local man who was seen near his son a few times. After he was arrested, he learns that the man he killed was innocent and he dies as a result of a heart attack. When the police continue to find the real murderer, it is revealed that there had been other boys who had been lost in town in the past. Seyfi and Nuri agree on the idea of the presence of a pedophile person in the town. After a while bones of two children are found in a dig and the case becomes more complicated. There is a very rich man named Abbas (Altan Erkekli) who has been living in the town and had an influence on the police. Abbas involves the case as if he tries to help the police but Nuri begins to suspect him about missing boys. One night, a boy whose age is around ten is found in the streets. The boy who has managed to run away from the place where he was kept, is not able to speak and give information to the police. In those days, the young girl in the coma dies and Seyfi falls in a deep pain which makes him decide to resign. Nuri argues with

Seyfi for quitting his job and leaving him alone in a case in which small boys are being abused and killed. Then Seyfi changes his mind about resigning. They find out that the boy found by police has a Russian mother who was killed years ago in Russia and had an arranged marriage when she stayed in Turkey with a local man who is a homosexual and working as a male belly dancer in the town. Abbas's grown-up daughter Dilara (Nur Fettahoğlu) helps Seyfi and Nuri to visit Abbas and Abbas confesses about his hidden son who is also the found boy, the son of the Russian woman. He talks about his wish to have a son after his wife died at an early age and he had a deal with a Russian woman to be a surrogate mother. Abbas claims that the baby was born mentally disabled and he rejected to raise him in his house. He also claims that he left the baby with the woman and did not see him later. However, he lies about leaving his son. There is a man living in the town who knows Abbas since they were both teenagers. At the final, it's revealed that this is man, named Fikret (Rıza Akin), had an affair with Abbas for about thirty-five years, since he was left by Abbas and they had murdered small boys for sexual pleasure since they were fourteen. Fikret is the one who kept Abbas's boy in his house locked and raise him since the day the boy runs away. He thinks himself as Abbas's wife, he wears a yellow wig to look like her. Abbas actually has never loved Fikret as Fikret loved him and misused his love to make him hide the murders he committed. However, Fikret decides to take revenge for being left and starts to leave traces to make the police discover the secret of Abbas. He kidnaps Abbas's daughter and son to make Abbas have to confront him and make the truth unravel for Abbas's daughter Dilara. However, Seyfi and Nuri Pamir find them while they are quarreling and threatening themselves with guns in the garden of Fikret's house at night. When all the secrets are told, guns are fired, Fikret and Abbas die, Seyfi and Nuri Pamir have injuries. However, Nuri Pamir's injuries are much severe than Seyfi which his survival impossible after losing high amount of blood for a long time.

Characters:

Seyfi, the detective and protagonist of *Bozkır*, is a middle-aged police commissioner who suffers from the remorse of shooting a young girl by mistake while he was chasing a criminal. As argued before in the previous case, film noir questions the guilt and “the

subject's accountability for the crime he or she has committed" (Fluck 2009, p. 289) Seyfi does not use the excuse of being a policeman, being on duty and does not forgive his mistake. However, people around him, including his colleagues in the police center and his wife believes that he exaggerates his mistake. The girl who falls into coma is kept in the hospital of the town where Seyfi was moved after this accident to help the family of the girl. Despite his successful career in the rush of big cities, his life turns upside down with one mistake. In the town where he keeps going, he lives as a ghost-like man, smokes a lot and waits for the miracle which will make the girl in coma recover and give him a reason to attach to his life. As Sanders (2006, p.92) explains, themes and moods of noir include:

despair, paranoia, and nihilism; an atmosphere of claustrophobic entrapment; a nightmarish sense of loneliness and alienation; purposelessness fostered in part by feelings of estrangement from one's own past even as one seems driven to a compulsive confrontation with that past.

Seyfi used to go to empty fields around the town with his car, sits under a tree. Even though the fields seem endless spaces, he is actually stuck between the sky and the earth, cannot move, feels like a chained dog. The town where he should return soon or late is his prison, resembles his conscience which makes him ignore himself, his wishes or desires. His wife Müesser (Esra Kızıldoğan) who has come with him in this small town, has been feeling lonely for a long time and she decides to leave him. Seyfi does not try to make her quit as if he wishes to be punished by everyone, including his wife. However, different from his despair caused by his mistake, it is revealed that Seyfi has a melancholic personality. Müesser tells him *"You were like waiting for that curse as if you were waiting for something like that to build a wall between you and the world."* On the other hand, he is very fond of children, actually feels the absence of a child of his own who makes him forget about the cruelty of the people. Müesser mentions and praises his father-like manners to his colleague Nuri Pamir and victims. One of the reasons that made him quit resigning after the girl in coma dies, is hearing of his wife's pregnancy. He finds the motivation to continue to struggle with the news of a baby.

Nuri Pamir is the other police officer in the homicide bureau who assists Seyfi. Protagonist's bro-like character who is younger than him is a stereotype in police dramas, mostly have manners in the opposite of the protagonist. Nuri Pamir has a short-tempered

personality and used to make Seyfi get furious due to causing trouble with folks in the investigation processes. He emphasizes his apolitical world view with his own words: *“I don’t know much about politics, whoever comes and goes. My business is with criminals,* while he is chatting with Seyfi about being a policeman. He is also a sensitive man, feels emotionally attached to the cases he is involved in. He behaves very well to the Syrian young man who is arrested after being accused of the murder of the small boy. He takes chicken doner kebab to him and they have lunch together in the custody room. He wishes to show him that he believes in his innocence and makes him feel safer. And after the Syrian man was stabbed and killed by the local guy who thinks he is the murderer, Nuri Pamir never eats chicken doner kebab again. In addition, he has a complicated affair with a young woman named Tülay (Bige Önal) who works as a psychologist in the state hospital. Tülay has an independent personality and used to mention her dissatisfaction with life in the town. She has worries about being criticized by local people due to her lifestyle and talks about her plans about going to Istanbul and saving her life. Nuri Pamir who feels ‘rootless’ begins to feel distant to her when she says *“Living here is like sleeping in a grave”* about life in ‘steppe’. He feels that he has nowhere to go. He adopts the town because he lives there. He feels humiliated when the town is humiliated, feels incompetent about satisfying the wishes of Tülay, he cannot even dream a better life which makes him weak in front of the woman he has affair. As a result, he becomes open to be manipulated and he is easily seduced by a local woman who is the opposite of Tülay. Nuri Pamir meets the young woman named Nihal (Merve Çağırın) who is a local woman and the neighbor of Seyfi. Nihal does not hesitate to show her admiration for Nuri Pamir in their first encounter. She has a small son and married but she lies and tells him that she is divorced. As a result, Nuri Pamir prefers the ‘easy’ one as he has said in his confession to Seyfi about his affair with Nihal. By managing to seduce Nuri Pamir makes Nihal the second femme fatale of Bozkır, while the main one is Dilara.

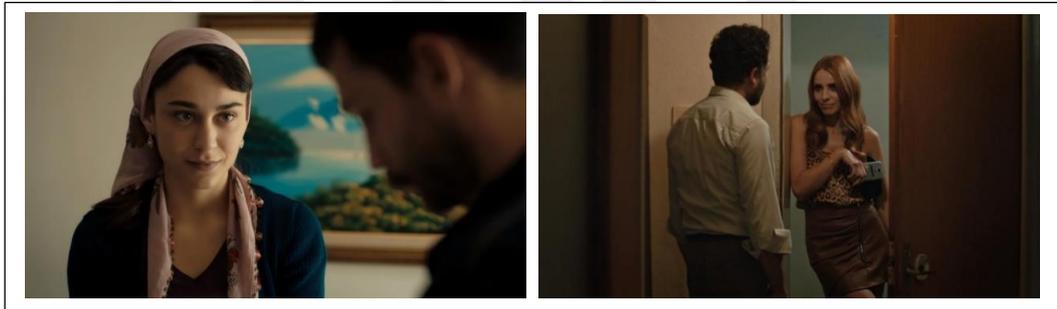
Dilara is the daughter of the richest man of the town, who has a way of life different from the local women of the town, wearing modern outfits, having sexual relationships, and drinks alcohol. Despite the high standards provided by her father, she has an unstable mood. According to Seyfi, she has bipolar disorder. Actually, her relationship with her father is the cause of her mental problems. She pretends to hate his father and tries to make him get furious with her lifestyle and relationship. However, she feels neglected

and tries to take revenge from her father. When she meets Seyfi during the investigation of the murder of her boyfriend, she forgets about her pain and all her interest turns to Seyfi. She starts to follow him and after a while she seduces him. Their relationship is based on physical pleasure and they do not have strong feelings towards each other. However, Dilara crosses the border when she visits Seyfi's wife to make her realize his husband's infidelity and Seyfi gets crazy and threatens her not to bother his life.

Femme fatale which is one of the characteristics of noir, has a definite way of representation, especially in classic noir. As Knight & McKnight (2008, p.170) explain:

The femme fatale frequently presents herself, at least initially, as weak, dependent, and in need of a strong man to protect her—all the while busily pursuing her own ambitions and goals. Her actual strength and cunning only emerge when she has trapped the man. Occasionally, the male character is entrapped by her dominant, rather than submissive, persona. Either way, the femme fatale figure poses a distinct threat to her chosen man, whom she is typically intent on manipulating and is frequently willing to set up to take the fall for her.

Figure 5. 6 Double Femme Fatales of *Bozkır*



Source: Blutv.com Bozkır (16 April 2020)

When the two femme fatales of *Bozkır*: Nihal and Dilara are evaluated, it can be seen that the way they behave to seduce the men in their target differ as it was explained above. Nihal pretends to be the needy woman who is alone and needs to be cared for by a strong man. She looks shy but makes the man feel admired, invokes the man, and waits until he responds. On the contrary, Dilara surrounds Seyfi and insists on him which makes him feel confident and unable to reject her after a while. And finally, both of the two women begin to be more demanding and try to control the men after they reach their goal. Especially Nihal pretends to be a regretful person to protect her reputation. She used to

emphasize that she was ‘not that kind of’ woman despite her lies about her marriage and cheating her husband who works as a truck driver.

Abbas, the evil of the series, who is a very rich man in his sixties and Dilara’s father, is able to manipulate the police by using his influence on the bureaucrats in Ankara. He behaves as the owner of the town and cares about the problems of the folks. What makes him dangerous is his ability on hiding his sadistic personality and the murders he committed, by pretending to be a man who highly values morality. Actually, he is bisexual and had a secret relationship with one of his colleagues for long years. His ex-lover also has a sadistic personality which make them commit child murders in the past. As Dyer (1977) highlights, in some examples of noir “gays function as both villains and frustrations of the heterosexual development, as do the femmes fatales.” Abbas aggravates his ex-lover as a femme-fatale and causes his fatal decision which also affects others.

5.2.1.2 Style and settings

Voice-over narration which is one of the characteristics of classical noir as it was mentioned before, is used in *Bozkır (Steppe)*. First episodes begin with the monologue of Nuri Pamir, which he talks about his chief Seyfi, and tells about the morning when the child murders case had started with the announcement of a found dead body. A small province in Eskişehir, surrounded with huge grain fields, is used as the filming location of the series, which makes the province function as one of the main characters of the series. The scenes with time-lapse of clouds, combined with the walking of Seyfi and Pamir in the middle of yellow fields are frequently used to emphasize the monotonous life in the province. The movement of clouds refers to the time which passes by but can change nothing. As Schuler & Murray (2007, p.170) argue, noir grasps the space, by invading the buildings, houses, walls, the offices, and also the people who live there. The feeling of inescapability is underlined both with the visual depictions as well as the dialogues about life in the province which is defined as “*sleeping in a grave*” by Tülay. In addition, low lighting angles are frequently used in the scenes involving Seyfi and Nuri

Pamir chatting alone, while high angle perspectives are used when Seyfi and Nuri Pamir talk to Kaya: their chief commissioner.

Figure 5.7 Light and shadow using in *Bozkır*



Source: Blutv.com Bozkır (16 April 2020)

In accordance with the characteristics of crime dramas, forensic and outdoor crime scene investigation scenes, and shadowy indoor scenes as the characteristic of noir are also used.

Different from the main characters of the series, the folks living in the town are also represented realistically both with their outfits and local accents. The emphasis on the 'locality' of the series can also be seen in its sound design. In the opening theme which is an instrumental song, the sound of 'bağlama' - a musical instrument special to Anatolia- is very clear. Moreover, the songs from Turkish folk music contribute to the narrative in almost every episode. Use of Turkish folk music, especially the songs of Neşet Ertaş, started with Behzat Ç. in 2010 which was a very 'local' crime drama with its tone of arabesk. *Bozkır (Steppe)* also has an arabesk mood which makes it to show similarities with Behzat Ç.. Ertaş's song named 'Evvelim Sen Oldun' (You had been my past) having lyrics as "I was ignorant, I was deceived by the colors of the world, I felt for a dream, I am ruined in vain", and the song of Çekiç Ali which is named 'Şu Yalan Dünyadan Usandım' (I am tired of this world) having lyrics as: "I am tired of this world which is all lie. I said goodbye to it from now on. I am deceived by the Devil and followed my desires.

I groaned as the pitiful nightingale” both vocalize the inner thoughts of Seyfi: the protagonist. In other words, Turkish folk music including arabesk characteristics is a tailor-made music type for Turkey-based country noirs.

5.2.1.3 Themes and ideology

As Rogers (2008, p.81) points out about the television police genre “it becomes apparent that even intertextual references within the genre seem to be governed to some extent by national attributes and cultural context.” *Bozkır*’s theme is based on child abuse and murders occurred in a conservative small town. The child abuse and murders committed in Turkey always create social indignations among society and the number of cases is increasing in the last decade. Lately, in 2018, society had responded to the two different cases about small girls in Ankara and Ağrı. In July of 2018, a group of people got together in Taksim to protest the rising number of cases in Turkey. The cases had underlined the inefficiency of law on the crime of child abuse and murders, and even the castration penalty had been mentioned which had been aimed to be disincentive (Kasapoğlu & Kaytazoğlu, 2018).

What *Bozkır* focuses on as a theme is an up to date problem which makes every citizen suffer independent from her/his nationality. In the first episode of the series, a group of local young men get together to find the criminal and punish him in their own way which would probably be lynch. Then the police stop them and dispersed the crowd. However, in the following days, an innocent Syrian worker is accused of the murder and the folks, including the older men this time, wait for his transfer to the court and lynch him with sticks and stones. *Bozkır* also has words to say about the immigrants, especially the Syrians. One of the local men relates the murder with the arrival of Syrian men who work in the construction site as seasonal workers. He says “*Has anything like this ever happened? They are all a pack of dogs.*” Seyfi silences the folks by speaking up and tells them that what the issue was a murder and “*it isn’t about flags*”. Unsurprisingly, the local men do not share his thoughts and at one night they burn the tents of the Syrian workers in the construction area. People of *Bozkır*’s town respond to immigrants negatively as

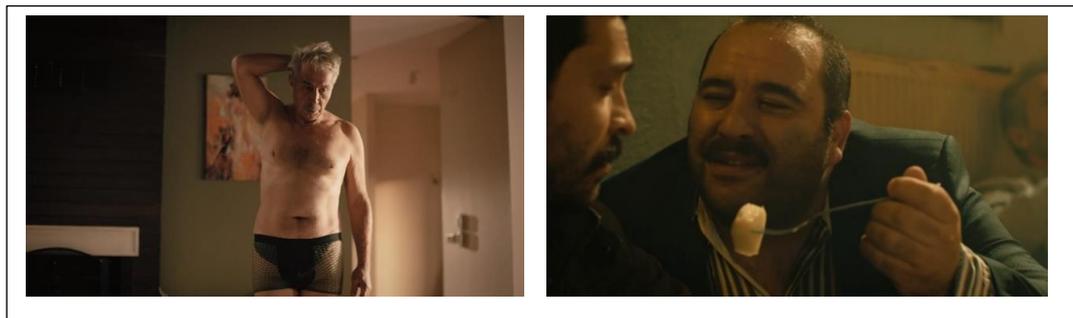
most of the people all around the world. The uncontrolled animalistic instinct of humans on protecting his space which results in lynch is criticized in the series. Seyfi, the protagonist, says:

“I made a wrong decision one day. Nobody around me thought I was doing wrong. They agreed with me. I saw if something is approved by everyone, it doesn’t count as wrong. That’s when I stopped beating myself up. Justice is a slave to time. It keeps getting fucked.”

