

T.C.
BAHÇEŞEHİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ

GENRE, GLOBALISATION AND THE NATION:
THE CASE OF TURKISH POLICE PROCEDURAL TV SERIES

Doktora Tezi

AYŞEGÜL KESİRLİ UNUR

İSTANBUL, 2016

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SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

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THE CASE OF TURKISH POLICE PROCEDURAL TV SERIES**

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ABSTRACT

GENRE, GLOBALISATION AND THE NATION: THE CASE OF TURKISH POLICE PROCEDURAL TV SERIES

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The Turkish television industry came under the influence of intense globalization in the beginning of the 1990s. The appropriation of global television genres by local producers was among the various consequences of this situation and the Turkish police procedural TV series appeared as a result of this process of intense globalization. Stuck between the assumed ‘Western-ness’ of the police procedural genre and national reflexes, tendencies, anxieties and tastes, Turkish police procedural TV series have been formed by the tendency to appropriate ‘Western’ conventions of the genre while simultaneously preserving ‘Turkish’ values.

Inspired by this interplay between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’, this thesis focuses on the formation of the police procedural genre in Turkey. By adopting a discursive approach to television genres, this formation is discussed from a wide perspective. In order to refer to as many articulations of the genre as possible, the thesis situates the development of the police procedural genre in Turkey in a broad cultural context. Nation building processes, the development of Turkish television broadcasting under the impact of dominant nationalist discourses as well as global forces are examined as a part of this context.

By means of examining these issues, the thesis argues that Turkish police procedurals are formed as a consequence of keeping the balance between the sensitive dynamics of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’. While simultaneously reproducing the ‘global’ conventions of the police procedural genre, these series reflect particular elements to point at the ‘national’ symbols, values, traditions and stereotypes on Turkish television channels. The thesis investigates the construction of these elements together with the localization of the global conventions of the police procedural genre and intends to offer an extensive study on genre formation and television in Turkey.

Keywords: Turkish Television, Globalisation, Genre, Police Procedural TV Series

ÖZET

TÜR, GLOBALLEŞME VE ULUS: TÜRK POLİSİYE TELEVİZYON DİZİLERİ VAKASI

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Türkiye televizyon endüstrisi 1990'lı yılların başından itibaren yoğun bir globalleşmenin etkisi altına girdi. Bu sürecin doğurduğu birçok sonucun arasında global televizyon türlerinin yerel yapımcılar tarafından benimsenmesi de vardı. Türk polisiye dizileri bu yoğun globalleşme sürecinin sonucunda ortaya çıktı. Polisiye türünün varsayılan 'Batılılığı' ile ulusal refleksler, eğilimler, kaygılar ve beğeniler arasında sıkışıp kalan Türk polisiye televizyon dizileri, türün 'Batılı' özelliklerini benimseme eğilimi gösterirken aynı anda ulusal değerleri de koruyarak oluştular.

'Global' ve 'yerel' arasındaki bu karşılıklı etkileşimden ilham alan bu tez Türkiye'de polisiye türünün oluşumuna odaklanıyor. Televizyon türlerine söylemsel bir yaklaşım benimseyerek, bu oluşumu geniş bir yelpazede tartışıyor. Türe dair üretilen mümkün olduğunca fazla sayıda söylemden bahsedebilmek için bu tez polisiye türünün Türkiye'deki gelişimini geniş bir kültürel bağlamın içine yerleştiriyor. Ulusallaşma süreçleri, bu süreçlerin ve global güçlerin etkisi altında Türkiye'de televizyon yayınının gelişmesi bu kültürel bağlamın parçaları olarak inceleniyor.

Bu meseleler aracılığıyla, bu tez Türk polisiye dizilerin 'global' ve 'yerel' arasındaki hassas dinamiklerin dengelenmesi sonucunda oluştuğunu tartışıyor. Diziler Türk televizyon kanallarında, bir yandan polisiye türünün 'global' özelliklerini yeniden üretirken diğer yandan çeşitli 'ulusal' semboller, değerler, gelenekler ve stereotiplere dikkat çekerek belirli unsurlar yansıtıyorlar. Bu tez bu unsurların kurgulanmasını polisiye türünün global özelliklerinin yerelleşmesiyle birlikte sorguluyor ve Türkiye'de televizyon ve tür oluşumu hakkında kapsamlı bir çalışma olmayı amaçlıyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk Televizyonu, Globalleşme, Tür, Polisiye Televizyon Dizileri

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A. INTRODUCTION

Many people who grew up in Turkey in the 1980s remember watching the most popular imported police procedurals on the public television channel, TRT 1, which was the only operating channel in the country together with TRT 2 at that time. These imported police procedurals like *Hill Street Blues* (1981–1987), *Cagney and Lacey* (1981–1988), *Dempsey and Makepeace* (1985–1986) and *Miami Vice* (1984–1990) were broadcasted side by side with the limited number of Turkish TV series. The images of the Western, mostly American, police figures dissolved into the portrayals of Turkish middle class families in the daily flow of television. These American TV series, which dominated the Turkish television screen during that period, were the early signs of the intense globalisation that was on Turkey's doorstep. Together with the changes in television systems worldwide such as the launch of the Eutelsat satellite, the Turkish television scene started to show the results of this global transformation in the following years.

The production of Turkish police procedurals was one of the significant signs of this transformation. The appearance of early examples of the genre like *Kanun Savaşçıları* (Crime Fighters, TRT, 1988) and *İz Peşinde* (In Pursuit of a Trace, TRT, 1989) pointed at a profound change in the Turkish television scene. By bringing the 'global' conventions of the genre together with 'local' expectations, interests, regulations and dynamics, these series were caught up in the interplay between the 'global' and the 'local'. The main intention of this thesis is to explore this interplay and provide an extensive understanding of police procedural genre in Turkey. Many different factors play a significant role in the formation of the genre in the Turkish context. In order to analyse these factors, the thesis does not only offer a comprehensive analysis of the 'global' field but it also concentrates on a broad examination of the 'local' scene.

Similar to the in-between position of the Turkish police procedural genre, the local scene in Turkey reflects the tension of being a Western and an Eastern country at the same time. Apart from being geographically located between Europe and the Middle East, Turkish national identity has been built upon this in-betweenness, especially in the early

republican era in the 1920s. Creative works such as novels, films and TV series have been affected by this characteristic and usually express the tension of being stuck in between these two conflicting positions. This tension partially determines the approach of this thesis because it usually brings a particular way of criticism to the forefront, especially in analysing creative works like Turkish police procedural TV series.

B. GENRE FORMATION AND CRITICISM IN TURKEY

“Hüseyin Bey revolverini eline aldı.
Bismillah diyerek merdivenin ilk basamağına ayağını attı.”¹
(*Milli Cinayat Koleksiyonu* 1914, p.105)

“Meşhur Sherlock Holmes o vakit İstanbul’un asayişini
deruhte eylemiş [üzerine almış]olaydı
Londra’daki muvaffakiyetlerini İstanbul’da katiyen ibraz edemez idi.
Yeraltı sekencesi içinde Dev Süleyman, Ayı Memiş, Maymun Sadık, Köse Selim gibi
Arsene Lupin’e taş çıkartan müthiş sarikler [hırsız] var idi.”²
(*Milli Cinayat Koleksiyonu* 1914, p. 192)

As indicated by these extracts from *Milli Cinayat Koleksiyonu* (National Homicide Collection), a dime novel by Süleyman Sudi and Vassaf Kadri, the tension between the ‘foreign’ and the ‘local’ can be spotted in the Turkish-Ottoman police procedurals, written as early as 1914. This tension, which can be found in the narratives of various Turkish police procedurals in later years, is even inscribed in the Turkish name of the genre. *Polisiye*, the Turkish word which can be literally translated to English as ‘about the police’, was adapted from the French word *policier* (police officer) (*Polisiye* 2016) and has been used to define all works in literature, cinema and television that belong to this genre.

¹ Mr. Hüseyin [the police commissar] took his revolver to his hand. He said *Bismillah* and stepped on to the staircase.

² If famous Sherlock Holmes had been responsible of Istanbul’s public order at that time he would never be as successful as he was in London in Istanbul. The underground community was full of astounding thieves like Giant Süleyman, Bear Memiş, Monkey Sadık, Beardless Selim who were far more superior than Arsène Lupin.

As Orhan Kemal Koçak asserts, the works that were gathered in the same category were known in literary world as '*cinai roman*', meaning the novel whose narrative revolves around a murder; '*zaptiye romanı*', which combines the Ottoman Turkish word *zaptiye* to describe a militarized police force with the word *roman* meaning novel, or '*dedektif romanı*', meaning detective novel. (Koçak 2004, p. 210) Among these many names, *polisiye* remained to unite the various types of works that have a police, detective or gentleman thief figure as their protagonist in one category without making a distinction between novels, films or TV series. By maintaining the category name which is adapted from its French equivalent, the 'Western' roots of police procedural genre is reiterated every time it is referred to.

In terms of literature, *polisiye* appeared in Turkey with the Ottoman Turkish translation of *The Mystery of Orcival* (1867) by Emile Gaboriau in 1882. Being a keen reader of crime fiction, the Ottoman Sultan, Abdulhamid II, contributed to the proliferation of the genre by ordering his assistant to follow the newly published crime stories and immediately translate these works in Ottoman Turkish. According to Erol Üyepazarcı, the Ottoman translation bureau translated various crime stories for Abdulhamid II during his reign between the years of 1876 and 1909. (Üyepazarcı 2008, p. 520-523)

The very first Ottoman Turkish crime novel was *Esrar-ı Cinayat* (Mysterious Murder), written by Ahmet Mithat Efendi in 1883, and after that many authors followed this new trend. Together with the Turkish crime fiction in the dime novel format, translated crime novels continued to be published under different names with sensational covers. Crime fictions were very popular and cheap. In order to respond to the expectations of the readers and increase financial gain, publication houses resorted to pseudotranslations which became an established practice in later years, strengthening the association of the genre with 'Western' origins.

Pseudotranslations were presented as original works of 'foreign' writers but were actually written by Turkish authors who created new adventures from scratch for iconic detective figures such as Sherlock Holmes and Mike Hammer. In comparison to the original works, these Turkish variations drew diversified portraits of these well-known detectives. For

instance, Şehnaz Tahir-Gürçağlar explains that although some of the pseudotranslations of Sherlock Holmes stories resembled the original works, most of them portrayed Sherlock Holmes in very different manners. (Tahir Gürçağlar 2008, pp. 143-144)

Along with these pseudotranslations, referring to popular ‘international’ characters such as Sherlock Holmes and Arsène Lupin was also a very common practice in the early years of crime fiction in Turkey. Putting local police figures or heroic outlaws against these famous figures was preferred to stimulate nationalist feelings and prove ‘the power of the Turks’ to the readers. For instance, in Peyami Safa’s *Sherlock Holmes vs. Cingöz Recai* series, which was published in 1928 and constituted of 15 books, the iconic detective is defeated by the local, Robin Hood-like thief Cingöz Recai at the end of every adventure. According to Seval Şahin, these stories were written under the shadow of the nationalistic desires of its author who confronts the ‘Western’ subject, the ‘original’ Holmes, with the ‘Eastern’ subject, his copy Cingöz, and celebrates the victory of the copy over the original. (Şahin 2011, pp. 1771-1781)

The Turkish crime fiction genre was built upon this continuous interaction between the ‘Western’ model and its copy. The status of the crime fiction genre in the literary world always remained elusive due to this interaction. The genre has either been criticized for being a low literary form (Üyepazarcı 2008, p. 170) or condemned for being unable to properly adapt the ‘Western’ conventions of the genre in the Turkish context, (Sarıbaş 2002) remaining ‘the stepchild of the Turkish literature’. (Çavaş 2013, p. 205) The continuous interaction with the ‘Western’ model always kept the genre in-between, never managing to become a solid representative of the ‘national’ literature. This historical and critical legacy was transferred to Turkish police procedural TV series when they first appeared. Since television broadcasting has always been in close interaction with ‘global’ television flows and operated under the influence of different dynamics and sensations, the impact of this legacy was altered and intensified.

When the ‘*polisiye*’ genre appeared in the TV series format these series solely focused on the adventures of police commissars and their colleagues in the precinct. With this precise focus, these series were not only separated from Turkish crime series such as *Deliyürek*

(Crazy Hearth, Show TV, 1998-2001), *Kurt Kapanı* (Wolf Trap, TGRT, 2000) and *Kurtlar Vadisi* (Valley of the Wolves, Show TV, 2003-2005) which concentrate on the criminal affairs of mafia leaders, but they also strengthened their associations with ‘Western’ police procedurals. The same hesitations regarding the status of the ‘polisiye’ genre in Turkish literature are brought into daylight, with variations, and the police procedural as a television genre was also considered to be built on an assertion of constitutive lack. According to Nurdan Gürbilek, this assertion is not new but deeply rooted in the foundations of Turkish criticism. Gürbilek states that “Criticism in Turkey- not only social and cultural criticism but also literary criticism- is mostly the criticism of a lack, a critique devoted to demonstrating what Turkish society, culture or literature lacks.” (Gürbilek 2003, p. 599) She explains that in Turkey a typical critical statement only becomes meaningful when it is built on a comparison. Gürbilek says

(“We don’t have a novel of our own” or similarly “We don’t have a tragedy, a criticism, a philosophy, or an individual of our own”) are typical of a critical stance that positions itself from the very start as a comparative one, presuming that it becomes convincing only when it talks about something the “other” has but “we” don’t have, pointing out to the persistent lack, the irremovable deficiency, the unyielding inadequacy of its object: Turkish culture. (Ibid.)

Gürbilek states that this criticism of lack is polarized between two extreme approaches. The first approach believes the “original is elsewhere (“outside,” namely in the West) while the second insists that we do have an authentic literature and a genuine native thought but in order to appreciate it we have to leave aside all those lifeless imitations and snobbish efforts related with the West.” (Ibid., p. 600) For Gürbilek, the ones who believe that the original is out there have an absolute appreciation of the foreign model and look down at the local productions by accepting them as imports, while the second group thinks that there is a true self that was smashed by the idealization of the foreign, “waiting for the right moment when the oppressed tradition, the repressed past, or the autonomous inner world will speak with a language completely its own.” (Ibid., p. 601)

Turkish police procedurals are frequently examined from different points of view that are stuck between these two approaches. Under these circumstances, approaching Turkish police procedurals turns into one of the major dilemmas of this thesis. Inspired by Nurdan Gürbilek’s approach to overcome the continuous circle of “reproducing the discourse of

lack and victimization” (Ibid., p. 625) this thesis appreciates “the accidents and traumas that make up the space we call self.” (Ibid.) By embracing this approach, the thesis intends to investigate the intertextual and transnational influences that penetrate into Turkish police procedurals in order to understand them in their multiplicity. A study with these intentions requires to touch on various issues regarding the construction of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ fields in the Turkish context. In order to carry out this requirement, an additional approach has to be adopted to examine the intertwined factors that are influential in the formation of the police procedural genre in Turkey.