In *Bozkır*, some men commit murders, some little boys are assaulted and killed, and some men try to stop the crime and provide justice. As a result, it tells about the world of men where women have only a limited impact on the order of that world.

In terms of gender, it can be argued that *Bozkır* is a reformist work due to having LGBT characters which are not very often in Turkish television series. However, the way of representing these characters does not make the series supportive for LGBT. Abbas: the evil is a bisexual man who gets pleasure from killing small boys, and his ex-partner who is homosexual has sadistic personality like Abbas. On the other hand, their relationship is built upon very clear man-woman dynamics which can be seen in Abbas and his ex-lover’s dialogue where Abbas says *“I am tired of you, your tirades, your delusions, unending sensitivities...”*

Figure 5. 8 LGBT Characters of *Bozkır*



Source: Blutv.com Bozkır (16 April 2020)

The third LGBT character of *Bozkır* is a male belly dancer who is also not innocent. He used to complain about the difficulty of living in a town as a homosexual man and he says *“being faggot is not easy”* to make the one he talks feel pity for him, however, he has a

dependent personality and helps the man whom he loves for years to hide the kidnapped boy.

On the other hand, heterosexual characters are not emotionally satisfied too. They cannot manage to keep up proper relationships or their dreams do not come true. In *Bozkır*, honest men are weak. They need to be supported, admired, or encouraged. They should not have to feel themselves as obliged to satisfy the needs or expectations of the women they are living with. But the women they know are all dominant and they do not settle for what they are given, they demand more and they do not compromise.

In terms of the police and the juridical system, *Bozkır* questions the police legitimacy as *Masum* but it differs from it with emphasis on the power of ‘evil’ on these forces. Besides the omnipotent evil: Abbas, the chief of police: Kaya (Bülent Düzgünoğlu) who is the manager of Seyfi and Nuri Pamir, is apparently a useless manager, was represented as selfish, coward and even a little bit fool. Father of the murdered boy who became devastated and lost his hope on finding the real murderer, says that “*A policeman is a slave to his salary and his rank. They protect themselves, not the law*”, he describes Kaya and others like him with his words. Kaya’s cartoon-like character disrupts the sense of reality sometimes and makes the viewer remember s/he is witnessing a fiction. Kaya used to have stomach pain but hesitates to go to visit a doctor because of his fear of endoscopy. Most of the time, he cannot even concentrate on Seyfi’s words due to his pain and advises him to close the case as soon as possible. He is a person easy to deceive. Abbas gives financial support to the necessities of the police center and the town, and he manages to make Kaya admire his beneficent personality.

Figure 5. 9 Evil and Chief of Police in *Bozkır*



Source: Blutv.com Bozkır (16 April 2020)

Kaya used to mention Abbas's wealth and influence on the bureaucrats in Ankara says that *"I can't afford to make such valuable person nervous for no reason."* He wants no trouble in the town to make him have headache. He even does not hesitate to confess the reason he prefers to be transferred in that small town with his words: *"They told me there would be a nice breeze there, but I am burning here."* He is far from being an ambitious policeman, and he only cares about his comfort and waits for his retirement.

The omnipotence of evil is also overemphasized in *Bozkır*, as the dysfunctional presence of the chief police is. Seyfi defines Abbas as *"the whale in the steppe"*. Abbas had managed to hide all his murders for long years indeed, however, he has a partner who is as cruel as him and has sadistic desires. His partner helps him to save himself. He, the obsessed ex-lover, functions as the protector of Abbas. Actually, what protects Abbas for years is this man's loyalty, not his power. In the end, he quits protecting him and starts to act in a way to make police realize the murders they committed together. When he is about to be shot by Abbas, he tries to provoke him by telling that he would not let the police arrest him, he says *"I won't leave myself to the justice of the ones who are coward and ignorant."*

For Abrams (2006, p.69) noir is much more than a whodunit. It focuses on the "darkness of human nature" and in the world of noir "there is no safe place to hide and no possibility of escape." As it was mentioned above, being a country noir makes *Bozkır* to have the town as a non-human character. The town which is used to be named 'steppe' in the dialogues of Seyfi and Nuri Pamir, functions as an old person who inhibits the change - in a negative way- in the area. It is shown as the reason of the people's ignorance. Dilara accuses the local people living the 'steppe' for being reckless, she says that they could sleep no matter what happens. People's selfishness makes evil more powerful. In the final scene, every man in the town watches the football game, even the policemen on duty and doctors in the hospital. In addition, Seyfi used to lose his ambition for his job when he talks to Kaya. He tells Nuri Pamir that if they closed the case, everybody would be happy. He talks about the insensibility of people, notes that people prefer peace, a life without problem bothering themselves instead of providing justice.

Finally, in the *"night of horror in the steppe"* when Abbas and his ex-partner try to kill each other, the two policemen Seyfi and Nuri Pamir are also shot, but Nuri Pamir has

deeper wounds and he loses too much blood. He says “*I am thirsty, I am feeling lighter*” while lying in the arms of Seyfi, which makes the viewer do not doubt his death. Seyfi is left for the imagination of the viewer, who can be saved with the help of Dilara. The youngest, more innocent and braver one, the one who has not used to the manipulation of justice yet is about to die, while the older one, more experienced, the one who got used to the hypocrisy of people, who made fatal mistakes, and is not purely innocent anymore has a chance to survive.

5.3 ŞAHSİYET (PERSONA) (PUHU TV)

*“It is no longer a crime,
if you commit it with a large enough crowd.”*

Puhu TV released its second original content *Şahsiyet (Persona)* on 17 March 2018, one year later than the release of its first original *Fi* (“Şahsiyet dizisinin yayın tarihi belli oldu!” 2018). The series was released weekly and spanned 12 episodes whose durations were between 52 to 96 minutes. Writer of the series is Turkish novelist Hakan Günday who is popular with his crime novels categorized as underground literature. *Şahsiyet* is directed by Onur Saylak has started his career as an actor and directed his first film named *Daha (More)* in 2017. The script of *Daha* is also adapted from Hakan Günday’s novel with the same title. Producer of the series was Kerem Çatay, the owner of Ay Yapım which is the production company of well-known television melodramas like *Yaprak Dökümü (Fall of the Leaves)* (2006), *Aşk-ı Memnu (Forbidden Love)* (2008), *Ezel* (2009), *Kuzey Güney* (2011), *Karadayı* (2012), *Medcezir* (2013).

5.3.1 Generic Conventions

Şahsiyet is a crime drama based on revenge motivated serial killer. Having a serial killer protagonist hunting the criminals who committed a crime collectively in the past, makes

the series differ from a usual whodunit. “When the protagonist is a criminal, the story is told from his/her point of view. The narrative is manipulated so audiences will identify with him” (Cobb 1992, p.211). The protagonist reveals the reason for his transformation from an ordinary old man into a serial killer in the beginning, and make the viewer quit focusing on the identities. On the other hand, he does not get any pleasure from committing murder as most of the stereotypical serial killers do, he even spends years to find the courage to start murdering. The detective of the series explains the protagonist’s situation by telling that “*he has so many people to take revenge on that it turns him into a serial killer.*” *Şahsiyet* is also an example of film noir. As Conard (2006, p.2) points out, ambiguity in morality is one the most characteristic themes of film noir, and it is often created via protagonists whose actions are open to be questioned morally, on contrary to traditional way of character formation which adopts always good protagonist. Narratives of film noir used to be built on “ambiguous sexual identities, instabilities, and the crossing of traditional boundaries. It feeds on political corruption and moral decadence” (Park 2011, p.28).

5.3.1.1 Plot and characters

Plot

An old man named Agah Beyoğlu (Haluk Bilginer) lives alone in his apartment since he lost his wife ten years ago. After working as a civil servant in the secretary of the courthouse for twenty-seven years and getting retired, he has remorse due to keeping silent about an unsolved case he had witnessed when he was working in a small town named Kambura. He wishes to kill unpunished criminals whose number is very high but he cannot find the courage he needs for years. When he is diagnosed with the early stage of Alzheimer’s disease, he decides to apply his delayed plan. Even though he calms himself by thinking that he will forget the murders he commits somehow in the near future, he later confesses that he is afraid to forget about the case which bothers his conscience since the year it happened in 1996. In that year a fourteen-year-old orphan girl committed suicide due to her despair caused by the regular rape she had for two years by fifty-three men of the town. Agah Beyoglu has the diary of the girl which was an evidence

but was ignored by the police willing to sweep the case under the rag. Agah steals the criminal records of the case which are kept in the archive of the town and then he starts to kill the ones involved with the case as they are all written in the diary. While he continues to his murders, he leaves notes written on stickers which he pastes them on the dead body. The notes are the sentences chosen from the girl's diary. Agah aims to reach a policewoman in the homicide bureau and make her remember her past when she was in Kambura and knows the dead girl very well. However, the policewoman who is named Nevra (Cansu Dere) cannot remember the girls and the days she had in Kambura, for a while. Actually, she has a trauma caused by being raped on her last day in the town, which she later erased from her memory. Agah wears a cat costume which makes him hide his identity. As the murders continue, the case of the first serial killer of the country becomes very popular which makes the homicide bureau forced to solve it and find the killer as soon as possible. One of the men targeted by Agah is Cemil (Hüseyin Avni Danyal) who is a very rich businessman, raised in Kambura, and still has contact with the local people of the town. He behaves as if he is the owner of the town and makes the Kamburans obey all of his orders. Cemil is the man who raped Nevra and as a result of coincidence, he hires the daughter of Agah as a secretary. Finally, Nevra reaches the details of the case by following the traces left by Agah and she remembers everything. Agah organizes a meeting to help Nevra to take her revenge by killing Cemil. However, Nevra denies killing a person, instead, she offers to give Cemil to the police. Then Agah talks to her about the difference between law and justice. Soon after Cemil is shot twice, but the identity of his murderer or murderers remains a secret between Agah and Nevra.

Characters

Agah Beyoğlu, the protagonist of the series, is a retired civil servant who lives alone and suffers from the remorse of a crime he witnessed years ago. He finds the motivation he looks for years to start his revenge plan when he learns about his Alzheimer's illness which causes him amnesia. He is good at using gun and can set up bombs which require professional knowledge about armors such as 'timed C4'. He has been an imaginative person since he was a child. He had a wish in his ninth birthday to be called by Soviet Embassy to join Yuri Gagarin's travel to space in 1961. He is a humorous man who has

extraordinary personality, cares about his outlook, and wears colorful socks. He often acts like crazy. He scares a little girl in the park by telling her that he is waiting for the ghost of her dead wife, to get rid of the girl and be alone. He waves a hand to security cameras in his cat costume he uses to hide his identity while murdering people. He is also good at manipulating people. He deceives his doctor by introducing him another woman as his daughter to hide his illness from her own daughter. He confesses his talent about lying to his doctor and also confesses that he had used to lie to his wife when he was young. Even though he deeply loved his wife, he did not even care during her illness, and he feels very regretful now. He wishes to get rid of all of his own sins by killing a men crowd who abused a teenage girl and caused her to commit suicide, as well as punishing them.

Nevra, the detective of the series, is a young policewoman who is also one of the victims of child abusers who are targeted by Agah. Despite studying public administration and working as a manager in private sector for a while, she has resigned as went to the police academy. The only female police officer between the 140 staff members of the homicide bureau. Her colleagues envy the quick rise in her rank, they do not trust her and do not hesitate to discriminate her. It is possible to argue that representation of women in film noir is problematic because powerful and/or sexual female characters are assumed to be femme fatales (Tasker 2013, p.361). However Nevra's position in the series is far from a femme fatale figure, despite her confession about being a flirty woman in her past. She is also a victimized in her past, but she has power as an adult and successful police today. However, she feels weak sometimes and has regrets about being not good at communicating people. She says: "*I don't know how to co-exist with people, how to talk to people, what to do with friends, how to spend time with a boyfriend, how to manage the space between you and someone else. But I've always pretended to know. And I was always wrong.*" She has problems with her mother who is a conservative woman too. She accuses her about being too distant to her when she was a teenager. Actually, she has a problem with her past which is caused by a rape she had when she was twelve which she cannot remember. The missing parts in her life interrupt her to be satisfied with the life she created for herself. For Abrams (2007, p.7) neo-noir which is reinvented by noir itself, still protects the main features of classic noir. However, the detective in neo-noir not only tries to find the suspects of the crime, instead he tries to find "his own identity" which might be separated. He needs to reach his other-selves.

The detective's mind has divided, typically because of a traumatic event that causes some form of amnesia. This can be in the form of retrograde amnesia, in which the detective cannot remember past events, or anterograde amnesia, in which he cannot form new memories, or lacunar amnesia, which involves the loss of memory about a particular event." (Idib., p.10)

The female detective Nevra, has no memory about the era she lived in small where she had the trauma and Agah tries to make her remember the rape she had. He wishes her to find the head of the criminals who organized the rape and take her revenge.

Ateş is a young man who works as a journalist in a magazine. However, he does not respect the job he is involved, he feels ashamed of the way of journalism he is involved in. He is a man who has problems with his self-confidence. For the first time he meets Nevra, he tries to seduce her to be able to reach the information he needs about the serial killer case. He acts like a needy man. As Chin (2015, pp. 42,43) points out, "the homme fatale of film noir, who is characterized by his deviant masculinity, is always punished narratively as he meets a fatal ending." Ateş's position in *Şahsiyet* is homme fatale in the beginning, but it shifts later and he turns into the victim when he falls in love with Nevra and killed by the evil while he is working on the case.

Zuhal, is a middle-aged woman, who is the daughter of Agah. She is a diagnosed alcoholic and she still cannot stop drinking when she starts until she loses her conscious. She relates the reason for her problem with his father. She feels neglected due to being sent to boarding school, complains about his father's distance to her. She is unaware of the cause which makes her father keep away from the town where the evil lives and hunts the young girls. Feeling of loneliness interrupts her to become an adult. Her sixteen years old son criticize her for being emotionally dependent on people around her.

Cemil, the evil of the series, is an ultra-rich businessman in his fifties who has a conglomerate. He was orphaned when he was nine and had to live with his sick mother. He says that he was raised by 'Kamburans' people of the town he lived in. He feels owed to them. However, he can commit crimes, caused others to join the crime, or help the criminals not to be punished by using his influence on the police and juridical system.

According to Park (2011, p.28), the difference between noir and neo-noir depends on the way of portraying the evil. While in classic noir always has "a saving framework of law"

so that all the institutions of the state cannot be dysfunctional at the same time which guarantees the justice sooner or later, in the world which neo-noir depicts, all the institutions of the state may fail at the same, which results in victimization of everyone and invasion of paranoia. In *Şahsiyet*, a judge and a major are two of the criminals and they corporate with the police to conceal the case. As a result, with its amnesiac detective and omnipresent evil, it can be argued that *Şahsiyet* is an example of neo-noir.

5.3.1.2 Style and settings

Şahsiyet can be evaluated as a proper example of quality television with its visual style too, as well as its narration. The viewer of the contents which are produced by video-on-demand services does not prioritize entertainment, and values creativity and aesthetic. As Palmer (2007, p.155) notes, noir in contemporary productions can be related with auteurism, which makes it preferred by the viewers who can be defined as ‘highbrow’ Visually speaking, *Şahsiyet* differs from other local crime dramas for being an idiosyncratic work with its unusual way of camera and color using. Nocturnal compositions with neon lights dominated by one main color are frequently used which gives the series its unique style.

Figure 5.10 Dominant color use in *Şahsiyet*



Source: puhutv.com (accessed 20 April 2020)

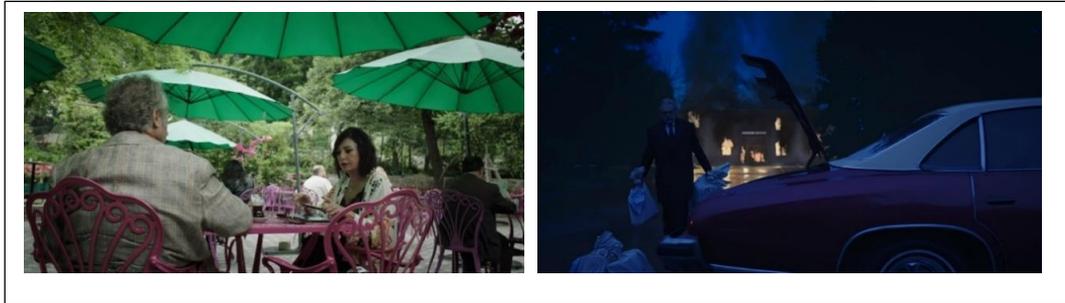
Besides highly contrasted lighting, “disruptive compositional balance of frames and scenes, the way characters are placed in awkward and unconventional positions within a particular shot” is associated with film noir (Conard 2006, p.1). Indeed, extraordinary use of high or low angle perspectives and unusually balanced frames contribute to the visual characteristic of the series where they are combined with frames having cinematic aesthetic.

Figure 5.11 Extraordinary Compositions in *Şahsiyet*



Source: puhutv.com (accessed 20 April 2020)

Figure 5.12 Cinematic Aesthetic in *Şahsiyet*



Source: puhutv.com (accessed 20 April 2020)

Filming location of the series is Istanbul and Gölyazı district of Bursa’s province of Nilufer. Lively streets of Beyoğlu where Agah Beyoğlu lives is the main location of *Şahsiyet*. On the other hand, Gölyazı, where is a small town located on the small and island-like peninsula, is used as ‘Kambura’: the made-up town of the series. According to Mollaer (2018) Kambura is an allegory of Turkey, representing a dystopia rather than a utopia with its sociopolitical features. (Bir Türkiye Alegorisi: Şahsiyet Dizisi Üzerine" 2018)

The protagonist of the series is a man who likes music and poems. He listens to classical music in high volume. He loves one of the poems of Nazım Hikmet named Ceviz Ağacı (Walnut Tree) and used to vocalize it. He also plays lute and sings. Various music types form rock to jazz or classical Turkish music and Turkish folk music are involved in *Şahsiyet*, however, it is not possible to speak about any melodramatic tone that emerged in the scenes with this music or songs, including the ones performed by Agah Beyoğlu.

5.3.1.3 Themes and ideology

The protagonist of *Şahsiyet* suffers from remorse for years after witnessing the case about a raped girl and he decides to kill all the criminals who were punished. The theme of series which focusses on a child abuse case is the dysfunctional juridical system. A man who intends to provide justice on his own, dares to become a criminal as a result of his hatred towards the legal system. In addition, male dominance over females and vulnerability of all women in society as a result of the inefficiency of the law are criticized. Detective of the series is a woman who is also the victim of rape. Despite being a police commissioner, she still faces discrimination by her male colleagues. She is being humiliated or harassed by swearwords. The two frames which are shown below express the viewpoint of the series on gender. The first frame including the man crowd in the police center recklessly staring at a female reporter underlines the objectification of women by men no matter where they are. Second frame including the two girls who tear the posters of the dead girl who was murdered underlines the lack of solidarity between women as a result of being manipulated by men.

Figure 5.13. Male Gaze composition in *Şahsiyet*



Source: puhutv.com (accessed 20 April 2020)

Figure 5.14 Town girls in *Şahsiyet*



Source: puhutv.com (accessed 20 April 2020)

Before starting the murders, Agah kidnaps a man who killed his wife and released after being punished only for eight years. Agah uses his fingerprints to hide his identity and to mislead the crime scene investigation officials. He has a collection of photos of murdered women he took from the criminal records. He forces this man to watch these photographs to make him feel sorry. He thinks that he wasn't properly punished and says to him: *“What is eight years? Unjust provocation, time off for good behavior... Mitigation after mitigation. They could have given a medal too. I have read your trail records. They gave proper consideration but they didn't deal proper retribution.”* Agah utters his distrust to the juridical system from the beginning of the series.

The case which Agah had learned about years ago is about an orphaned twelve years old girl who was raped regularly for two years by fifty-two men and committed suicide after getting pregnant. Agah learns the identities of these fifty-two men who were not punished from the diary of the girl and starts to hunt them one by one before he forgets the case and his plan as a result of his illness.

The series does not adopt a masculine discourse as usual as most of the crime dramas do. Agah does not use swearwords as a part of his daily language, he only uses slang words when he gets crazy. Nevra does not use swearwords. However, Nevra works in the police center where masculinity is highly performed. She prefers masculine style in her outfits and performs masculinity with her body language unconsciously.

Class dynamics are represented in *Şahsiyet* via geographical differences of İstanbul and Kambura. Cemil, the evil of the series, talks about geographical determinism in an interview he had as a businessman and says:

Astrology should take birthplaces into account. Predictions made on birthplaces would be more plausible. In the end, children born in Tripoli, Peshawar or in any village of Angola will live pretty much identical lives. And the ones born in Toronto, Oslo, Tokyo will also have. Our rural people are very well aware of this fact. That's why they never ask someone they meet for the first time what their sign is. They ask them where they're from. And then there's rising sign issue. That corresponds to your citizenship. That's important as well. A Syrian boy born in Syria does not share the same fate with a French boy born in Syria. My sign is Aleppo. My rising sign is French. That changes things. Or my sign is Congo. My rising sign is Belgium. The issue is different then.

Nevra defines Kambura as a place where the red riding hoods and wolves are living. She visits the town for the investigation of the case and learns that her primary school teacher had married fifteen years of girl when he was more than fifty years old. It is revealed that a group of local men got organized to lynch a gypsy family living in the town and they burnt down their house and killed two adults and five children years ago. However, they do not have any regret for their crime. On the other hand, a police commissioner working in Kambura Police Station is a man who hinders his duty. He does not care about the cases and slides over them. He does not even charge any policemen to archive the cases digitally for years. The policemen who come from Istanbul ask him that what he did there for three years and he says “*Waiting to get assigned to another town.*” Briefly, the series discriminates the residents of the town by associating them with insensitivity and laziness.

In terms of legal system, criticisms on its dysfunctionality are frequently vocalized. The journalist Ateş who has the photos of Uğur Mumcu, Çetin Emeç and Hrant Dink² on the wall of his house, feels ashamed and cannot bear to look at these photos. He resembles the way of journalism he made to show business. He says:

“This show serves one purpose only to make people forget. I am in the forgetting business of unending murder cases. How come so many people are licensed to carry guns? How come people can access guns so easily? I never talk about that. If you want to make people forget about the gun, all you have to do is talk about the victim.”

After a while, Ateş resigns and starts to investigate the case of raped girl. He manages to find an important about the case but before he tells it anyone, he was killed by the explosion of the bomb that was put in his car.

² Uğur Mumcu (1942-1993), Çetin Emeç (1935-1990) and Hrant Dink (1954-2007) were the journalists who were assassinated in Turkey.

When Nevra visits ‘the psychiatrist’ who arranged the report of the man throws the torch to the gypsy man’s house, he confesses that he was forced by some people to arrange a fake report about the criminal’s mental health when he was working in the Kambura State Hospital. He explains why he preferred to keep silent about the case as:

“Normally a fraud uses people’s hope. A fraud comes to you and tells you ‘give me one dollar and I will give you ten back.’ And if you’re greedy by nature, you get hopeful and give him the dollar. Buts the frauds of this country stopped selling hope. There’s an easier way. People are so afraid of you. Tell someone you’re a cop on the phone and they’ll give you every dime. If the frauds of a country con you through fear instead of hope, you never ask them who they are or what they do for a living.”

He identifies the man who forced him to arrange the report and it is revealed that he was Mehmet Yurtgil (Avni Yalçın), the judge of heavy penalty court in Kambura, who had a reputation for taking bribes and was also one of the men who raped the girl in the case.

Nevra’s chief Tolga (Necip Memili) supports her on the investigation which is about to reveal the identities of the rapists, but the prosecutor warns him by telling that he was called from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Justice to close the case. Cemil, the evil, who has influence on these state institutions manages to silence them and Tolga is suspended from his rank. He explains his disappointment after losing his trust to the juridical system with the example of *panic* button example as:

“You push it and shout is there anybody there but there is voice. You start to think there is something wrong. You snap it off the wall and take a look and...! What the fuck! The wires are not connected. There are no wires. Just a thing that was mounted on the wall. You’ve spent your life by trusting it. But they put it there to deceive you. Just trust it. Don’t ask questions. Just do your job. That’s what is there for. And you have been fool enough to trust it. Actually, there had been nothing to trust.”

For Schuler & Murray (2007, p.170) the organization of crime in neo-noir has not a definite form and it resembles the “hydra”, which makes the corporation continue to live due to having the ability to reproduce on its own which make it immortal, despite losing some of its men who were killed by the justice.

Şahsiyet lets its protagonist get his revenge and achieve his plan. However, the pimp man living in Kambura who also sold the little girl to fifty-two men years ago still continues to sell kidnaped the little girls locked in his barn.

5.4 DİP (BASE) (PUHU TV)

*“I looked myself in the mirror,
it was like seeing a hollowed-out tree.”*

Puhu TV released its third original series and second crime drama *Dip (Base)* on 30 March 2018 (“DİP ne zaman başlıyor?” 2018). It spanned eight episodes by weekly releases – each has durations from 57 to 79 minutes. The writer of the series was Başar Başaran and Emre Özdür who previously had written melodramas like *Vurgun* and *Azize* in 2019) and romance drama *Bodrum Masalı* in 2016 for television. Five episodes of *Dip* were directed by Çağatay Tosun who had been the directors of television series like *Muhteşem Yüzyıl: Kösem* in 2015, *Merhamet* in 2013 and *Suskunlar* in 2012 before working for *Dip*, and the other three episodes were director by Uygur Kutlu. The producer of the series is Erol Avcı, the owner of the production company named TMC, who has produced television series and cinema films since 1993.

5.4.1 Generic Conventions

Dip is a crime drama whose subgenre is mystery. With its melancholic and mentally unhealthy protagonist/detective who is surrounded by people hiding their real identities in a city where it becomes the center of crime at night, makes *Dip* to have noir elements both in its theme and style. As Dixon (2009, p.3) points out, the real scope of the noir is night and its essential field is the city. Different from the criminals he has to deal with, the protagonist of *Dip* is even mistaken by his father-like friend about his real identity, and as the secrets of people around him begin to be revealed, this deceived man finds himself in the middle of a paranoid world. For Sanders (2008, p.18) paranoia in noir is the “way of thinking” rather than being a mood. *Dip*, as a noir, builds its narrative on the unreliable nature of human which becomes the reason for never-ending paranoia for everyone.

5.4.1.1 Plot and characters

Plot

Sahir (Ilker Kaleli) works as a suicide negotiator in the suicide avoidance department of police which is established as an experiment for a while ago. Since the suicide of his wife, he is in great despair. He has hallucinations about his wife Ekin (Berrak Tüzünataç), and he used to take medicines which make his mind more confused. One night he drinks in a bar and soon after he finds a mobile phone in his pocket which is put by a stranger. He gets a call via this mobile phone which is from Ekin's number. He is told to go to a bridge to interrupt a young woman who is going to commit suicide. When he arrives, he finds a young woman who is there but not trying to kill herself, instead, she is tried to be killed by two gunmen. Sahir saves her and jumps in the river. Both of two do survive but the young woman runs away. After meeting this young woman Sahir begins to suspect that he is being followed by some people who know his past. It is revealed that Sahir had worked as a psychotherapist for the deep state of Turkey for years. Later his name and profession were changed and he has a new life. Sahir is in touch with a man Ali Kemal (Bülent Emin Yarar) who also works for the deep state and has a very high rank which makes him more powerful than Sahir knows. Ali Kemal has been helping him to cope with his depression. Sahir mentions the young woman to Ali Kemal and asks him for help but Ali Kemal denies his suspects about being followed and mistakes him. Actually, he knows the young woman who is named Bilge (Neslihan Atagül). Sahir manages to reach some information he needs with the help of his old friend who was once working for Ali Kemal. He learns that Bilge was the daughter of a man named Orhan (Feridun Düzağaç) who is the head of a group struggling for preserving the independent defense industry of the country against the other group who wish to join the West's unified defense system. Ali Kemal confesses Sahir that he was the father of Ekin, and Ekin was murdered not committed suicide. He also tells that Ekin was the student of Orhan. The group who wish to join West's defense system keeps on murdering the engineers who were taught by Orhan. They give a special medicine to these engineers which attacks the nervous system and makes them commit suicide. These murders make Orhan had to come back to Turkey after hiding for four years abroad. The other group learns Orhan's arrival and kidnaps

Bilge to make Orhan to handover the codes of the defense system of the country. Orhan meets them in a warehouse as he was ordered to make an arrangement to save his daughter. However, he rejects telling the code until Bilge was injected with the suicide drug which makes her kill herself if she was not stopped. When Orhan cannot give up his daughter and admits to handover the code, Ali Kemal arrives there and kills the ones who blackmail Orhan. Even though they manage to stop their enemies, the end of Sahir who goes to save Bilge from the basement she is kept remains ambiguous.

Characters

Sahir, the protagonist and detective of *Dip*, is a man who worked as a psychiatrist in the intelligence department operatives for years and he knows “*all the dirty secrets of the state*” as one of his friends says. He has been charged in the suicide avoidance department of police as a negotiator for a while ago. However, he has been suffering from the loss of his wife Ekin who also committed suicide. Sahir is not his real name and it is changed from Ateş which is his real name when he was working as a psychotherapist. As a result of his identity changing, he has no past and has no relationship with his parents. His wife’s loss has made Sahir lose all his wish to carry on living and have a mental illness which gives him hallucinations of his wife frequently. He uses medicines for his illness but he consumes them overdose which turns him to a ghost during the day. He also drinks very often to make his mind silent. For one of his colloquies “*He seems to always be bleeding.*” With all his very apparently underlined personal features: loneliness, loss of a loved one, being rootless as a result of lack of family, melancholic mood, drug and alcohol using makes Sahir stereotypical noir protagonist. Sanders highlights that protagonist of noir in film or television used to suffer from nihilism, loss of meaning and joy of life makes him think and act as if he does not care anything and has no aim to change his condition. (Sanders 2008, p. 15) Sahir confesses that the only meaning of life for him is saving people from dying as a result of suicide. He has no wish or desire for his own good. However, he is aware of his danger in his situation, says that he saw a “*hollowed-out tree*” when he looked into the mirror. He tries to cope with his mental illness on his own and abuses drug. His confused mind during the episodes of his illness used to be presented via close-ups.