C. A CULTURAL APPROACH TO THE POLICE PROCEDURAL GENRE

Genre theory has been dominated by various approaches in different time periods. The wide range of theories that are suggested to study particular genres extends from Aristotle’s categorizations in ancient times to Tzvetan Todorov’s theories in the 1970s. Although celebrated theorists such as Northrop Frye, E.D. Hirsch, Alastair Fowler and many others (Altman 2010, pp. 2-10) contributed greatly to genre theory in the field of literature in 20th century, as Jane Feuer suggests, “the traditional literary view of genre would have only a limited application to film and television.” (Feuer 1992, p. 105)

Due to the structural differences between literary works and films, particular theories were developed to understand film genres. According to Jane Feuer, in the United States, the notion of film genre has grown out of the formation of film as an industrial product. The economy and the division of labour in the American film industry required the standardization of the films as products. However, as Feuer explains, in order to meet audience expectations, each Hollywood film had to be by some means unique. Since it was difficult to keep the economic and political system of the Hollywood film industry running productively, film genres had to appear in order to keep the balance between similarity and difference and “regulate the production of difference by producing their own differences within very circumscribed structures of similarity.” (Ibid., p. 107)

Jane Feuer gathers the approaches to film genre under three labels: the aesthetic, the ritual and the ideological. As she underlines, these are not completely distinct categories but

labelling is useful to distinguish the differences between varied approaches. “The *aesthetic approach* includes all attempts to define genre in terms of a system of conventions that permits artistic expression, especially involving individual authorship.” (Ibid., p. 109) The ritual approach perceives genres as an exchange among the audiences and the industry by means of which cultural issues can be addressed and negotiated in genre films. Finally, the ideological approach considers genres as instruments of control which operate on the textual and industrial levels. As part of this approach, at the textual level, genres serve the capitalist system by producing the dominant ideology whereas at the industrial level, they provide the advertisers with the platform they need to transmit their messages. (Ibid.)

Feuer states that studies usually approach film genres by combining the ritual and the ideological approach. However, for her, applying genre theory to television might be problematic since film genres work better in regulating the dynamics of offering similar texts with particular differences each time. As she underlines, television always works with standard programme types but unlike films which mostly operate as discrete texts, television programmes blend into each other as a part of the ‘flow’ (cf. Williams) and are regularly interrupted by advertisements and promos. (Ibid., p. 109-118)

For that reason, understanding television genres such as police procedurals requires an approach which is specifically designed for this purpose. Driven by the same concerns, Jason Mittell states that “importing genre theories into television studies without significant revision creates many difficulties when accounting for the specifics of the medium.” (Mittell 2001, p. 3) According to Mittell, when concentrating on television genres, returning to structuralism, aesthetics or ritual theories means stepping back from the contemporary paradigms that cultural studies offer.

Although most of the studies that focus on genre analysis consider genres as a collection of textual attributes, Mittell suggests that genres appear as a result of the intertextual relations between multiple texts and he intends to question how these multiple texts correlate with each other to create a genre. Getting his inspiration from the theories of Tom Ryall on film genres, (Hollow and Jancovich 1995, pp. 65-66) Mittell proposes that

texts do not interact on their own but only come together through cultural practices like reception and production. He states that audiences link television programmes all the time and that texts are not actively related without the help of this cultural practice. Therefore, for Mittell, even though genres depend on intertextuality, it does not mean that what they depend on is an essentially textual element. Text themselves are not enough to understand how genres are formed, have merged, evolved and disappeared. Looking outside the texts provides a variety of different sites in which genres operate and change. (Mittell 2001, pp. 6-7)

However, Mittell also points out that an intrinsic textual approach to genres cannot be replaced with an extrinsic contextual approach. What is needed is “to look beyond the text as the locus for genre and instead locate genres within the complex interrelations among texts, industries, audiences, and historical contexts.” (Ibid., p. 7) This being said, the lines between the texts and those cultural practices are not strictly drawn. These boundaries are constantly shifting and “genres transect these boundaries, with production, distribution, promotion, and reception practices all working to categorize media texts into genres.” (Ibid.)

Consequently, Jason Mittell suggests to approach genres as discursive practices, which enables to identify the various forms of communication that operate in the formation and understanding of genres. Mittell believes that Foucault's definition of discursive formations as “historically specific systems of thought, conceptual categories that work to define cultural experiences with larger systems of power” (Ibid., p. 8) flawlessly fits in the definition of the notion of genre.

Discursive formations, as Mittell notes from Foucault, “do not emerge from a centralized structure or from a single site of power but are built bottom up from disparate micro-instances.” (Ibid.) They usually appear as ‘natural’, even though they are in fact culturally formed components and changeable. In a similar manner to Foucault's concept of the ‘author function’ of discourses, genres can be approached as a function of the discourse which is not essential or inherent to the text. In order to look at generic discourses, one

should examine “the contextualized generic practices that circulate around and through texts.” (Ibid.)

Mittell’s discursive approach to television genres is very constructive to understand the formation of the police procedural genre in Turkey. Since Turkish police procedurals are inspired by multiple resources, both global and local, various factors play important roles in their emergence and categorization as a genre. If these contextual factors such as the historical development of Turkish television broadcasting under the impact of the nation building processes are investigated in detail, a stimulating discussion can be held concerning the formation of the genre in the Turkish context.

By widening the scope of this approach, Jason Mittell suggests that questioning what the industry and the audiences say about the genre, the terms and definitions that surround the genre and discussing the culturally specific notions that are connected to the genre are some of the elements that can be included in the analysis. For him, one “should focus on the breadth of discursive enunciations around any given instance, mapping out as many articulations of genre as possible and situating them within larger cultural contexts and relations of power.” (Ibid., p. 9) The aim should not be finding a ‘proper’ definition, interpretation or evaluation of the genre but questioning how genres are culturally defined, interpreted and evaluated. (Ibid.)

Sharing the same intentions with Mittell, this thesis aims to decipher the multiple influences on the formation of the police procedural genre in Turkey. Following Mittell’s approach provides an opportunity for mapping out various details which are influential on this formation. Questioning the articulation of the genre in newspapers, the attitudes of the television producers towards the genre and the status of the genre in the historical development of television broadcasting are among the major issues that the thesis dwells on in order to offer an analysis from a wide perspective.

In a similar manner, the micro-instances of generic discourses that appear in some historically specific moments are the key sources that Mittell points at to understand how genres are formed and evolve. From his point of view, looking at the culturally specific

practices of industries and audiences can provide much more information about a genre than macro-structures. Therefore, Mittell suggests that cultural processes should be examined before the generic texts itself. Genre theory should take into account how generic processes operate in specific cultural contexts, how the practices of the industry and the audiences form genres and how genres can simultaneously be static in one moment and fluid over time. (Ibid., pp. 10-11)

Alternatively, although Jason Mittell's cultural and discursive approach to television genres offers an innovative methodology, as Jonathan Nichols Pethick emphasizes it also entails a danger of missing out on the significance of the actual texts themselves. (Pethick 2012, p. 10) While examining *Dragnet* (1967–1970) as a media text in his genre analysis, finding a methodology that is consistent with his cultural approach becomes a question for Mittell himself. He states that under the influence of Stuart Hall's emphasis on the processes of encoding and decoding, in the 1990s, cultural media scholars turned to reception practices and started questioning cultural contexts but the investigation of textual structures was left to the theorists of formalist film studies. Mittell appreciates productive formalist analyses which utilized the historical approach to film texts. However, he thinks that the neo-formalist school which exclusively focused on film texts as its object neglected larger political and cultural questions in its analyses. Because of this methodological divide between formalist and cultural approaches, investigating the textual form was delivered to formalists whereas television scholars who were concerned with more cultural issues abandoned questions related to textual forms. (Mittell 2004, p. 122)

Mittell believes that form can be examined without being formalist and explores how formal analysis can be integrated in the cultural approach of genres. For him, textual interpretation can play a significant role in larger projects of genre analysis because "media texts themselves are clearly important sites where meanings are articulated and potentially activated into larger cultural circulation." (Ibid., p. 123) Therefore, for Mittell, pursuing contextually centred models of interpretation in order to understand what kind of meanings are produced at the textual level might be productive without neglecting

“how texts operate culturally and historically, activating larger circulating discourses and meanings using the categorical shorthand of genres.” (Ibid.)