Figure 5.15 Close-ups during episodes of the Sahir's illness in *Dip*



Source: puhutv.com *Dip* (21 March 2020)

In addition, he is also the detective figure in the series due to his searches for the murderers of scientists which he carries on during the whole series.

Bilge is a young woman who teaches physics and has a great talent for solving the hidden algorithms. She is taught by her real father Orhan whom she met for the first time when she was thirteen. Despite her education in physics, she rejects to work with her father and his team. She is full of anger due to being a neglected child of a 'state person' who has secrets. She uses her talent in computer science and does hacking operations to force big companies to make donations for charities. When she learns that her father is not killed years ago as it was told her, she starts to find him, but she is used by the people who also wish to force Orhan to reappear.

Ali Kemal is a middle-aged man who is a former intelligence operative and also the father of Sahir's wife who died. He hides his real identity from Sahir to protect him from the danger of the group he fights against. He pretends to be a retired person who works as a carpenter. The unraveling of Ali Kemal's secrets deeply impacts Sahir and makes him have paranoid thoughts about the identities of all people around him. Sahir loses his trust in others when he is mistaken by a person who was like his father. However, Ali Kemal is also mistaken by people he knows. Even though they struggle for the same aim which is preserving the independent defense industry of the country, he learns that people whom he trusts have lied to him for years.

Artun (Levent Öktem), the evil of the series, is an old man who has been charged in intelligence service of the state. However, he changes his side after his retirement and becomes the head of the other group who are against the ones including Ali Kemal and

Orhan. He organizes the assassins of scientists who were once students of Orhan and still works for him. Artun pretends to be a patient with Alzheimer's disease to keep people away. He lives in 'Darulaceze' which is an institution that belongs to the state and working as a nursing home for homeless people. His aim is to reach the ultimate power and he does not hesitate to kill his son who tries to stop him.

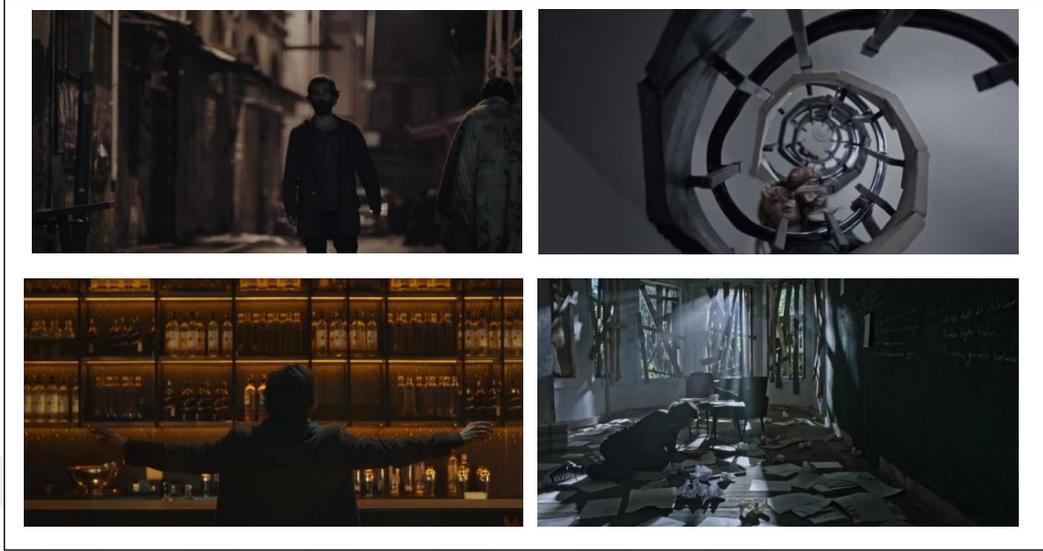
5.4.1.2 Style and settings

Dip uses the two stylistic features of noir: flashback and first-person voice-over narration which are required to clarify the complexities in narration (Neale 2000, p.154). However, the function of flashback is limited in *Dip*, because the complexity in narration depends on the ambivalences of identities, not to the fragmented chronology. On the other hand, the first-person narrator Sahir's monologue about suicide is used only for once in the first episode, and voice-over narration does not continue in the following episodes.

Like most of the crime or action dramas of television which are based on political conflicts and have characters who are charged by the state, *Dip* uses the warning of 'the characters and institutions in the series are is completely fictive'.

City in *Dip* functions as a character who hides its real identity in the day time and discloses itself at night. Opening credits of the series include different shoots from streets with pick packers, grabbers, men beating women, prostituting transsexuals, drug users and suiciders on the rooftops are all hidden by dark of the night. According to Schrader (1972, p.11) protagonist of film noir is used to be kept under the shadow and his environment is over-emphasized to depict the "fatalistic and hopeless mood" of the world he lives in. The character is in a desperate position in front of the city which gives him no chance to win. The filming location of the series is İstanbul, mainly the districts of Galata, Karaköy, Beyoğlu. Dark streets of the city, abandoned buildings, basement floors, old warehouses are frequently used in *Dip*. As Naremore (2008, p.282) explains, "wet city streets, dramatic staircases, elegant restaurants, shabby pubs, tilted camera angles, moody shadows, dreamlike lighting effects" are still used as the keys of creating noirish atmosphere, as it had been in film noirs of the black and white era.

Figure 5. 16 Classic noir compositions in *Dip*



Source: puhutv.com Dip (21 March 2020)

Music using highly contributes to the series narrative. The series adopts a melodramatic tone in sequences of hallucinations of Sahir about his dead wife, which the song of Cem Karaca named Bekle Beni (Wait for Me) is used. Sahir has an obsession with the song and used to listen to it in tears when he comes home and begins to drink. Erkin Koray's Akrebin Gözleri (Eyes of The Scorpion) is another song from Turkish rock music of the 1970s, which is used in *Dip*. On the other hand, the soundtrack of the series is dominated with electronic music created by the Turkish psychedelic rock star Gaye Su Akyol with Ali Güçlü Şimşek and Görkem Karabudak.

5.4.1.3 Themes and ideology

The theme of the series is the struggle among two groups who have conflict about the defense system of the country. The fight between the good and the evil which is based on national benefits is carried on via individual sacrifices of group members. And the fight ends up according to the behavioral differences between man and woman. Orhan, who is blackmailed with the life of his own daughter, does not accept the offer and sacrifices his

daughter to protect his oath. However, the woman whom he works with and has an affair for a long time warns Orhan not to ignore the life of his daughter. She gets furious when she heard Orhan's decision and resembles the warehouse where the two groups meet to do bargain, to the Mount Mina – the holy mountain which is believed that Abraham had intended to sacrifice his son Ishmael to God at the top of it. She says:

“Why was it Abraham who took his son to Mount Mina? Why didn't Hagar take him instead? Why his wife takes the child? Because no mother gives up her child. Even if it's God's command. You do because you were not the ones who gave birth. The world history is full of men who sacrificed the ones whom they never gave birth to, for the sake of their own dreams.”

In terms of gender, Dip has a modernist viewpoint by depicting its female characters who are middle-class women as powerful and independent. Sahir sees a man who humiliates a woman in a bar and then he says to his friend: *“Men can't handle women. Women are different now. They make their own money, they can support themselves, they have sex, have power, need no one, don't answer to no one. Men do not like that.”* Soon after he meets the same man in the toilet of the bar and beats him to give him a lesson about being kind to the women. However, he uses violence too, which underlines the difference between Abraham and Hagar.

Distrust on the police or juridical system is not deeply emphasized in *Dip* due to being based on a conflict between the former members of the intelligence service of the state which makes the police or juridical system less apparent. However, it is not totally left. The members of the group which is represented as 'the evil' have more power over police and juridical system than the good ones. The prosecutor who works on the case of one of Orhan's students defines the reason for death as suicide though it was a murder, as he was told by some people on the 'top'. The ones who were represented as the 'evil' control the ones who are the head of the juridical system and make them act according to their orders. In addition, Sahir visits a prison where he was sent to a suicide attempt occurs. The one who tries to kill himself is a prisoner who is kept in a special part of the prison where the life-sentenced criminals are kept. The officer tells Sahir that, the part of the building where they kept these criminals was independent of their rules. They rule themselves on their own. They are very dangerous criminals who make the officers feel afraid and prefer to stay away. Officer also say they manage to reach weapons from outside which make them more dangerous. He also warns Sahir not to involve the case, but Sahir enters there

where later he is taken by two men and make him reach the hidden basement. There is a huge archive and computer systems in the basement. The man Sahir meets tells him “*the independent archive of the country*” is being kept there. The man in the basement of the prison who is the head of the secret archive tells Sahir: “*Think about it, this must be the only safe place left. Outside these walls is a prison of its own.*” The ‘good’ ones are hiding in the independent part of a prison from the ‘bad’ ones who totally occupied the outside. Artun, the head of the evil team, explains the reason for the change in his decision as: “*There is no ideology left. Wealth is the only issue now*” which also clarifies the reason for the occupation outside. There are also less significant details about illegal practices in the police. The driver of the police ambulance is color blind is told by Sahir: “*You will use the siren of the ambulance; traffic lights do not matter.*” When the ambulance is not on duty and they get stuck in the traffic, the driver used to open siren to make the other car allow him to pass.

On the other hand, Ali Kemal, one of the ‘good’ ones, says that “*For the benefit of the overall good, we may sometimes do little bad things*” and underlines the probability of being a victim for every individual, the impossibility of being an absolute good. Being independent from the issue that was used as the reason for the division between two sides, ‘the good’ and ‘the evil’, *Dip* protects it’s noirish pessimism by assigning the power to the evil.

5.5 HAKAN: MUHAFIZ (THE PROTECTOR) (NETFLIX TR)

*“You should fulfill your destiny
and kill the last immortal”*

Netflix released its first Turkey-based original series *Hakan: Muhafiz (The Protector)* in 14 December 2018, almost after two years since it was officially launched in Turkey (“Netflix’in Türkiye’deki İlk Orijinali Hakan: Muhafız, 14 Aralık’ta Yayınlanacak” 2018). According to Netflix’s policy, the series was released by binge release method which let viewers to be able to reach the first season’s all ten episodes having durations from 31 to 42 minutes, at the same time. It was adapted from the book of Nilüfer İpek

Gökdel named *Karakalem ve Bir Delikanlının Tuhaf Hikayesi* by scriptwriters Jason George, Yasemin Yılmaz, Emre Özpınırççı, Kerim Ceylan, Binnur Karaevli, Volkan Sümbül. Director of the first three and last two episodes is Can Evrenol, while 4th, 5th and 6th episodes were director by Umut Aral and 7th and 8th were by Gönenç Uyanık.

5.5.1 Generic Conventions

The genre of *Hakan: Muhafız (The Protector)* is a superhero centered fantasy drama. Narratives of the fantasy genre are mostly based on experiences that are not possible in the real world and they used to involve “mythical creatures” which have extraordinary powers (Fowkes 2010, p.2). The protagonist of *Hakan: Muhafız* is a stereotypical fantasy character whose life turns upside down all of a sudden after the transformation he had which creates a superhero from an ordinary human and gives him heavy duties such as saving the city he lives. Superhero based narratives are divided into two as fantasy dramas or science fiction dramas. According to Casey et al. (2008, p.45)

First science fiction takes its departure point as real scientific and technological development. Many science-fiction texts extrapolate from an actual invention to the possible ways in which it might be used or abused (weaponry, computers and biological experimentation are common examples). Therefore, although it is fiction, it begins with ‘fact’ and can be seen as based in the rational and the explicable. Second, science-fiction texts are based on the present or look ahead to the future.

For instance, Peter Parker who is an ordinary young man is bitten by a spider which turns him into Spiderman, however, the spider is actually a creature with mutated genes (Layman 2005, p.194). Having an explanation for the transformation of its superhero via genetic change makes Spiderman a science fiction. On the other hand, the protagonist of *Hakan: Muhafız* is a young man having limited physical strength as a human in the beginning. He learns that he is the chosen one for duty when he wears a talismanic shirt. The shirt quickly invades his upper body and scares him very much.

Figure 5. 17 Transformation of Superhero in *Hakan: Muhafiz*



Source: netflix.com Hakan: Muhafiz (The Protector) (accessed 03 April 2020)

After the talismanic shirt disappears, a circle tattoo appears on his chest which is the sign of being the chosen one. Soon after he is shot to test his superpowers and the bullet which leaves the gun hits his chest and falls down as if it hit a concrete material. The test proves that the shirt has a magical power to protect the one who wears it. He is told “*Unite with the shirt!*” to teach his mind and learn to control his power. Then a lump of burning coal is put in his palm but his palm is not get burnt. According to the legend which is told him, the talismanic shirt was present since the 16th century and it makes the ones who wear it immortal. The chosen one who is charged to save the city as his ancestor had done in the past, has to wear it before starts his mission. As a result, *Hakan: Muhafiz* is a fantasy drama due to having a superhero whose power is based on magic rather than technology or science.

5.5.1.1 Plot and characters

Plot

Hakan (Çagatay Ulusoy) is an orphaned young man in his twenties, who raised by his stepfather Neşet (Yücel Korkmaz). He is a vivacious man despite being a lower-class man living in suburbs and working as a shopkeeper in his stepfather’s store in Grand Bazaar. He used to make plans about getting rich and become a man like Faysal Demir (Okan Yalabik), who is an ultra-rich businessman and the owner of Conglomeration of Cavidan. Hakan’s unexpected adventure starts when their store is visited by a woman who looks

for a shirt having spell-like motifs on it. Neşet checks the pictures of the shirt and lies woman about not having a stuff like that. Woman offer a very high payment if they find the shirt and leaves the store. Hakan remembers that they have this shirt in their storage and ask his father the reason of his lie. However, Neşet does not make any explanation about the importance of the shirt. Hakan cannot stop his desire for getting the money that woman offered and calls the woman to sell her the shirt. He takes his best friend with him to meet this woman and when they get together in a restaurant they are assaulted by armed men. Neşet who followed Hakan arrives and saves his son and interrupts the selling of the shirt. Neşet who was deadly shot rejects to go to the hospital and takes Hakan's to his old friend's pharmacy. He tells Hakan to trust the owner of the pharmacy who is a middle-aged man named Kemal (Yurdaer Okur) and dies very soon due to his wounds. Hakan's life turns upside down all of a sudden. Doctor Kemal who owns the pharmacy confesses every secret which Hakan should know and offers him help with his daughter Zeynep (Hazar Ergüçlü). Hakan learns that he is the chosen one, the Protector, who has a duty to save Istanbul from the evil guy known as the Immortal and aims to destroy the city. Even though Hakan does not want to believe in these people, he accepts to wear the shirt and after the transformation which makes him invincible, he has to believe what is told about him the legend. According to the legend, Hakan needs to find the holy dagger and the ring to kill the last Immortal, and he starts an investigation with Kemal and Zeynep on finding clues to reach these objects. During their adventures, Hakan suspects a man who might be the Immortal and starts to work with him to be close to him. This man is Mazhar Dragusha ((Mehmet Kurtulus) who is a close friend of Faysal Demir, and also works as the security chief in his conglomeration. When Hakan starts to work as Faysal Demir's bodyguard, he falls in love with Faysal's beautiful assistant Leyla (Ayça Aysin Turan). Soon after Faysal Demir fires Mazhar, and Hakan becomes the new security chief. Mazhar gets very disappointed due to his close friend's betrayal and decides to kill Hakan. However, Hakan kills him accidentally during the fight between them. As a result, it is revealed that real immortal is not Mazhar, he is Faysal Demir. Faysal saves Hakan from prison by using his influence on the police and confesses to him that he knows the Protector is him since the first day they met. Faysal threatens Hakan about killing Leyla and convinces him to give the shirt and some of his blood which will bring a dead woman to life again, who was his wife and once upon a time was an immortal too.

Characters

Hakan, the protagonist and the superhero of the series, is a lower-class young man who lives alone in the suburbs of Istanbul. He is an energetic and independent person and wishes to establish his own business become very rich with his best friend who is a funny and lazy young man. All young women living in his street admires him. He cares about physical appearance and strength and manages to attract young women easily. He does not have a girlfriend and has one-night stands with women he meets when he works. He also values justice and tries to keep the peace in his neighborhood. He beats the adults who hit children. As Morris (2005, p.52) notes, a superhero has to be strong in every aspect. Mainly he should have the physical capacity to save people who are in danger. He also should impress others with his bold, patient, straightforward, and caring personality. It can be argued that he has been a superhero without superpowers before he learned about his destiny and obtain his magical power. However, he makes a great mistake before his life turns upside down when he decides to sell the shirt to reach money, without informing his father.

Kemal, is a middle-aged man who is a doctor and owns a pharmacy where he uses as a hidden place to meet with the other loyal ones – the ones who wait for the chosen one and have an oath to protect him. He has a function as the ‘good man’ who supports the superhero, assists him in the beginning of his new life, and even sacrifices his life in favor of him. Kemal has a young daughter named Zeynep (Hazar Ergüçlü) who is a teaching assistant in the history department studying The Ottoman armor and war weapons. Zeynep cares and teaches Hakan about fighting techniques before he starts his journey. However, she has feelings about him which would cause ups and downs in their relationship in the future.

Leyla, is the beautiful young woman whom the superhero falls in love with. She is a lower-class woman who needs to support her sick mother financially. She works as the assistant of ‘the evil’ (villain) and causes trouble for the superhero by causing him to stay close with the evil.

Faysal Demir, the villain of the series, is an ultra-rich businessman who hires Hakan as his private bodyguard. He is also one of the seven immortals who plan to conquer the city. However, he has a priority before conquering the city, which is reaching his dead

wife. He needs the blood of the Protector to bring her back to life again. In general, the issues in the backgrounds of super-villains are revealed to clarify the reason which turns them into the evil (Brenzel 2005, p.153).

5.5.1.2 Style and settings

Fantasy genre has increased its popularity since the release of the first film of *The Lord of The Rings* trilogy in 2001. Despite being defined as the most childish genre of cinema for years, it proved itself by attracting the grown-up ones with the *Harry Potter* series. Finally, *Game of Thrones* had been the most-watched television series of its channel with the final episode of its 9th season (Gartenberg, 2019). When all these popular films or series are considered, it can be argued that being visually qualified had contributed to their success as well as their narrations.

As Fowkes (2010, p.5) points out, using iconography can be convenient to recognize the fantasy genre. Stereotypical characters like magicians, witches, little fairies, giant monsters, besides flying humans or talking animals all announce the themes of films or series. However, all fantasy films or series does not have to include characters like these are. *Hakan: Muhafiz* uses visually fantastic elements in limited amount. Hakan: the superhero does not experience a change in his appearance. Only three objects which are described in the legend: the talismanic shirt, dagger and ring are used as fantastical objects which can sparkle or invade the body. On the other hand, talismanic shirts are not made-up outfits that are created for the series.

The talismanic shirts which their earliest examples were encountered in the Hittites have reached the present day by differentiating from pre-Islamic Turks to the Seljuk State and from there to the Ottoman State. The talismanic shirts were often worn especially by the Ottoman sultans. Moreover, the dates of important events like sultan ceremonies, war announcements, the movements of the army used to be arranged according to the auspicious days which were determined by the head of the astrologers. Preparations of these shirts used to be started at the time of honor set by the astrologers, and they were decorated by illumination masters who write 55 verses of Quran. There are 87 shirts in the Sultan Dresses Collection in Topkapı Palace. In addition, these shirts also includes unexplained letters, Esma-i Husna, the name of the four angels, the prophet stamp, Hz. Ali's Zülfikar sword and various plant motifs. (Baydar, 2018)

The talismanic shirt is the key object of the series for being the reason for the fight between the superhero and villain. Having a narrative based on a legend related to Ottoman Empire allows using the sequences from the 16th century which the viewers are familiar as a result of former local period dramas. These sequences are all used with voice-over narrations for informing the viewer about the destiny of Hakan.

Figure 5. 18 16th century compositions in *Hakan: Muhafiz*



Source: netflix.com Hakan: Muhafiz (The Protector) (accessed 03 April 2020)

Filming locations of the series are all in Istanbul, including Grand Bazaar, Sultanahmet Mosque, Aya Sofia in the historical peninsula, Bosphorus, suburban streets of Fatih, skyscrapers in Şişli, Prince Island. The aim of touristic promotion of Istanbul can be observed by the overuse of the Istanbul landscape between sequences. On the other hand, having three directors for ten episodes in the first season can be observed especially via the visual characteristics of the series. For instance, unusual perspectives like the extra low or oblique angle perspectives which are used by Can Evrenol in the first and third episodes are not used in the following episodes.

Figure 5. 19 Evrenol's extra low or oblique angles in *Hakan: Muhafiz*



Source: netflix.com Hakan: Muhafiz (The Protector) (accessed 03 April 2020)

5.5.1.3 Themes and ideology

With its superhero-based narrative, the theme of *Hakan: Muhafiz* is the battle between the good and the evil. According to Loeb & Morris (2005, p.11), superhero stories voices the most inner wishes and fears of individuals. They may function to give inspiration to find a way to get rid of the fear about the future or depict the present realities. The legend which is told to Hakan, begins with the conquest of Istanbul by Ottoman Empire:

Soon after Mehmet the Conqueror conquered Constantinople, he realized he had enemies in the city. Seven Immortals who devoted themselves to destroy Istanbul and the world. Nobody knew when or where they came from, but all famines, floods and earthquakes were traced back to them. One night, Mehmet had a dream. He came to know how to identify and kill the immortals who looked like one of us. Mehmed saw three objects in his dream. The first one is the virtue ring that glows when it touches an immortal. The second one is a unique dagger that can kill the immortal. And the third one is a shirt that would serve as an armor in this deadly war. The talismanic shirt which is protected by holy prayers, still has symbols that remain mysterious even today. All we know is there is a special connection between the shirt and the protector. So, the Protector is the Mehmed chosen due to his skills, his power and his pure heart. Hakan, you are the last Protector!

According to the legend, Hakan has a blood tie with Mehmet the Conqueror and Istanbul still needs to be protected from the enemies which are visible or invisible. The young Ottoman Emperor Mehmet's fear of losing Istanbul embodies seven mythical creatures that still haunt his grand grandson. The evil continues to threaten him and waits for his only one mistake to take back the city he lost. The immortality of the evil represents the unending threat for Istanbul which still continues today.

In terms of gender, the series does not focus on gender conflicts and keeps the struggle between the good and the evil. When the masculinity and femininity performances are evaluated, it can be argued that the series has a modernist representation for both genders. Doctor Kemal's attitude towards his daughter has not patriarchal codes.

On the contrary to gender, class conflicts are clearer in the series. When the protagonist/superhero Hakan is a lower-class man who cares the peace and justice, the evil/villain: Faysal Demir is an upper-class man who has no limits on reaching his goals. The series questions the police legitimacy with the influence of the immortal Faysal Demir and his devoted friend Mazhar Dragusha (Mehmet Kurtuluş) on the police. Mazhar

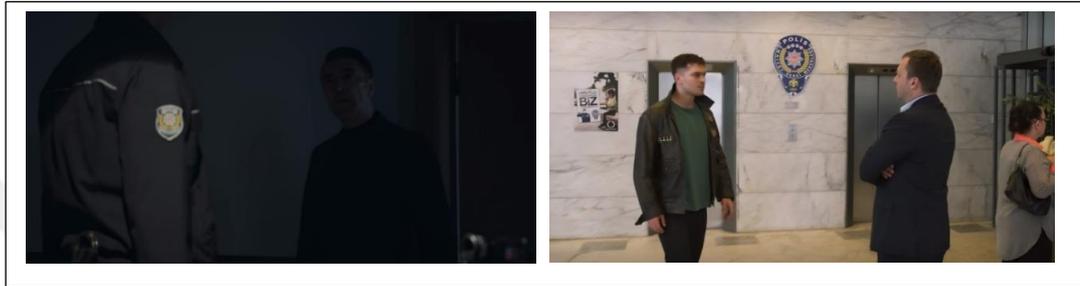
Dragusha knows the real identity of his friend Faysal and helps him in great loyalty to reach his goal of conquering the city.

Mazhar works with a policeman named Tekin (Mehmet Yılmaz Ak) to investigate about Hakan and the talismanic shirt illegally. Policeman Tekin tortures Memo (Cankat Aydos) who is the best friend of Hakan in an abandoned building. Two more men help Tekin to beat the tied-up man to make him confess about Hakan's place. However, Memo rejects answering Tekin's questions despite being severely tortured. Soon after Tekin calls Mazhar to want the money Mazhar promised him. During the call, it becomes clear that the attack made to get the talismanic shirt and resulted murder of Hakan's father is organized by the policeman Tekin. Later on, Tekin meets Mazhar to inform him about his research about Hakan's father. But Mazhar finds the information he reached in insufficient and warns him to make a deeper investigation and satisfy him. Then Tekin organizes a trap in the middle of Sultanahmet Square by using Memo's dead body as if he is sitting on a bench and waiting for Hakan. When Hakan comes closer to Memo, Tekin tries to shoot him with a sniper. However, bullets cannot hit Hakan's body and Tekin once again fails. When the assault occurred in Sultanahmet Square is investigated, the sniper's identity is exposed and Tekin was forced to resign by his chief in the police station. Tekin visits Mazhar in great despair due to losing his career and asks him to do something to prevent his manager to expose his crime. Mazhar rejects him by asserting the failures about his orders. However, Tekin takes a risk and tells Mazhar: "*Do you have a bolder man in the police? You need me.*" Mazhar brings him a briefcase as if he decided to help him. He gives the briefcase and tells Tekin: "*100.000 €. Your chief will forget everything once he sees this money.*" Actually, there is a bomb in the briefcase and it explodes when Tekin opens it in his car. After Tekin was killed, it becomes clear that Mazhar's relationships within the police are not limited to Tekin.

After a young man who accuses Faysal Erdem of his father's disappearance, tries to kill Faysal, and gets arrested, Mazhar comes in the police bureau as if he is the lawyer of the young man and interrupts his interrogation. When the policeman in the interrogation room leaves them alone, Mazhar presses the button of the camera and stops the recording of interrogation which should continue to record according to the law. In this scene, stopping the recording is seen in close-up to show the influence of Mazhar which means that he can do whatever he wants in the police station. Normally the interrogation rooms have a

mirror-like wall that let others outside the room watch the process and there are microphones to let them hear the conversations in the room. However, Mazhar can break all the rules, by proving that he was above the law. The scene continues with Mazhar's confession about the murder of the young man's father. He says that the murderer was also himself and he would continue to kill his mother and sister if he does not obey him.

Figure 5. 20 Emphasis on the General Directorate of Security Logo in *Hakan: Muhafiz*



Source: netflix.com Hakan: Muhafiz (The Protector) (accessed 03 April 2020)

In the final episode of the first season, Hakan kills Mazhar accidentally and gets arrested. However, Faysal visits the police station and Hakan is released in a few minutes. The policeman tells Hakan when he is opening the doors of prison that *“We got an order from someone important. You saved your ass.”* And Hakan is welcomed by Faysal in the corridor of the police center, in front of a wall with the logo of the general directorate of security of Turkey.

5.6 ATİYE (THE GIFT) (NETFLIX TR)

*“The world is pregnant with something big.
The birth will be here, in Anatolia.”*

Netflix TR released its second Turkey-based original series *Atiye (The Gift)* on 27 December 2019 with binge release method, one year later than its first original series

(“Atiye'nin ilk sezonu yayınlandı” 2019). The first season of the series has 8 episodes with their durations changing from 42 to 55 minutes. *Atiye* is also a literary adaptation like *Hakan: Muhafiz*. Writers Jason George, Nuran Evren Şit and Fatih Ünal adapted the script of the series from Şengül Boybaş’s novel named *Dünyanın Uyanışı* (Awakening of The World). Gönenc Uyanık is the director of five episodes of the series and three of them are directed by Ozan Açıktan.

5.6.1 Generic Conventions

Atiye (The Gift) is a super heroine-based fantasy drama, which builds its narrative on the self-realization of a young woman who discovers her inherited supernatural powers. Different from the superhero of *Hakan: Muhafiz*, *Atiye*’s superheroine does not use talismanic objects to reach her power, and her transformation occurs mentally when she faces her inner fears and learns about her blood tie with a mythological goddess. According to Fowkes (2010, p.9), fantasy manages to attract the viewer by letting him/her experience the impossible and forget about the limits of the real world. The viewer is engaged “on both a psychological and a symbolic level” The series contributes its narrative visually by including symbolic representations to support the imagination of the viewer. For instance, the composition which depicts the rebirth of the protagonist by arising from the hill covered with sand symbolizes a womb which is made of the earth: the womb of Mother Nature. Or the protagonist finds her dead sisters in the mysterious cave in a bright forest with pink lights which evokes the feeling of peace and happiness by resembling the common imagination of heaven.

Figure 5. 21 Womb and Heaven depictions in *Atiye*



Source: netflix.com *Atiye (The Gift)* (accesses 02 May 2020)

When the source of the superheroine's power is considered, the series can also be categorized as supernatural fiction. Supernatural fiction is a broad definition involving all fantasies, metaphysical horror or science fiction. Supernatural narrations go beyond the limits of physics and act against the rules of nature. They include stories begin with gothic fantasies, ghost stories, occult stories like witchcraft, possession, vampire or werewolf tales (Clute & Grant 1997, p.909). The protagonist of the series meets a shepherd in an isolated road, who is the ghost of a small girl who was killed many years before. In addition, the goddess she has a blood tie with has occult powers such as healing of others with her blood or ability to re-born.

5.6.1.1 Plot and characters

Plot

Atiye (Beren Saat) is a young woman who is an abstract painter and used to draw a specific symbol in different versions. She has hallucinations for a while about an old woman in authentic clothes who calmly stares at her. In the premiere of her last exhibition, she sees the same old woman once again in the gallery and runs after her, but the old woman disappears. On the same night, she learns the news about Göbeklitepe (the archeological site in southeastern Turkey) where an ancient artifact is found which has the same symbol on it as Atiye always draws. Next day she goes to Urfa immediately without informing anyone she knows, and on the road, she meets a shepherd girl having a star tattoo on her forehead who is actually a hallucination. The shepherd girl gets in her car and takes her to the excavation area of Göbeklitepe. Atiye meets Erhan in the area, who is the head archeologist of Göbeklitepe. However, Erhan (Mehmet Günsür) does not let her enter the cave where the artifact is. The shepherd girl helps Atiye to enter the cave and she sees the huge cavern full of purple stones on its floor. After she returns to Istanbul, her boyfriend Ozan (Metin Akdülger) who has a paranoia about being cheated, proposes Atiye not to lose her and all of a sudden Atiye finds herself in the middle of organizations of her wedding. During these days she attends a conference where she was invited by Erhan and she learns that Erhan's father who was also an archeologist and the first person who started the research on Göbeklitepe. Erhan shows her the notebook of father where

there was a sketch of the shepherd girl with a star tattoo on her forehead. During the meeting of her wedding organization, Atiye has a seizure and has a hallucination about her own corpse body which drives her crazy. Soon after she is diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and forced to have medication by her doctor and her parents. She gets devastated and quits searching about Göbeklitepe. But Erhan finds the mysterious old woman and visits her with Atiye. The old woman named Zühre (Meral Çetinkaya) tells Atiye that she is her grandmother who is still alive. Next day Ozan's father Serdar (Tim Seyfi) who is a powerful businessman captures the notebook of Erhan's father by sending attackers on Erhan. At the same time, Atiye's mother Serap (Başak Köklükaya) deceives her by telling her grandmother is dead years ago and makes her believe she is very sick. However, on the wedding night, Erhan visits Atiye and tells her that he found her grandmother Zühre, and Atiye runs away with Erhan.