By getting inspiration from this concern, the thesis pays particular attention to the textual meanings that are reflected by Turkish police procedurals. In an attempt to include these meanings in the analysis, the thesis affirms Jason Mittell’s suggestions to design an interpretive approach to television texts. Instead of adopting a formalist way of analysis, the thesis makes an interpretive analyses of carefully selected Turkish police procedurals and focuses on what kind of meanings are articulated in these texts to contribute to the formation of genre in the Turkish context.

D. UNDERSTANDING TURKISH POLICE PROCEDURALS AS DISCURSIVE FORMATIONS

In order to offer an extensive analysis of the formation of the police procedural genre in Turkey by implementing Jason Mittell’s discursive approach to genre while keeping Nurdan Gürbilek’s statements in mind, the thesis is divided in five chapters. The first chapter concentrates on nation building processes in Turkey after the proclamation of the republic in 1923. Inspired by the major elements that Stuart Hall specifies to question the construction of the national narrative, (Hall 1992) the chapter explains how the building blocks of Turkish nationalist discourse are determined as a consequence of Kemalist nation building processes. Following this explanation, the chapter focuses on the impacts of this national narrative on television broadcasting in Turkey, from its inception. By exploring how this narrative determined the contents of television programmes, especially regarding use of language and music, the chapter intends to reveal the key components of public broadcasting.

Despite being partially challenged after the establishment of private television channels in the 1990s, these components continue to banally influence the content of television programmes. By reflecting the values of official nationalist discourse in Turkey, TV series continue to reproduce the symbols that were determined in this era with certain twists. Turkish police procedurals which are formed in accordance with dominant

nationalist discourses do not only get affected by these symbols iconographically but also ideologically. For that reason, establishing this historical background in the beginning of the thesis is of great importance to understand the discursive formation of the police procedural genre in Turkey.

In the second chapter, the thesis concentrates on globalisation and localisation practices in the Turkish television industry. Since the interaction between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ is considered as the key factor that influences the formation of the police procedural genre in the Turkish context, the profound discussion of these concepts is necessary. This chapter provides a literature review on globalisation and localisation, including the debates on significant issues such as media imperialism, homogenization and Americanization. After briefly discussing how these issues operate in the globalisation process of the Turkish television industry, mostly in the 1970s and the 1980s, the chapter focuses on the localisation of ‘global’ television programmes. The impact of these processes on Turkish television is discussed together with their influences on the broadcasting of the ‘foreign’, mostly American, police procedurals on Turkish television channel(s) beginning from the 1970s.

In this way, the thesis aims to comment on the presence of global television forms on Turkish television along with their localisation for domestic audiences. By revealing how localisation processes such as dubbing, retitling and publicity altered imported police procedurals in the 1970s and the 1980s, the thesis intends to articulate the impact of these transformations on television content. In order to further comment on the influence of globalisation processes on the Turkish television industry, the chapter continues by broadening the discussion to the consequences of the intense globalisation of the 1990s. Together with the continuing effects of localisation processes on television contents, the chapter explains the simultaneous impact of globalisation processes on the Turkish television industry on financial and organizational levels, introducing new concepts like audience measurement and competition and leading up to new ways of watching TV.

By means of this discussion about the simultaneous globalisation and localisation of Turkish television, the thesis intends to affirm the interactive relationship between the

concepts of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’. Since Turkish police procedurals appear as the consequent products, inspired by this interactive relationship, affirming this connection carries great importance to elaborate more on the formation of the police procedural genre in the Turkish context. Through this assertion, the thesis strengthens its own approach to Turkish police procedurals which are perceived as discursive formations under the constant influence of the interaction between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’.

After setting this theoretical and historical background, the thesis focuses on genre production in Turkish television from the 1970s to the end of 1990s. In order to avoid the potential confusion of discussing the developments in the Turkish TV series industry in the 1990s and in the 2000s together, the thesis prefers to focus on these highly different eras in separate chapters. The third chapter begins by explaining the historical development of Turkish TV series production starting from the 1970s. The chapter is particularly interested in the 1990s since global television genres, including police procedurals, are majorly produced during this period.

The chapter mainly draws the attention to the discussion of the ‘local’ variations of the ‘global’ genres in a limited number of scholarly works. It raises concerns over the tendency to examine local responses to global genres by approaching these TV series as ‘authentic’ products, unsullied by influences of the ‘global’. Despite contradicting the perception of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ as interactive concepts, the thesis uses this tendency to question the signifiers of banal nationalism in Turkish TV series, in an attempt to investigate what makes these series familiar and recognizable to Turkish audiences. In this chapter, five major national elements are suggested in order to point at the representations of banal nationalism in Turkish TV series.

In this way, the chapter builds the necessary background to talk about the relationship between global generic conventions and local national elements in Turkish police procedural TV series. By focusing on early Turkish police procedurals in the 1990s, the chapter aims to reveal the significance of the dominant nationalist discourses for this continuous relation. The influences of nationalist discourses on the changing dynamics of the ‘Western’ model and its copy as well as the effects of these dynamics on criticizing

early Turkish police procedurals are revealed in this chapter and further commented on in the next chapter.

The fourth chapter concentrates on the social, political, cultural and economic transformation of Turkey in the 2000s. The chapter is mainly interested in the impact of these transformations on representations of national elements which are bound to change in accordance with the shifting nationalists discourses. By explaining the nation building processes that are initiated by the governments under the administration of Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*), the chapter introduces three major factors that play significant roles in the construction of the ‘new’ national narrative of Turkey. Neoliberalism, neo-Ottomanism and Islamism are taken as the main driving forces that gradually changed the Turkish television scene in the age of unlimited access to global television programmes and transnational collaborations.

The chapter builds its discussion on the discourse of the police procedural genre in contemporary Turkey on this background. By relying on the changing conception of the ‘Western’ other and the rising nationalist discourse in the 2000s, the chapter discusses the dynamics of producing ‘successful’ police procedurals in Turkey which could last longer than a few episodes in the highly competitive television environment. In this way, the chapter intends to question the rooted tension between ‘foreign’ conventions and ‘local’ national elements and how this tension remains active in the formation of Turkish police procedurals.

The last chapter concentrates on interpretive textual analysis of four Turkish police procedurals in order to comment on the relationship of ‘foreign’ generic conventions and ‘local’ national elements in their narratives. Before focusing on these examinations, the chapter discusses the global generic conventions of the genre together with the dominant themes and ideologies that are reflected from police procedurals worldwide. Since American police procedurals get the upper hand in worldwide popularity, the conventions determined by them are taken as the common denominators of the genre. These features are discussed in the analyses not only to reveal how the mentioned TV series fit into the

police procedural genre but also to elaborate on how they are localized to be meaningful in the Turkish context.

The Turkish police procedurals *Arka Sokaklar* (Backstreets, Kanal D, 2006-), *Kanıt* (The Evidence, Kanal D, 2010-2013), *Behzat Ç.: Bir Ankara Polisiyesi* (Behzat Ç.: An Ankara Police Procedural, Star TV, 2010-2013) and *Filinta* (Flintlock, TRT 1, 2014-2016) are analyzed in the second part of this chapter. The analyses aim to reveal how these series harmonize the generic conventions of the genre with national elements and how they give ‘local’ responses to a ‘global’ television genre on a textual basis. The chapter is also interested in the kind of discourses about crime these series create, in order to understand the key issues addressed in these series.

By analysing these issues, the thesis intends to situate the police procedural genre in Turkey in a wider cultural context and argue how Turkish police procedurals are created by balancing the tension between the ‘foreign’ conventions of the genre and ‘local’ dynamics. In this way, the thesis does not only aim to understand how Turkish police procedurals are born out of the interplay between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ in a national context but it also provides a broadened understanding of television broadcasting in Turkey.