Her escape results in a great crisis for the family. Ozan's father Serdar insists on not letting the press hear about Atiye's escape. However, Mustafa (Civan Canova) who is Atiye's father and a police retiree makes an investigation about her daughter's missing and he learns that his mother-in-law Zühre is really alive and his wife lies them. While everybody looks for her, Atiye goes to the Mount Nemrut with Erhan and Zühre. According to Zühre, Atiye would find the secret about her in Nemrut. Zühre also helps Erhan to discover that the car accident in which he lost his father, mother, and little sister when he was a child was actually a murder to stop his father's works about Göbeklitepe and silence him about the secret he had. In the mount Nemrut, Zühre dies at the sunrise after telling Atiye to start her journey to find her own way. Atiye sees the shepherd girl once again and the girl takes her to a cave where she gets stuck due to the collapse of the stones on the gate. Erhan informs the police to save her. Atiye's family with Ozan and Serdar also come to Mount Nemrut to follow the operation. While she is being searched, Atiye has a mysterious journey in the cave about her life and faces the realities she ignored for a long time. At the end of the road in the cave, Atiye sees her grandmother Zühre, who tells her she is ready to be born again and Atiye finds herself at the top of the mount Nemrut under the sand and she wakes up.

After Atiye is found and they turned to Istanbul, she learns her connection with Shahmaran who is the queen of snakes having a healing power according to Middle Eastern mythology. After her reborn, Atiye obtains supernatural powers. Her ex-fiancé

Ozan sleeps with her sister Cansu (Melisa Senolsun) and Cansu is killed by Ozan's father Serdar who wishes his soon marry Atiye. After Cansu's murder, it is revealed that Serdar knows the secret power of Atiye. He is being directed by the dark forces for a long time who aim to open the gate in the cave of Göbeklitepe which can only be opened by Atiye. According to the letter which is written by Erhan's father, the gate has a connection with the secret about 'time' and its reality which has not been discovered by humankind until that day. Serdar sends a woman who works for him to catch Atiye and Erhan who go to Göbeklitepe to open the gate, but the woman cannot stop Atiye. Atiye opens the gate and finds her sister Cansu in the 'other' side of the cave, then takes her back to life again. When she leaves the cave, she finds herself in a different year and her sister does not know her.

Characters

Atiye, the protagonist and the superheroine of the series, is an upper-middle-class woman who is a painter but also works as a teacher as a result of her mother's insists. She has a stable relationship with her fiancé Ozan and a close bond with her sister Cansu. However, she has problems with her mother Serap who has despotic personality, on the contrary to her father Mustafa who is a caring man and very close to his two daughters. Atiye's self-realization process which is trigger by her grandmother who has mystical powers actually follows a path similar as the popular discourses new age movement offers. New age movement has been promoted self-improvement discourse all over the world since the 1980s, which means "going beyond one's 'socialized self' and getting in touch with one's 'true self' or ones 'inner self' through practices such as meditation" (Thompson, 2018). Atiye faces her deepest fears which are the cause of her hidden pain, in the cave she gets lost. She suffers from the rape of her boyfriend, her mother's lack of love, her envy on her sister. And she manages to heal herself when she confesses them to herself. As Loeb & Morris (2005, p.16) notes, the starting points of superhero narrations used to be the fears of humanity. They depict this fear via a threat that would harm huge crowds, and the superhero begins to struggle to defeat the threat which ends with a victory. The function of the superhero is "both inspirational and aspirational". Atiye's new age style journey which is overemphasized in the narration can be interpreted as inspirational.

Erhan functions as the detective of the series, due to his investigations on the secret of Göbeklitepe and the mysterious destiny of Atiye. He is an archeologist man who raised in an orphanage after losing his family in a car accident. He is a melancholic and hard-working person. He describes the loneliness he felt when he was a child as *“You wait in the corner, willing to show everyone love, but those people always prioritize someone else.”* Besides his despair, he has grown up by blaming himself about the car accident, until he learned that the accident was actually a murder. His relationship with Atiye begins as a guide or lecturer, then it turns into a love affair that supports Atiye to release herself from the family circle interrupting her independence.

Serdar, the evil/villain of the series, is an ultra-rich businessman who is the father of Atiye’s fiancé Ozan. He has a sadistic personality and tortures his own son to make him stronger. He defends his acts by telling him *“if there is one emotion that defines a person more than love, its pain.”* He is aware of Atiye’s special mission which would impact humankind and his real ambition is being able to follow her and reach the map showing the mysterious gate before Atiye. He has a connection with a group which is represented as the evil forces who aim to destroy humanity. He used to perform pray like activities as if he is worshiping to a mysterious god and is commanded by a non-human digital voice about his duties.

5.6.1.2 Style and settings

Fantasy dramas are frequently inspired by mythological gods or goddesses or ancient characters. Blending the myths with real used to attract the viewer who wishes to see the historical references in the stories of today’s world. *Atiye* as a fantasy drama, is one of the clearest examples of these dramas who aim to get the attention of the audience by using a mystery of the unknown which is also the real. The series uses the archaeological site named Göbeklitepe by connecting the site with its protagonist’s ancestors, besides her self-improvement journey.

Archaeological Site of Göbeklitepe which is commonly named as ‘the lost civilization’ is 18 km far from Şanlıurfa city center, which was discovered first in 1963 when the crews from Istanbul University and Chicago University were making a research in

the area. However, the beginning year of excavations is 1994 and the findings of the area have shown that they are from the Neolithic period and are about 12000 years old.

According to the storyline of the series, father of the archeologist Erhan, had been the head of the team as the professor of Istanbul University who started the excavations many years before. Erhan now follows the path of his father and continues to reveal the mystery of the site. The series adopts the real history of the site by involving characters with backgrounds suiting the facts. However, involvement of Göbeklitepe to the narration has also a different function which is explained by Pelin Diştaş, who is the content coordinator of Netflix TR, during the promotions of the first season of the series. Diştaş had declared that they aim to attract both local and foreign tourists to visit Göbeklitepe: the national treasure of Turkey (2019).

Figure 5.22 Göbeklitepe and Nemrut compositions in *Atiye*



Source: netflix.com *Atiye* (The Gift) (accesses 02 May 2020)

In visually speaking, *Atiye* reveals the strategy of touristic promotion in the 1st, 4th, and 8th episodes frequently. The composition including the characters both via close-ups or wide-angle perspectives is used to introduce the excavation area of Göbeklitepe, as well as the natural landscapes of its region. Mount Nemrut is also involved in the series, where there are the tombs and giant statues of mythological gods and goddesses on the summit of the mountain on the 2206 meters high. The Mount Nemrut, where *Atiye* gets lost in a cave had been used both in night and day time settings in the series.

Main filming location of the series is Istanbul, however, the key places of the city are not presented to increase the recognition of the city, and only urban landscapes are used between the sequences to indicate changing time intervals.

As a fantasy drama *Atiye* is darker than *Hakan: Muhafiz*. Nocturnal settings are frequently used to underline the mystery of the evil force following Atiye, and rain is used to increase the anxiety for the possible danger waiting for good ones.

Figure: 5.23 Dark atmosphere of *Atiye*



Source: netflix.com *Atiye* (The Gift) (accesses 02 May 2020)

5.6.1.3 Themes and ideology

Despite including a protagonist who has supernatural powers, the theme of the series does not focus on the battle between good and evil as most of its similar ones do, and it shows a different way to its protagonist to use her superpowers which is self-realization and healing. The story of a young woman who faces her sufferings caused both by others and by herself, also includes gender conflicts as a theme.

In terms of gender, the series has a modernist way of representation of women with its powerful and independent female figures besides the protagonist, while avoiding the adoption of masculine discourse. However, the salvation of Atiye is not totally her own success and she owes her independence and fulfilled self-improvement to Erhan half and half. If Erhan could not find her grandmother and takes her away from the wedding, she

would be the wife of a man she does not love, who is actually a rapist, and probably her mental health would go worse. As a result, it is not possible to claim that *Atiye* has a feminist discourse with its powerful female protagonist. In her spiritual journey she experienced in the cave, it is revealed that she was raped when she was drunk, by her fiancé Ozan, in the very early days of their affair, but then she had preferred to ignore the rape and continued her affair with him and even accepted his proposal. After her spiritual transformation, *Atiye* refuses Ozan's proposal and leaves her by telling him "*We went on as long as we did because of your interest, your love. But now we're not going anywhere. I feel so much freer since I ran away from the wedding.*"

Even though the series begins with concepts like self-realization or spiritual healing which are known as the discourses promoted by new age movement in the last decades, the themes of Sufism also join the narrative. *Atiye's* grandmother Zühre uses the quotations of Shams-ı Tabrizi while she is explaining *Atiye* the secrets of her destiny. She says "*Eternity does not mean having endless time. It means timelessness. If you want to experience infinite enlightenment, you need to get the past the future out of your mind, and stay present, said a wise man, Shams-ı Tabrizi.*" Or Erhan who tries to discover the secret in his father's writings mentions quotations which are "*You don't want to turn your life upside down. How do you know that the other side of your life is not better than the side you know?*" and he says about the belief of fate, "*We all are the parts of the divine plan. We are all a continuation of one another. You could not stop what happened.*" When he continues his investigations, he finds a password including numbers 53, 16, 83, 6, 30, 19 written in Syriac language in his father's hidden documents and he realizes the relation of numbers with three suras of Quran with the help of a man he meets when he was in custody. The three verses mentioned in the series are:

*When that which shroudeth did enshroud the lote tree. (Necm (Star) Sura, 16. verse).
The day when all mankind stands before the Lord of the Worlds? (Mutaffifin Sura, 6. Verse). He bringeth forth the living from the dead, and He bringeth forth the dead from the living, and He reviveth the earth after her death. And even so will ye be brought forth. (Rûm Sura, 19. verse).*

Erhan begins to solve the mystery of Zühre, who has the soul Shahmaran: The Queen of Snakes and has the ability to reborn as it was mentioned in the verses. Shahmaran is a well-known character of Middle Eastern mythology is the key character of *Atiye's*

mystery. The legacy of Shahmaran that Atiye carries in her blood is revealed by the explanation of the old man who informs Erhan about his father's secret documents as below:

“People think snakes are dangerous, that they are poison, the devil itself. But in reality, snakes are the knowledge. They mean rebirth. They are tasked with protecting what's sacred. Shahmaran was the beautiful and graceful Queen of Snakes, and ruled in a hidden underground garden of heaven. But one day, a human discovered her and her crown. One of the people, out gathering honey, fell into her territory one day. After living with Shahmaran for a while, the human decided to return to his world. When the human told Shahmaran of this decision, Shahmaran, trusting the human, made him promise one thing: “You must tell no one where we live, where we hide. If you do, you will bring an end to us. Thing did not go well for her. Her most trusted friend betrayed her. People came and found her and killed her, believing her dead body would perform miracles. According to one belief, when Shahmaran dies, her soul passes to her daughter continuing to live within the daughter.”

According to Morris (2005, p.45) “there aren't many references to God in the mainline superhero stories. The world of the superheroes is for the most part a pretty secular place.” However, *Atiye* refers to the mythology, Sufism, and Islam while building on its narrative and combines them with historical locations in Turkey like Göbeklitepe and The Mount of Nemrut.

The series questions the police legitimacy by representing the police as an institution including members who take orders from the 'evil forces' of the series and support them to reach their goal. Atiye's father Mustafa who is a retired policeman hides the case of a car accident of Erhan's family which is actually a murder. When Atiye learns about the truth she calls him to account for an explanation and he confesses that the police had made it on purpose, they killed Erhan's father with his wife to stop his investigations. Mustafa says:

“They wanted to sweep this under the rug, but I hid it. It was a murder not an accident. The murdered family were shot at close range. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw it. Then they cleaned it all out, destroyed all the evidence. They said it was a state secret. I wanted to object but they threatened my family, my life. I did what I had to do. I kept quiet. Only thing I knew these men will do anything to reach their goal.”

Figure: 5.24 Victims of the Evil in *Atiye*



Source: netflix.com *Atiye* (The Gift) (accesses 02 May 2020)

Furthermore, Serdar, the evil of the series, uses his influence on the police whenever he needs. He manages to get the official permissions to use dynamists to explode the rock which closed the gate of the cave *Atiye* got lost in. Even though they have to be very careful about the environment due to ancient monuments of the area, he made the operation team use the dynamists to explode the cave. Serdar uses his influence on police once again when he decides to keep Erhan away from *Atiye*, and he makes him get arrested for artifact smuggling.