Aside from being an extended study on television in Turkey, this thesis aspires to contribute to the wider debates about globalisation in the fields of media and culture. As it focuses on globalisation and localisation it intends to reconsider the scholarly discussions about the consequences of these processes on local cultures. By using Turkey as a case study, the thesis aims to explore the preserved familiarity in local media scenes in the age of globalisation and the underlying reasons behind it. The importance of pointing at the ‘national’ appears as a major issue in this discussion. As the thesis comments on this issue by particularly focusing on the formation of police procedural genre in the Turkish context it seeks to broaden the ongoing disputes about the significance of the ‘national’ in globalisation processes.

1 TELEVISION BROADCASTING AND TURKISH NATIONAL IDENTITY

The history of Turkish television broadcasting is closely related to the national history of Turkey. The components of the Turkish national identity and the role that the ideals of republican reforms played in shaping the ‘new’ Turkish citizens directly influenced the early years of Turkish television broadcasting and what happened afterwards in different ways. These foundational elements also played a major role in adapting global television genres to the Turkish context. Similar to other genres such as sitcoms and soap operas, Turkish police procedurals utilized the global conventions of the genre by building upon the foundational elements of the nation and offered a familiar atmosphere to Turkish audiences.

For that reason, in order to understand the roles that nation building processes played in the formation of the police procedural genre in Turkey, this section primarily intends to give some background information on the formation of Turkish national identity in the early Republican era. In an attempt to draw a detailed portrait of the Turkish nation in its early years, the chapter focuses on questioning how national narrative, origin, foundational myth, traditions and folk culture have been created to unite the people of the republican Turkey in the 1920s.

Moreover, with the intention to build a link between this portrait and Turkish television broadcasting, the chapter concentrates on the pioneering years of television in Turkey and how the programming decisions were made in accordance with the foundational components of Turkish national identity. The chapter explains the years of Turkish television broadcasting under state control and pays particular attention to the policies of the state-run television broadcaster TRT regarding Turkish language and music. These policies are also utilized to comment on the transition of Turkish television from state controlled to commercial broadcasting and discuss the changing television environment in Turkey at the end of the 1980s with the emergence of private television channels.

New forms of television programming like Turkish police procedural TV series are briefly explored in the chapter as a consequence of this transition. However, rather than approaching these new types of television programming as the indicators of democratization and political liberation, the chapter discusses the attributes of the private television channels together with the changing economic dynamics and accelerated nationalistic tendencies in the 1990s. Consequently, the chapter aims to understand the foundational elements of the Turkish nationalist discourses and their influence on state run and commercial television broadcasting. In this way, the necessary background is created for discussing national and ideological dynamics behind localisation processes of global television genres like police procedurals.

1.1 TURKISH NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE EARLY REPUBLICAN ERA

Stuart Hall explains that “national cultures construct identities by producing meanings about ‘the nation’ with which we can identify; these are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and images which are constructed of it.” (Hall 1992, p. 293) Hall lists five major elements in order to question how the narrative of the national culture is told.

The first one is “the narrative of the nation, as it is told and retold in national histories, literatures, the media and popular culture.” (Ibid.) According to Hall, stories, images, scenarios, national symbols and many other materials that they provide represent the shared experiences, griefs and victories that give the nation a meaning. In this way, the everyday lives of millions are connected “with a national destiny that pre-existed and will outlive” (Ibid.) many.

The second element in Hall’s list is “the emphasis on *origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness.*” (Ibid., p. 294) What Hall means by this is the fact that the nation is presented in the narrative of the national culture as primordial: “‘there in the very nature of things’, sometimes slumbering, but ever ready to be ‘awoken’ from its ‘long, persistent and mysterious somnolence.’” (Ibid.)

The third one is what Hobsbawn and Ranger described as the invention of tradition which is constituted of “a set of practices, ... of a ritual or symbolic nature which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviours by repetition which automatically implies continuity with a suitable historical past.” (Ibid.)

The fourth item in Hall’s list is the narrative of a foundational myth which is a story that “locates the origin of the nations, the people and their national character so early that they are lost in the mists of, not ‘real’, but ‘mythic’ time” (Ibid., pp. 294-295) and finally, the fifth element that Hall mentions is “the idea of a *pure, original people or ‘folk’*.” (Ibid.)

Turkish national identity is constructed upon the elements in Hall’s list. However, its ambivalent position between the East and the West, its complicated relationship with its Ottoman past and the roles and actions of the national elites during the process of nation building give Turkish national identity its distinctive character. Şerif Mardin says “neither the Turkish nation as the fountainhead of a ‘general will’ nor the Turkish nation as a source of national identity existed at the time” (Mardin 1981, p. 209) when Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founding father of the Turkish Republic, set out on the task of building a nation in the 1920s. In Mardin’s terms what happened was that “Mustafa Kemal took up a non-existent, hypothetical entity, the Turkish nation, and breathed life into it.” (Ibid., p. 208)

Republic of Turkey was officially founded on October 29, 1923 and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk became the first president of the republic. Although this declaration happened in one night, the foundation of the republic was the consequence of a long process, including the decay of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish War of Independence which started in 1919. Tanıl Bora explains that at the beginning of World War I, while carrying on with the necessities of its age such as becoming a nation state in order to be modernized and civilized, Ottoman and Turkish nationalism followed a unique path, in Bora’s terms a *Sonderweg*. According to Bora, this pursuit of a *Sonderweg* was certainly not that unique since the word itself implies, it was an output of German nationalism, and a similar kind of pursuit could be found in Arab and Hindu nationalism. (Bora 1996, pp. 170-171)

However, for Bora, what made Ottoman and Turkish nationalism unique in this equation was its distance both to the potential of becoming an imperial power like Germany and to an urgency of starting an anti-imperialist or anti-colonialist struggle like in the Arab and Hindu worlds. In terms of its relation to the West, the Ottoman Empire and Turkey had been positioned neither within the West like Germany nor in its periphery like the Arab countries and India. Bora points out that this in-betweenness, together with the weaknesses that were caused by its belatedness and the actions of the constituent actors, led Turkish nationalism to apply to some complex and synthetic formulas while determining its distinctive identity and its *Sonderweg*. (Ibid.)

In its early years, Turkish nationalism was composed of many different elements which belonged to various cultural and ethnic groups that inhabited in the Ottoman Empire. Tanıl Bora defines Turkish nationalism in this period as a nebula which included different forms of nationalism and different constructions of a variety of nations. After the Independence in 1923, particular precautions were taken in order to homogenize and form this nebula, which carried the process of nation building to extreme levels. Although the other designs of national identity did not cease to exist and played new parts in the construction of the Turkish national identity, in the coming years Turkish nationalism finally presented itself as the ultimate form, as the eventual, matured, purified remnant. (Ibid., pp. 171-173)

1.1.1 Narrative of the Nation

The narrative of the Turkish nation was built upon the victories of the War of Independence. According to Hamit Bozarslan, at the end of the War of Independence in 1922 the new state celebrated the victory of Turkishness and Islam over the Christian components of Anatolia. The population exchange with Greece, the extermination of Armenians, and the territorial claims in *Mısak-ı Milli* (national pact) helped the unionist regime to complete the religious homogenization of Anatolia. (Bozarslan 2006, p. 29) As a result of this homogenization, the merchants, bankers and the industrialists of the Ottoman Empire disappeared. In this way, while a new bourgeois class was created based

on “the policies of the state during the project of nationalist modernization” (Keyder 1997, p. 39) there was no other strong bourgeois class that was reluctant.

The new bourgeois class which could be called ‘the modernizing elites’ had the picture of the new nation in its minds and created a new narrative for the Republic of Turkey by indenting to cut the historical, religious and cultural ties with the Ottoman past. Çağlar Keyder says “in the transition from empire to nation-state, there had been a change in the legitimating discourse of state authority. The imperial Ottoman ideology, a blend of Islamism and elite cohesion at the top, had to be abandoned.” (Ibid., p. 41) As Keyder emphasizes, this ideology is replaced with the idea of nationalism during this transition which created the ideology of the newly established republic. Throughout this process, the unity of the nation and the need to express the nation in a single voice were strictly underlined. (Ibid., p. 42)

The common people by whom the reforms and the new social disorder were not admired were considered by the modernizing elites as an ignorant mass that had to be disciplined and educated by the revolutionary reforms. Whereas Islam was considered as the religion of the nation, it was perceived as the signifier of archaic and superstitious beliefs. Becoming like the Western civilizations and regaining its strength were the core aims of the newly established republic. (Bozarslan 2006, p. 31) Since there was no serious confrontation for the modernizing elites to face, they did not attempt to comply with the popular resentment of the masses which remained passive, silent partners. (Keyder 1997, p. 43)

After the proclamation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, while building Turkish national identity, a series of new reforms were initiated which aimed to erase the historical legacy of the Ottoman Empire and create a zero point for the Turkish Republic. As Kevin Robins puts it, these reforms were aimed at the secularization of society and included changes in the organization of religious activities like the abolition of the caliphate, disestablishment of the state religion, shutting down of shrines, and the termination of dervish orders and brotherhood. They also paved the way for changes in the lifestyle such as the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, the formation of a western-style penal code and dress code

including the banning of the fez, and the replacement the Arabic script with Latin alphabet. (Robins 1996, p. 68)

Apart from secularization, ‘elevation to the level of the Western civilizations’ through Westernization was another major motivation behind these reforms. However, Westernization was an ambivalent process for the modernizing elites. On the one hand, it was perceived as an urgency of becoming a developed nation. Reşat Kasaba explains that the modernizing elites changed the Ottoman institutions and rearranged the physical environment with the intention to make it look like its European counterparts. They believed that once the physical environment changed, people’s behaviours and manners would be easy to manage. (Kasaba 1997, p. 29)

On the other hand, Westernization evoked a great amount of fear and was approached with caution by the modernizing elites. As Meltem Ahıska explains, although Western civilizations were accepted as superior in comparison to the Ottoman heritage they were also despised for being morally corrupt and surrounded by threatening class struggle issues. (Ahıska 2003, p. 367) As a consequence of this fear, Westernization was majorly reduced to acquiring the technology of the West in the name of progress. But the morality and indigenous values of the nation were intended to be protected from the processes of Westernization in order to avoid degeneration.

For that reason, ‘progress’ and ‘threat’ were the two terms that were associated with Western civilizations (Ibid.) in constructing the narrative of the nation. As Ahıska underlines, the progress that Western civilizations symbolized was acknowledged, even by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk himself, as irrepressible, high speed and aggressive. The Turkish nation was perceived as being ‘too-late’ to catch up with their level of progress. Despite this concern, the national project was motivated by keeping up with the speed and the movement of the century. However, the panic that was raised by the high speed progress of Western civilizations also brought along a feeling of inferiority. (Ibid.)

An extreme amount of self-confidence was embedded in the narrative of the nation in order to repress this feeling. As Tanıl Bora explains, a whole new discourse was generated

around the idea that the Turks had the most ancient culture and civilization and being civilized was proclaimed as a value that was naturally intrinsic to the Turks. (Bora 1996, pp. 174-175) National feelings were additionally proliferated through creating attachments to the idea of heroism. (Ibid., p. 186) The narrative of the nation was built on the motto that ‘every Turk is born a soldier’. Excessive symbolic meanings were attributed to the Turkish flag and Turkish national anthem. The production of semi-military marches became an important part of the everyday life in Turkey. Patriotism was taken one step further and comprehended as a perpetual and vigilant protection of the national values. For Tanıl Bora, an obligation for being or becoming a ‘militant’ citizen was created in order to fulfil the conditions of citizenship. (Ibid., p. 177)

However, this intensive incitement to proliferating national feelings had different consequences. Tanıl Bora underlines that the imaginary excellence led to a certain level of megalomania and put Turkish national identity into an isolated position by causing its disconnectedness from the rest of the world. The assumption of having already met the requirements of being a universally civilized nation by nature limited the national interest in the rest of the world and created a confident apathy. Bora states that except the occasional demonization, the narrative of the nation was xenophobic and closed to the notion of the foreign. (Ibid., pp. 174-176)

Besides, the disconnection between the excessive self-confidence that was prompted at the official level and the everyday experiences and feelings of the common people created feelings of insecurity in the collective unconscious. (Ibid., p. 189) Being hesitant between the histories and literatures and unable to use the legacy of the proto-nationalist movements, the narrative of the nation was lacking of romanticism. (Ibid., pp. 185-186) Therefore, it was far removed from creating a voluntary national unity.

1.1.2 Origins, Continuity, Tradition and Timelessness

The origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness of the Turkish nation were achieved through certain projects and reforms beginning from the early 1920s. According to Yael Navaro Yashin, defining what was culturally native and presenting Turkey as a new polity

were the main efforts after the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Although the Turkish Republic was established following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the continuity between the past and the present was not found in highlighting the Ottoman heritage. Instead, the culture of the Turkic groups located in ancient Central Asia was glorified as the origin of the Turks. (Yashin 2002, p. 11) In order to strengthen this connection, the ‘Turkish History Thesis’ (*Türk Tarih Tezi*) and the ‘Sun Language Theory’ (*Güneş Dil Teorisi*) were created. Whereas the ‘Turkish History Thesis’ proposed a new origin for the Turks, the ‘Sun Language Theory’ suggested that Turkish was one of the primordial languages. (Bozarslan 2006, p. 32)

In order to comprehensively define Turkish national identity, Ottoman identity was associated with the ‘old Turkey’ and constituted a substantial image of the other. Tanıl Bora explains that while defining the ‘old’ identity, the Ottoman was described as the father figure who suppressed ‘Turkishness’ and prevented its maturation. Accordingly, Islam was considered as a potential threat that could awaken the remnants of the Ottoman. For that reason, it was not included in the distinctive characteristics of national identity despite being considered as a part of the wide circle of its features. (Bora 1996, pp. 181-182)

Islam was assumed to be exterior both to the universal character of Western civilizations and the uniqueness of Turkish identity. It was assumed that Islam became corrupt and dull in the late centuries and it was dismissed for being one of the ‘degenerate’ features of the Arabs which functioned as the exterior other and the reminder of the ‘old identity’ for a long time. However, the Islamic heritage of the Turks was brought forward when it was a useful tool in negotiations like the population exchange between Turkey and Greece or when it became handy in building an excluding mechanism against the non-Muslim minorities. (Ibid., pp. 183-184)

In this way, the origin, continuity, tradition and timelessness of the Turkish national identity were based on the dismissal of the Islamic and Ottoman heritage and the generation of new links with the ancient civilizations of Central Asia. But as Tanıl Bora underlines, the otherness of the past and the exclusion of Islam incapacitated national

identity not only strategically but also imaginatively. The old Turkish history which was addressed as the original and essential resource was both historically and geographically distant and it remained extremely artificial to pave the way to a popular romanticism. (Ibid., pp. 185-186)

1.1.3 The Invention of Tradition

In the early republican era, new traditions were invented for the people in order to strengthen the feelings of unity and sync people with the present moment. As Çağlar Keyder explains, “the freshly constituted elements of a popular ‘tradition’ were represented to the masses as the authentic (and official) version, without much concern for preexisting versions.” (Keyder 1997, p. 45) All national symbols such as heroic sculptures, folk music, legends, heroes and public ceremonies were redefined accordingly. (Ibid.) In order to boost self-esteem, spread the newly invented traditions and transform the ‘corrupted’ legacy of the Ottoman Empire, mass organizations like people’s houses (*halkevleri*) and people’s chambers (*halkodaları*) were created. New schoolbooks were prepared and the education of the children became a priority. (Bozarslan 2006, p. 33)