5.7 FINDINGS

5.7.1 Based on the Aesthetic and Ritual Approach

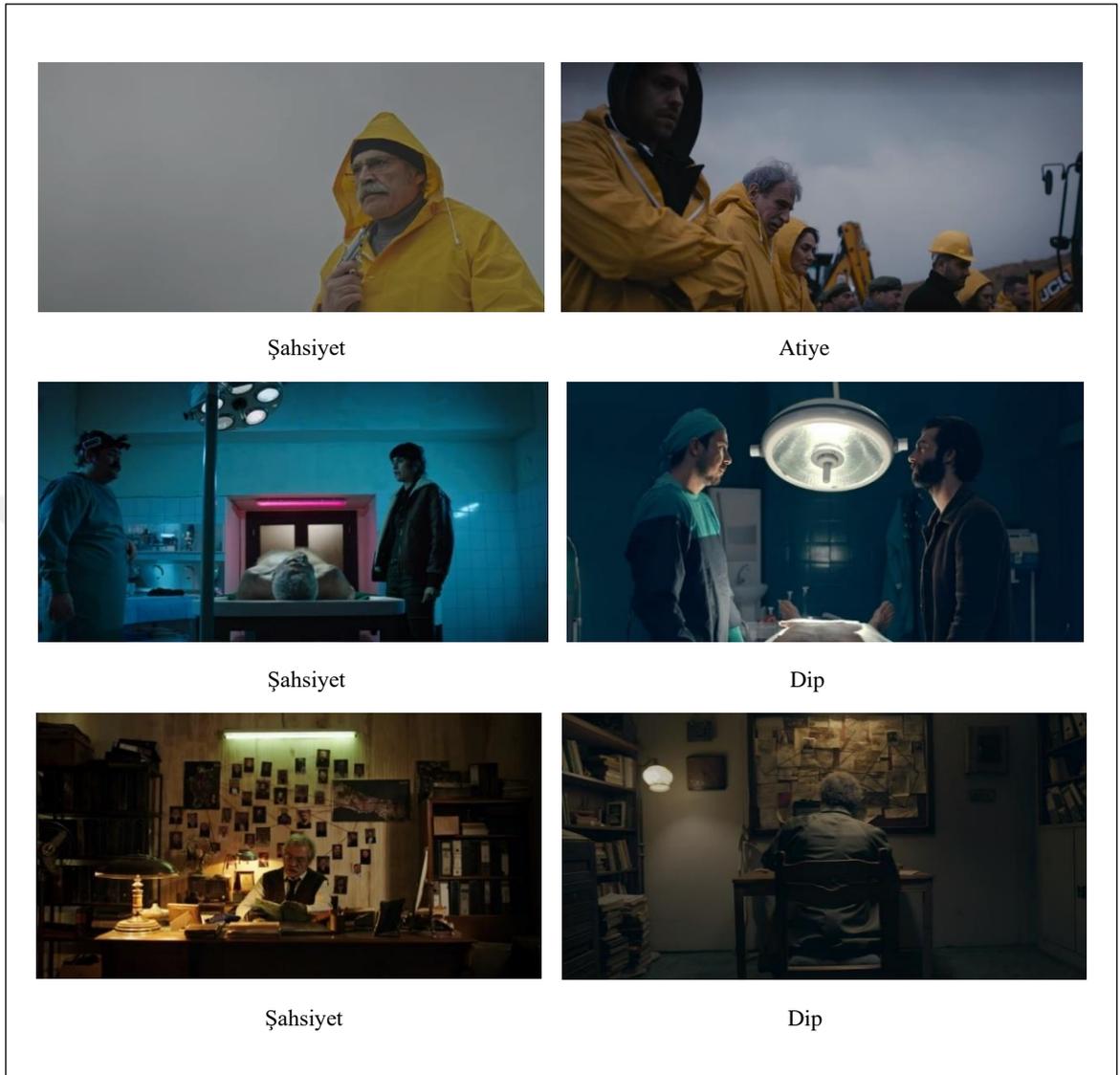
In the post television era, the quality in scriptwriting and producing for television series is gaining importance, as well as the artists who carry on these professions in the industry are being labeled as authors for a while (Pearson 2007, p.214). Before the era of post-television had started in 2016, the audience in Turkey had met television series like *Ezel* (2009) and *Son* (2012) having cinematic aesthetic with their unusual editing methods and high production qualities (Tüzün-Ateşalp 2016, p.21). However, the audience had exposed to series which are lack of newness and look like each other again in the following years. In the last decade, as the television audience has begun to get fragmented, the producers have tended to try new strategies. They had discovered that the demand for more specific content which differs from the ones on the black box with the creativity in

their scripts and dynamism in their storytelling. Traditional television series in Turkey which aims to keep the audience busy for hours and present him/her the advertisements between the programs got boring year by year for a group of audience who prefer to watch foreign series or films. As this part of the audience got used to the high quality in foreign television series, they began to demand the local contents which have similar qualities. The Turkish streaming services Blu TV and Puhu TV, and the global television performing Netflix have been providing Turkey-based series since 2017.

When the original/local contents of the streaming services in Turkey are evaluated, it can be seen that they differ from the series of traditional television by their narrations and visual characteristics. As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, these services prioritize the genres which are excluded by traditional television due to various reason such as censorship or prime-time hour's strategies which requires more conservative narratives. The most popular genre in the series of Turkish streaming services are crime dramas. Crime dramas do offer audience excitement while presenting the realistic and less spoken issues of today's world. The demand on crime drama is predictable when the audience who prefer streaming services are considered. On the other hand, Netflix TR had preferred fantasy drama genre for its first two Turkey-based series by aiming to reach broader audience.

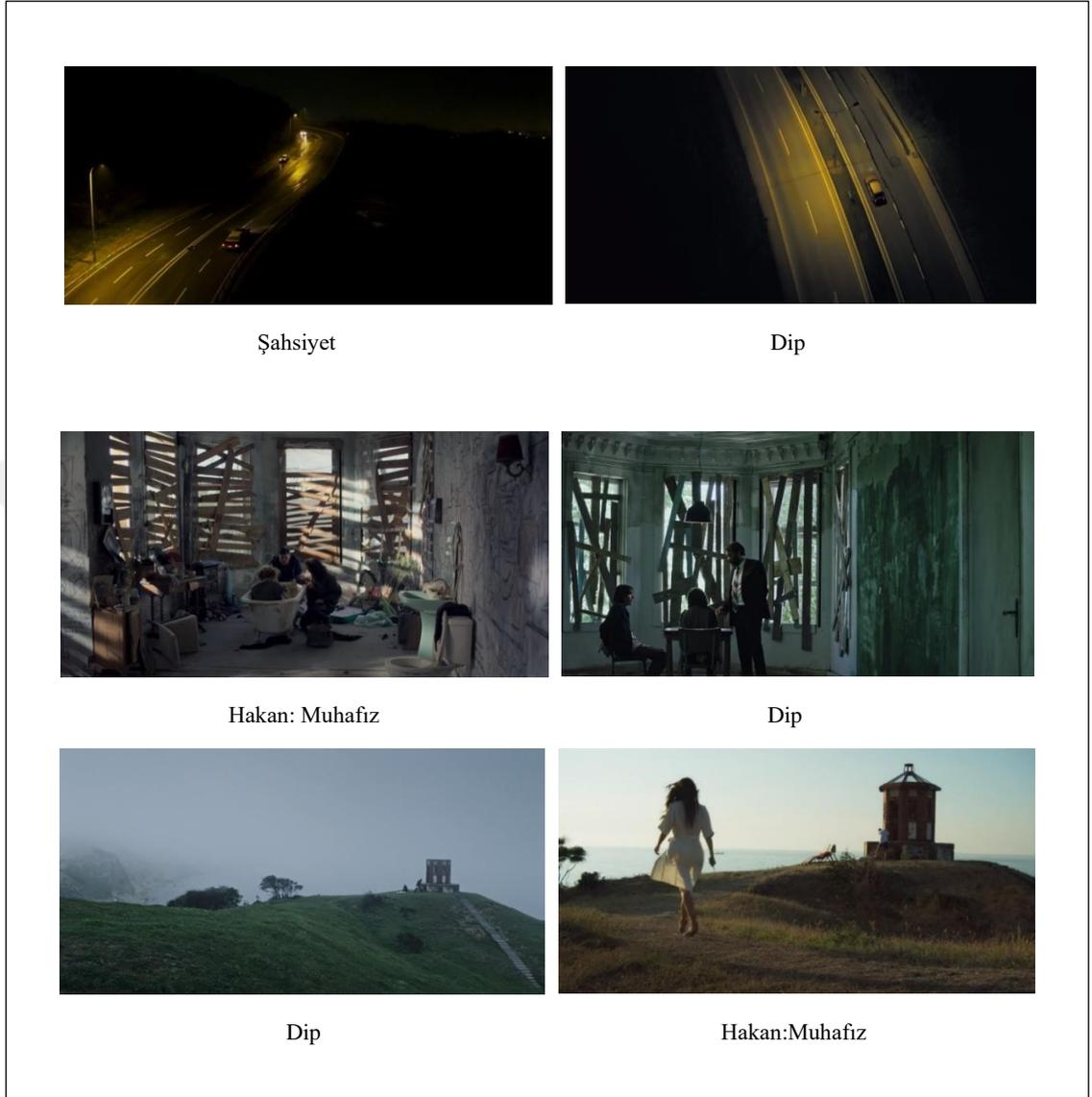
Independent from their genres, the three of series which are *Şahsiyet*, *Atiye* and *Dip* have similarities in their compositions, color preferences or filming locations shown below:

Figure 5.25 Similarities in compositions in *Şahsiyet*, *Atiye* and *Dip*



Source: puhutv.com and netflix.com (accessed 10 May 2020)

Figure 5.26 Similarities in filming locations in *Şahsiyet*, *Atiye* and *Dip*



Source: puhutv.com and netflix.com (accessed 10 May 2020)

In terms of settings, urban or natural landscapes which were frequently used in *Hakan: Muhafız* and *Atiye* for the promotion of the country had been criticized in Turkey. Film critic Murat Tolga Şen (2019) interprets the over-use of these landscapes as selling postcards to tourists. Şen also criticizes Netflix for following a guaranteed way in *Hakan: Muhafız* despite all opportunities it has, and preferring to sell 'cheap' action and sexuality with an Ottoman based superhero who kicks the asses of wealthy and lobbyist evils ("Netflix'in yerli işlerde cimriliği yine kendini belli etmiş! Kimsin sen Atiye!" 2019).

According to film critic Mehmet Açar (2020) despite having higher quality than *Hakan: Muhafiz*, the quality of *Atiye* is below the average of other non-English originals of Netflix and he underlines the necessity of creating series with artistic vision instead of ordered projects (“*Atiye*’nin Dayanılmaz Hafifliği” 2020).

Different from their visual characteristics, these series show resemblances in their casting preference too. First of Netflix TR which functions as the one and the only global television in the post-television era and prefers less ‘niche’ productions if they are non-English, works with two Turkish stars who are well known by the foreign audience with their internationally popular series. As King (2012, p.159) notes “Directors, genres and pre-sold or recycled materials all play their part. Stars, however, are generally seen as the most consistently reliable indicators of box-office potential. They are often at the center of the film-packaging process.” *Hakan: Muhafiz*’s leading actor is Çağatay Ulusoy who had become known with *Medcezir* and *Adını Feriha Koydum* internationally and his popularity unsurprisingly had contributed to *Hakan: Muhafiz*. Netflix had announced *Hakan: Muhafiz* had been watched at most in Brazil and Mexico, and it had been popular in other Latin America countries and followed by African countries. The total of its audience in Canada and Australia equals Mexico, as well as it had been watched in the Middle East and European countries. In addition, 85 percent of the series viewers were from outside of Turkey (“*Hakan: Muhafiz* dizisinin izlenme rakamları belli oldu” 2019).

Preferring Beren Saat as the leading actor of *Atiye* can be interpreted as ‘the strategy’ of Netflix too. Beren Saat has been one of the most popular Turkish star abroad, after the export of *Aşk-ı Memnu* and *Fatmagül’ün Suçu Ne?*. Netflix probably had considered the international popularity of two Turkish actors: Okan Yalabık (*Hakan Muhafiz*) and Mehmet Günsür (*Atiye*) who were reached the audience of almost every country with *Muhteşem Yüzyıl (Magnificent Century)*.

On the other hand, Turkish streaming services: Blu TV and Puhu TV are preferring to be more ‘local’ in their narrations when they are compared with Netflix TR. As it was explained in the previous chapter, *Behzat Ç.* and *Leyla ile Mecnun* had been two unique examples of Turkish television series which made the fragmentation of audience become more apparent than ever. Turkish audience who abandoned watching traditional television content had proved their demand on the ‘sincere’ one with their high interest

on *Behzat Ç.* and *Leyla ile Mecnun*. When the high number of international television series produced every year is considered, preferring the ‘local’ which provides sincerity easier, is understandable for Turkish streaming services which target the local audience, on the contrary to Netflix TR. The casts of these ‘local’ series have resemblances among each other too. For instance, Haluk Bilginer and Cansu Dere who had been the key characters in *Ezel*, got together in *Şahsiyet (Persona)* once again, While Haluk Bilginer had been in the cast of *Masum (The Innocent)* previously. Yiğit Özşener, the evil of *Ezel*, had become the protagonist of *Bozkır (Steppe)*, while Berrak Tüzünataç from the cast of *Ezel* had joined the cast of both *Fi* and *Dip (Base)*. In addition, two leading actors of *Leyla ile Mecnun* had met in *Masum (The Innocents)*, while Osman Sonant from *Leyla ile Mecnun* had become the evil of *Fi*.

In addition, creators of the local series of streaming services in Turkey all experienced more or less similar processes from pre-production to release dates by adopting the requirement of a different way of storytelling and marketing methods in accordance with the characteristics of a new medium. Being independent of the constraints of traditional television allowed considering the expectations of the intended audience on not ‘family-friendly’ content. As a result, the involvement of alcohol, cigarette, or nudity in these series does not need to be mentioned as a ‘finding’.

5.7.2 Based on the Ideological Approach

The six series that were chosen for the case studies of this thesis have a common feature which is adopting the battle between good and evil as a theme in general. The battle between good and evil is the broadest theme that is used by almost all narratives in literature, cinema, or television to build their conflict on. However, it is more apparent in some genres than others. Crime dramas and fantasy dramas -with their criminals and villains- are the two genres that underline this unending battle more when they are compared with others.

As Cooke (2008, p.29) points out, the television industry all over the world which has been facing a decrease in the audience shares lately, re-discovered the crime/detective

drama genre. This genre manages the hook the audience easily while allowing its creators to follow similar formulas again and again by relying on the law and order discourse. Crime drama series also provides gratification for the audience by letting them make analyses of the crime, criminal, and morality as well as to choose their side (Robinson 2020, p.9). On the other hand, crime dramas have a significant function by impacting the consensus in society and the formation of culture by representing particular ideologies (Clarke 1992, p.252). “They shape viewers’ fundamental understanding of right and wrong, the role of race and gender in society, how the justice system works and what we should and shouldn't expect from both the system and the people in it” (Mastro 2020, p.18).

The representation of police and the juridical system has a critical viewpoint in all of the series studied as cases of the thesis independent from their genres. These six series: *Masum (The Innocent)*, *Bozkır (Steppe)*, *Şahsiyet (Persona)*, *Dip (Base)*, *Hakan: Muhafız (The Protector)*, *Atiye (The Gift)* all question the legitimacy of these institutions and depict a pessimistic landscape with their omnipotent evils who can manipulate all members of the police and juridical system. In all the crime dramas: *Masum (The Innocent)*, *Bozkır (Steppe)*, *Şahsiyet (Persona)*, *Dip (Base)*, the noir elements they involved both in their themes and styles can be seen. One of the two fantasy dramas: *Atiye (The Gift)* has also very clear noir characteristics. At this point, it needs to be questioned that why noir possessed the soul of television series of the new medium in Turkey. According to Fluck (2009, p.288),

As a form of social or political criticism, film noir hardly ever goes beyond the sweeping premise of a completely corrupt society and a melodramatic romance of painfully punished nonconformism presented through highly contrived narrative constellations.

Indeed, the narrations of streamed Turkish noirs cannot go beyond criticism of corrupt society and dysfunctional legal system by not offering any way of solutions or mentioning a probability of an escape for their victims.

Dixon (2009, p.4) highlights the resemblance between the circumstances of the recent era and the circumstances of the world depicted in noir. He defines the tools of the internet like games, films, chat rooms or websites used by people as an escape tool from the real world, and he says, “we are all ‘connected,’ yet we have never been more isolated from

one another. This is the true message of noir; that today is horrible, and tomorrow will be worse; that hope is an illusion.”

On the other hand, the legitimacy of the police and legal system is not only questioned in crime dramas. Winckles (2019, p.251) contributes the argument with the example of a very popular original Netflix series: *Orange is the New Black* which is a comedy-drama based on a group of women in prison. He defines the series as ‘ideologically reformist’ by revealing the “absurdity” of the carceral system in the United States and forcing the viewer to take a side about the mass incarceration. However, he criticizes the series for underlining the impossibility of any actual action or social reform and says, “this could be part of the larger neoliberal goal, to begin with - to make people feel they are aware of an injustice without actually doing much to stop it.” This criticism can be read as it is better not to represent an incorrect reality and let people ignore it if they have no chance to recover it. However, it would be unfair to interpret Winckles’s argument in this way. It is pretty clear that, he criticizes the neutralizing of the prospect for any improvement for the legal system in America by representing the impossibility of receiving a result despite all actions.