The new national holidays, which were designed by marking the victorious moments of the War of Independence or republican reforms, built the backbone of the invention of new traditions. As Arzu Öztürkmen states, the four major national holidays in Turkey were determined as Atatürk’s Commemoration, Youth and Sports Day (May 19), National Sovereignty and Children’s Day (April 23), Victory Day (August 30) and Republic Day (October 29) in the narrative of Atatürk’s *Nutuk*. All these national holidays were celebrated in very similar forms and were more like ceremonies than holidays. Although some special occasions like the tenth year of the declaration of the Turkish Republic in 1933 caused more jubilant celebrations, they mostly consisted of costume parades, sentimental poetry recitations and stadium performances, which according to Öztürkmen created a distance between the holidays and their participants in the course of time. (Öztürkmen 2001, p. 51)

Despite being official ceremonies rather than joyful celebrations, these holidays draw the appropriate picture of the nation as it was imagined. Öztürkmen underlines that Turkey was defined as a ‘classless society’ in these events. Turkish people from all classes were pictured celebrating the national holidays side by side. The attempt of watching and the importance of this visual practice made the parades one of the essential parts of the celebrations. (Ibid., p. 58) However, the formalism embedded in the celebrations caused a decline in the enthusiasm of the early republican years from the 1950s. (Ibid., pp. 50-51)

1.1.4 The Foundational Myth

The foundational myth of the Republic of Turkey was built upon the speech that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk delivered in six days in 1927. In this speech, which was entitled *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal told heroic stories from the War of Independence, defined his position as the leader of the army and the roles of some significant figures in the establishment of the republic at the expense of some others.

Hülya Adak defines this text as the Turkish Kemalist nationalist myth (Adak 2003, p. 514) and explains that in *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal as the narrator of the myth is positioned “as the unique/sole hero or secular prophet in Turkish history.” (Ibid., p. 515) She points out that *Nutuk* took Mustafa Kemal’s arrival on Anatolian soil, in the city of Samsun in 1919, as the zero point for telling the rebirth of the Turkish nation. (Ibid., p. 516) This zero-point at which the Turkish nation was reborn was separated from what came before historically.

In this way, the history of Turkey was written from scratch and the foundational myth was built upon Mustafa Kemal’s persona as it was explained in *Nutuk*. As Adak states, the nation was not granted with an autonomous existence, free from Mustafa Kemal’s presence, and it was designed as an I-nation under the shadow of Atatürk. (Ibid., p. 516) *Nutuk* continued to be admired as the original source of the foundational myth of Turkey in later years and the idea of the I-nation was preserved.

1.1.5 Pure, Original Folk

As a part of the national culture, the country, village life and the farmers of the nations were aggrandized in the early years of the Turkish Republic. Asım Karaömerlioğlu explains that when the Turkish Republic was established, 80 per cent of the population were villagers. Since the non-Muslim communities were the ones that kept the dynamism of urban life and were forced to leave the country at that time, the population of the urban areas dropped to 17 per cent from 25 per cent. So, the population of the Turkish Republic was more provincial than the Ottoman Empire. (Karaömerlioğlu 2006, p. 3)

This provincial population was approached by the more educated inhabitants in a sentimental manner. According to Karaömerlioğlu, after the establishment of the people's houses (*halkevleri*) in 1932, issues like going to the village, supporting the ideology of peasantry, and glorifying the economy of the village and villagers were romanticized. Republican intellectuals were encouraged to visit Anatolia in order to 'educate' and 'enlighten' the supposedly 'backward' villagers. Alternatively, Karaömerlioğlu claims that the urban residents were also anxious about a possible wave of migration from the villages to the urban centres which might be considered as an alternative motive for the glorification of Anatolia as the 'authentic' homeland of the Turks and the exaltation of the peasantry and village life. (Ibid., p. 5)

However, Tanıl Bora claims that although Anatolia was presented, mystified and glorified as the abstract space where the Turks have resurrected, its depiction as a lonely and abandoned geography made it very difficult to imagine it as a 'real' place and build a tangible relationship with it by feeling an emotional attachment. The literature that told the stories of the homeland and the populism of the folk culture were limited and not influential. Therefore, the insufficiency of the romanticism that has to surround the idea of the homeland hindered the construction of the national identity which was supposed to be built upon the experience of collective living. (Bora 1996, pp. 186-187)

In the early republican era, Turkish national identity was built upon these heroic stories, invented traditions, imagined memories about a distant past and glorified national symbols. By means of these foundational elements, the modernizing elites intended to create a classless society without regarding the cultural, ethnical or religious diversity in Turkey. They aimed to form a homogenous mass, united under the same ideals of Westernization, secularization and the idea of progress, and worked for the survival of the nation-state, founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk himself. As Tanıl Bora highlights, the symbols, traditions, narratives and rituals of the early republican nationalist discourse were extremely exhibitionist, rigid and stereotyped and its political rhetoric relied on a cliché vocabulary. (Bora 2003, pp. 437-438) However, its foundations were accepted by the masses in later years as a banal reflex and greatly influenced the political, social and cultural segments of life in Turkey.

Television broadcasting was among these segments which shaped the nationalist discourse as much as it was designed by it. It provided the nation-state with a platform through which the voice of the nation could reach to every corner of the country and continue to impose the Kemalist modernization project on people in the comfort of their own houses. As a consequence of this intertwined relationship, national reflexes which were based on the foundations of official, Kemalist nationalism were used to design television programmes on public broadcasting channels. Turkish formations of global television genres like police procedurals got affected by this design to a great extent.

1.2 PUBLIC TELEVISION BROADCASTING AND TURKISH NATIONAL IDENTITY

Mass media played a major role in implementing nation building processes all around the world and Turkey was not different. Before the invention of television, radio was utilized as a significant mediator of national messages. The republican reforms as well as the narrative of the newly established republic were reiterated in radio programmes which were particularly designed to support nation building processes. In her study on radio broadcasting in the early years of the Turkish Republic, Meltem Ahıska states that radio broadcasting, which was taken under state control starting from the late 1930s, was

perceived especially by the broadcasters, the state officials and partially also by the audiences as the 'voice of the nation'. (Ahıska 2005, p. 19)

Apart from giving the newly established republic a national voice, radio also functioned as an education device for the modernizing elites. Ahıska underlines that radio was perceived as a 'school', as was frequently repeated in the memoirs of the early radio broadcasters who were occupied with imagining the nation. She explains that the elites which were engaged in shaping national culture had to pass through a process of re-education. They had to be reproduced, reshaped and disciplined. For instance, "love of the nation had to be created; domestic life and gender roles were to be redefined in nationalist terms; and the education of children and youth had to be posed as a national concern." (Ahıska 2010, p. 20) The talks as well as the dramas which were broadcasted on the radio aimed at accomplishing these goals.

The ambivalent conception of the West, both identified with the terms, 'progress' and 'threat', were adopted by radio programmes in these early years. Ahıska explains that in radio programmes the West was simultaneously idealized for being accepted as the centre of civilization and disparaged for denying and ruining Turkey's national history. (Ibid., p. 48) Besides, by being a technological device that was 'taken' from the West, radio represented Western development and modernity but it also conveyed cultural messages of the nation. (Ibid., pp. 66-67) In this way, elements of Western civilizations and cultural components of Turkish national identity were combined in radio programmes. This coexistence underlined Turkey's ambivalent connection with the West and highlighted the hesitant steps which were taken in the process of Westernization.