The representation of evil in the series studied as cases of the thesis are shown below.

Table 5.1 Representation of Evil in Streaming Services Series

THE NAME OF THE SERIES	REPRESENTATION OF EVIL
<i>Masum (The Innocent)</i>	A retired policeman tries to cover up the murders committed by his two sons. Another policeman who is chief of the police has a sadistic personality and regularly tortures women, but never gets punished.
<i>Bozkır (Steppe)</i>	A pedophiliac old man kills small boys since he was a teenager and with his friend. This man has influence over the police and government officials which secures his reputation.
<i>Şahsiyet (Persona)</i>	More than fifty men including a judge and different public servants rape a twelve-year-old girl regularly but are protected by an ultra-rich man who has a great influence over the police and government officials and can save any criminal from punishment. The pimp who involved the crime continues to sell small girls.

<i>Dip (Base)</i>	Two different groups have struggle about the defense of the country, however, the group which is represented as the evil one, rules the police forces.
<i>Hakan: Muhafiz (The Protector)</i>	The villain and his assistant ‘bad guy’ have the influence over police and government officials which makes them untouchables.
<i>Atiye (The Gift)</i>	The villain works for the head of a group which is represented as a mysterious dark force, and has the influence over police and government officials to make them help to reach their goal.

Here, Fluck’s question about noir series: “How many confirmations of what critics regard as the corrupt state of American society do we actually need?” (2009, p.288) can be adapted to Turkey. The six series produced by three different private establishments share the same way of representation of the police and juridical system in Turkey. Even though all of them have a consistent criticism about injustice in themselves, when they express it with similar narrations in a chorus-like way, they serve to the normalization of dysfunctional legal system in the end.

The characters of noir used to live under the conditions which they have no agency on their emergence. These conditions function as a prison for the characters making them feel isolated and in the end, they get no chance to leave that prison-like world (Sanders 2006, p.93). The violent circumstances of today’s world can be an explanation of audience’s interest in noirish crime dramas. They may need to get used to the nightmarish world outside and they need to witness it via audiovisual content too, for normalizing the nightmare they are exposed in real. However, being exposed to the nightmare both in real and fictional world may result in the internalization of hopelessness in the long run. Woolfolk (2006, pp.108,109) explains the neutralizing function of noir as below:

The noir worldview denies to the protagonist the realization of either a transformative moment of resistance to its darkness or a triumph of the will to power. Film noir’s dark vision does not permit the possibility of an unequivocal character-defining moment of denial because it is set in a world so disenchanting that no ethic of resistance can hold. No compelling symbol system of militant ideals defines the cultural horizon.

As Woolfolk emphasizes, the series studied as cases of the thesis cannot offer any solution to the problem they depict or mention any possibility of resistance. Rüya, the victim of *Masum* (2017), suffers from a regular abuse of a psychopath man who is actually the chief

of police and blackmails her about killing her husband if she gives up meeting him. The final scene of *Masum*, which left Rya in her existing desperate situation based on assaults and beatings or perhaps a murder in the end, contributes the ‘pessimism’ of the series, even in the last second. The evil of the *Şahsiyet*, is killed in the end, but it is added that the crime, the child abuse continues with other criminals and victims, which evokes the feeling of ‘loop’. At this point, it can be asked if it is possible to construct a final for noir without disrupting the sense of reality and being ridiculously cathartic.

In 2010, the Turkish writer and scriptwriter Ayfer Tun had focused on the story of a woman who was abused by a chief of police, in her novel named ‘*The Absinthe Night*’. The main character of the novel is Şebnem who was raised as a neglected child of a divorced couple and had self-destructive behaviors throughout her life. Being the beautiful daughter of a woman who is as impressive as her, has never been an advantage for Şebnem, and even inspires her improper acts which she has made to take revenge from her parents who are responsible for her traumatic childhood. She realizes the impossibility of being a famous actor after she had some unsuccessful experiences in the film industry, and she poses nude for an adult magazine when she was nineteen. These poses which were used also as the cover photo of the magazine causes her trouble even twenty years later when she was forced by the chief of police to become his mistress, though she was a married woman. The chief of police blackmails her with her past and uses his authority as a state person to make her visit him in a hotel when he calls. After a while, Şebnem risks her life and decides to record the night which they meet in her own house for the first time. A handsome young man who was also one of the victims of the chief of police joins them that night. Şebnem manages to record the chief of police having sex with a woman and a man, and she sends the copies of CDs of the video in which she also made a short confession to journalists and bureaucrats to disgrace the chief of police. However, the chaos she anticipates does not occur and the video becomes invisible for the ones who had the copies. After this moment, she starts to wait for the triggerman who will be sent by the ones from ‘above’ to make her vanish. Her panic continues until she is found in the house where she is hiding, by her cousin Selda who is an ambitious journalist. Despite not being very close cousins, Selda cares Şebnem very much and confesses her admiration to Şebnem’s courage. Selda is married to a journalist man who is from Belgium which means she has double passports that make her ‘untouchable’ in Turkey. As a result, she

sends the video by e-mail to her husband to convey it via internet all over the world. When the case is exposed, concealing of it becomes impossible. Finally, Şebnem gets rid of a probable unidentified murder when “she was entrusted to the world, in case of her country’s fail about protecting her” (Tunç 2019, p.451). In the novel, ‘double passport’ which is the guarantee of journalist’s security, functions to underline the lack of freedom for press, and also the vulnerability of citizens in Turkey, on the contrary of the ones who have power. However, it is the key of the resistance to the status quo at the same time. The surprise cousin Selda trusts not only her Belgian passport but also to the ‘collective’ reaction of strangers. In summary, Tunç follows an alternative route to save the princess from the castle, and manages not to paint the sky totally black in a nightmarish world. So her method can be the answer to how to avoid an over-optimistic, cathartic final while preserving the ‘darkness’ of a narrative.

It can be claimed that the four of the series studied: *Masum (The Innocent)*, *Bozkır (Steppe)*, *Şahsiyet (Persona)*, *Dip (Base)*, the crime dramas, prioritize offering a content which is completely different from the television series and they aimed to speak about what is unspoken in traditional television for a while. The other two: *Hakan: Muhafiz (The Protector)*, *Atiye (The Gift)*, the fantasy dramas, prioritize reaching the highest amount of audience internationally. However, both six of them share two characteristics in their narratives. Firstly, the freedom of individuals is limited with their own body, which means they can drink, smoke or have sex with anyone they want, but cannot demand more. Secondly, these individuals cannot manage to correct anything associated with ‘society’ or ‘social order’, and /or anticipate any change for the status quo.

6. CONCLUSION

The thesis focused on the series produced by streaming services in their first three years in order to discover what they offer as ‘new’ really was. It is possible to say that streaming services had taken advantage of being the services of the new medium which offers them a release from all limiting conditions of the old one. Unsurprisingly, in all six series studied as cases, sexuality, alcohol and cigarette had been used according to their narratives in forms that cannot be blamed for being unnecessary. Furthermore, having sufficient time from project development to post-production had contributed to their aesthetic quality. However, defining these series as progressive is not possible due to the pessimism their narratives share caused by their way of representation of evil.

It can be argued that the spectre of *Behzat Ç.* has been haunting streamings services, resulting in a rise in noirish dramas having protagonists with mental or emotional disorders, narratives with pessimistic depictions, and over-use of masculine discourse. Themes of these crime dramas are not new. The theme of *Masum (The Innocent)* which was male violence and dominance over women had been previously used in television series in several ways. One of the most extraordinary examples was *Uçurum (The Cliff - 2012)*, a drama about foreign young women who were trapped by pimps and forced to work as prostitutes. The theme of *Bozkır (Steppe)* and *Şahsiyet (Persona)* which was child abuse, had been used in a television drama *Suskunlar (Game of Silence - 2012)* which was about revenge plan of four young men who were abused in prison when they were little boys. On the other hand, LGBT characters are generally criminalized on television, as they were in *Bozkır (Steppe)*. *Dip (Base)*'s ‘deep state conflicts’ are not different from the ones used in *Kurtlar Vadisi (Valley of the Wolves - 2003)*. In addition, characters who have supernatural powers as the ones in local fantasy dramas of streaming services: *Hakan Muhafız (The Protector)* and *Atiye (The Gift)* had been on television from time to time since the TRT’s comedy series *Uzaylı Zekiye (Zekiye from the Space - 1989)*. As a result, speaking about a fresh breeze about themes is not possible in these series.

Furthermore, all of these six series represent the evil as ‘omnipotent’ who have influence over the police and legal system which make them unstoppable and the other members of the society potential victims. The way of their representation of evil can be evaluated as ‘criticism of social defects in the country’, however, when they criticize all together simultaneously, it functions as a normalizer of these defects, instead of criticism. At this point, the emphasis on noir world in these series becomes a problem when it turns into a common viewpoint of six different series produced by three different establishments. Fluck (2009, p.134) points out the transformation of film noir with the postmodernist culture that emerged in the 1960s, which made it the most suitable genre for today’s postmodern world. It created a succeeding combination of “mass culture and modernism” by hybridizing thriller and art film. According to Park (2011, p. 28), pessimism of noir “feeds on political corruption and moral decadence. Given these conditions, the twenty-first century seems well on the way to providing a suitable habitat.” These arguments explain the popularity of noir in the series of the digital medium. Noir evokes the feeling of witnessing a real fact. It makes the viewer feel as if s/he has a grasp of the secrets which is not known by everyone. The realism depicted by noir makes the viewer feel as exposed to an artistic work, an art film as Fluck said, rather than being amused by ordinary television content. Indeed, noir provides many options for directors to create an art film-like series by using oblique camera angles, low key lighting, or shadows. As Weissmann (2012, p.32) highlights, improving electronic technology allowed people to turn their living rooms into small theatres by large-screen flat televisions that offer cinematic experience. As a result, the visual characteristics of a series become more important than ever. Evolution of the television as a ‘device’ which made it to be able to adapt itself to the circumstances of the post-television era.

The thesis presents the detailed lists of each year's most popular five television series from 2000 to 2019 defining their genres and as well as explaining their plots and informing about their total number of episodes. When the lists of the last twenty years' television series are evaluated, it can be seen that melodramas dominate the television screen, due to being the most convenient genre to create conservative narratives. It is possible to claim that, streaming services do the easiest thing to prove their difference from traditional television by leaning on noir. Noir can be positioned as the opposite of

melodrama which invades traditional television. As Arslan (2005, p.72) notes, “melodrama's relationship with reality is always problematic. Besides, preferring simplification, melodrama involves elements which are opposite of the real, to increase dramatization.” However, noir narratives always consider realist depiction and never use romanticizing elements. On the other hand, “World of melodrama is totally black and white” (Ibid, p.39) while the world of noir is gray, where the line between good and evil, moral and immoral, criminal and innocent is blurred.

The thesis also studied the change of television in the post-television era from pre-digital broadcast television which was a domestic medium, to today’s pocket-size televisions integrated to mobile phones. As the internet continued to promote privatization, diversity on television content had gained importance to satisfy every viewer who has been discovering their varying tastes. Today, people can reach almost unlimited archives including films and series from all over the world via SVOD services like Netflix or Amazon Video Prime, without depending on any physical components. However, making a choice among thousands of films or series becomes tiresome for the viewer sometimes. The services use algorithms to create recommendation lists for their viewer by following their preferences from their previous selections. Even though recommendation algorithms seem user friendly at first sight, they have been criticized for limiting the agency of the viewer on their choices. Indeed, recommendation lists which are offered by the services, may cause the viewers to get exposed to similar kind of content after a while, which make them ignore different options. People who consume the same kind of audiovisual content for a long time, become more self-oriented in the long by losing the chance of discovering different viewpoints and cultures which enrich people both mentally and emotionally.

On the contrary to agency arguments, the post-television era gives rise to the questions about time famine for the people of the digital world. Television content has always helped people socializing by giving them issues to talk about and share their opinions about characters or incidents. People who became the fan of a series or a show had created communities even though they do not know each other. During the pre-digital years, people used to write letters to television channels to share their ideas about their contents or declare their wishes or complaints. After the internet had been a part of daily life, people started to share their ideas online, or create online fan groups where they find a

new option to socialize. However, as the number of contents offered to the viewers increases, people cannot find enough time to follow everything which became popular among their friends or folks, and begin to feel insufficient and as if they always miss something. In addition, the function of broadcast television was providing entertainment to the people, letting them get relax without forcing them to make choices. If people cannot be satisfied by the content today, it means they made the wrong choice and lost time which may cause stress. It can be argued that, as the television has evolved digitally, its entertaining level began to decrease.

The arrival of post-television era had resulted in two different remarks about the future of television. According to the first one, television will have vanished in the future despite its all efforts to adapt itself to internet technology. This remark is used to be opposed by the ones like Lotz (2014, p.35) who give the example of radio's transformation after the introduction of broadcast television which prevented its end, and claims that different ways of distribution of television content can co-exist which makes an end for television not predictable. (Lotz 2018, p.180) The second remark about the television's destiny defines the function of the internet as a new medium which provides television ways of reaching more audience. Archives of SVOD services which include very rich catalogs of television series that were broadcasted previously, confirm this remark. Since Netflix became worldwide popular and began to function as a global television, it has been accused of threatening the television. Wolff (2015, p.67) opposes the ideas which assume Netflix as a threat to television, and he claims that the internet is being threatened by television.

TV is disrupting the Internet. It is not Netflix bringing digital to television, but, quite obviously, Netflix bringing television programming and values and behavior—like passive watching—to heretofore interactive and computing-related screens. Other than being delivered via IP, Netflix had almost nothing to do with the conventions of digital media—in a sense it rejected them. It is not user generated, it is not social, it is not bite size, it is not free. It is in every way, except for its route into people's homes—and the differences here would soon get blurry—the same as television. It was old-fashioned, passive, narrative entertainment.

It can be claimed that the post-television era does not announce an end for television, but causes an end for mainstream programming. As a result of rising requirements for diversity in content, all members of television industry including internet-based

establishments, are searching for ways to engage the audience via creatively developed narratives. However known ways of storytelling are limited and SVOD services use similar ways with television to create their original contents. As Lobato (2019, p.22) argues “the internet is now absorbing existing textual forms and associated business models of television and putting them together in new combinations.”

When today’s very recently introduced technologies as hologram technology, VR (virtual reality) glasses or Glass of Google are considered, it is not difficult to predict a new evolution for already evolved television which will change its structure completely in near future. However, people will continue to need hearing stories as they did for ages. Despite technology’s surprisingly rapid progress, stories do not evolve easily, and it seems that creating fiction for television will be much more challenging than today.

In conclusion, all six of the series studied as cases of the thesis - including the fantasy dramas - represent the evil as omnipotent and all members of the society as more or less victims. The freedom of individuals is limited with their body, which means they can use it in any way they want, they can have sex with anybody, or they can harm themselves by drinking alcohol or cigarettes. However, they live in a world where they are trapped as a citizen, whose rights are limited and they are much more vulnerable than they know. Sharing a common pessimism in social context and depicting the status quo as unchangeable cause these narratives to be interpreted as conservative, despite the personal physical freedom they offer. On the other hand, a possible intention of questioning the police legitimacy becomes fruitless when it is repeated again and again in a short time within similar genres and similar ways. As a result, they can be criticized for their function on normalizing dysfunctional legal system and neutralizing the prospect for improvement. In their early era, streaming services fulfill the demand on diverse content by offering series in different genres, however, their narratives that are promoted as new, cannot go beyond reproducing already existing ones. The thesis aspired to contribute to future studies on the post-television era in Turkey and inspire further studies about the evolution of televisual narratives.

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