This ideological background was transferred to television when it started broadcasting. Television as an institution embraced the same ideals, goals and policies and turned into an extension of the radio in spreading the voice of the nation. Television broadcasting was practiced in Turkey as a 'scientific' project in 1952 for the very first time by an academic team gathered at Istanbul Technical University. There were only a few television receivers covering a very limited area in Istanbul. But the television of Istanbul

Technical University continued its broadcasting which consisted of a few hours of programme footage. (Serim 2007, pp. 27-28)

With the enactment of the new law concerning the establishment of the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) in 1963, radio and television broadcasting were officially united in the same institution. With this law, the technical equipment and television programmes of Istanbul Technical University were transferred to TRT and television broadcasting was secured under the state monopoly in the name of 'unbiasedness'. A new institutional structure was introduced. All equipment and programmes were considered as state property. All operations, processes and transactions concerning television broadcasting were engaged to the Turkish state. (Ibid., pp. 43-44)

In the early years of television broadcasting Turkey was highly dependent on Western technology and experience. In order to put television broadcasting in practice, the receivers were imported from Holland and Germany. Television devices were also not very easy to obtain and located only in a limited number of places such as governmental institutions, universities or hotel lobbies. In 1967, television sets which were imported from different countries such as Germany and Japan started to be sold on the Turkish market but they were too expensive and impossible to afford for middle class families. (Ibid., p. 42)

Becoming a television producer was also not for everyone. In 1963, the Turkish government signed a protocol with the German government in order to implement an education programme for potential television producers. In the following years, some volunteering employees of Ankara Radio were sent to Western countries such as Germany, France, England and Italy in order to be trained for television broadcasting. In 1967, two experts from the BBC came to Turkey and conducted a workshop in order to train potential television producers and after the workshop, the state arranged a governmental entrance exam to employ new TV producers. (Ibid., pp. 49-50)

All these endeavours indicated that the technological, administrative and organizational infrastructure of Turkish television was built from scratch in the early years of TRT.

However, despite the efforts to become more specialized in television broadcasting, the stories that were told about these early years signalled that television broadcasting was still an ‘amateur’ initiative when it was first introduced.

In organizational terms, TRT was a small, disorganized and dispersed institution. For Ömer Serim, the first building of TRT on Mithatpaşa Street in Ankara was a rented apartment and the studio was located in the basement which was enlarged by building an extension: in Serim’s terms it was ‘carved like a molehill’. (Ibid., p. 51) As İsmail Cem, who acted as the general director of TRT between the years of 1974 and 1975, states in his memoirs, the institutional buildings of TRT were located in different places in 1974 when he was appointed for the position. Cem describes this situation simply as an indicator of what a disorganized institution TRT was in those early years of television broadcasting. (Cem 2010, pp. 18-19)

For Cem, the organizational structure of TRT was not cut out for television broadcasting either. Television broadcasting required team work. Every crew member had to be coordinated, organized and planned but the employers of TRT were not used to working in this manner. Everything was implemented in the last minute. (Ibid., p. 55) For instance, TRT’s schedules were not determined weekly. Planning the TV schedules was a daily practice which meant that Saturday’s TV schedule was clarified on Thursday at the earliest. (Ibid., p. 45) For that reason, according to Cem, when he started to work in TRT it was an institution which was really difficult to organize. He describes the situation as ‘miserable’ and the attitude of the administrators as informal and irresponsible. (Ibid., p. 48)

On the technological level, one accident followed the other during live or recorded broadcastings. In order to depict this situation, Cem tells one of the incidents that happened half an hour before the broadcast of the entertainment programme *Telespor*. He explains that before the broadcast, he left his office at the general directorate to visit the department of television management near the television studios where he found out that two of the cameras were broken and one of the senior officers forgot to tell him about this situation. As Cem explains, there were 15 minutes left to the broadcast and the senior

officer was saying that there was nothing to do; the maintenance officers were trying to repair the cameras; if the cameras were not repaired they could start the broadcast with delay or not air the programme at all. Cem started to think about shouldering and carrying one of the oversized cameras in the newsroom down to the big studio from which *Telespor* was broadcasted. When he was just about to spring into action the telephone rang: the camera was repaired. The day was saved when there were 5 minutes left to the broadcast. (Ibid., p. 49)

The devoted Turkish television presenter Halit Kıvanç, quoted by Ömer Serim, explains a similar experience when he was the presenter of the first game show *Bildiklerimiz, Gördüklerimiz, Duyduklarımız* (Things We Know, We See and We Hear). The programme was shown on TRT in 1969 as one of the first few programmes that was broadcasted live at that time. Kıvanç states that one day while he was presenting the show the chief of the studio signalled him and showed him a paper through which he was informed that one of the cameras was broken. Kıvanç explains that the paper was signalling a message which says that he had to speak to the working camera in the middle and have a break after a while. He says “I had nothing to do. I do not remember how long I had spoken but I kept speaking by addressing to the audiences until the cameras were repaired. Along the line, I invented a new term called *telesafirlik* in order to define the situation of Ankara residents who did not own a television set and visit their neighbours at the time of the broadcast in order to watch television.” (Serim 2007, p. 54)

These technological and organizational difficulties complicated the immediate development of TRT television. According to İsmail Cem, from a different viewpoint, TRT’s technological progress was directly related to the developments in Turkish cinema, economy and electrical infrastructure. During that period, there was no electricity in half of the villages and Turkey suffered from regular power blackouts. Turkish cinema was also not very developed technologically. All these challenges made television broadcasting highly problematic. (Cem 2010, p. 55) However, despite all difficulties, TRT maintained its progress. In 1974, its transmission capacity tripled compared to the previous year (Ibid., p. 126) and new technological equipment was ordered from abroad. (Ibid., p. 58)

In terms of ideology, similar to the Ankara radio, national ideals which were based on Westernization, secularization and the idea of progress were adopted by TRT television. As Sevilay Çelenk points out, early television broadcasters agreed upon the idea that television programmes should be educative, aim to report on/for and inform the public rather than entertain. (Çelenk 2005, pp. 49-50) In order to implement this aim, when appointed as the general director of TRT in 1974, İsmail Cem immediately started to work on producing new programmes and reorganizing the schedule.

On his sixth day on the job, Cem and his team organized a new schedule. The broadcast was opened with a children's programme and followed by a discussion on mass problems. After that came the news, a classical Turkish music programme and a subtitled, foreign film. Cem underlined that this new organization gave television broadcasting an educative and cultural character as intended. In the newspapers, this new broadcast was applauded for making the audiences feel like they watched a television channel of a developed country, rather than TRT. (Cem 2010, pp. 65-66)

As it was understood from this comment, creating television programmes like the Western ones was always influential in decision making in TRT. As İsmail Cem stated in a press conference, serving the proliferation of the art and culture, entertaining the audiences and encouraging them to play sports were among the duties of radio and television. (Ibid., p. 39) Despite being demanded, entertainment should never be prioritized. The priority should be on prompting people towards the good, the righteous, the truthful, the virtuous and creating a beautiful world. Cem promised that under his management, 'young brains' would never be motivated to embrace 'incorrect' values of judgement and to fall into virtueless habits. (Ibid.)

What Cem meant by 'incorrect' values of judgement was not clarified but bringing the nationalistic tendencies of the period to mind, Cem's statements could be interpreted as a promise of secularization and Westernization which was adopted in decision making processes of television broadcasting together with all its ambivalences. As in the Ankara radio, Westernization was perceived by TRT both as a threat and a guide for progress. On the one hand, TRT's broadcasts were aspiring to be like the developed, Western countries.

On the other hand, people would never be allowed to have ‘incorrect’ values which could be transmitted by a Western device like television. In this sense, Cem’s statements could be taken as a summary of the mentality that dominated the administration of public television programming in later years, even after Cem’s discharge from TRT in 1975.

By pursuing this mentality which always looked after the national and ideological interests of the Turkish state, TRT continued to disregard people’s taste and interests. Programming decisions were made in order to preserve the gains of the republican reforms and stuck to the narrative of Turkish national identity at the expense of cutting the institution’s ties with everyday reality. This approach influenced the content of television programmes on TRT to a great extent and shaped TRT’s policies regarding to the use of Turkish language and music on television.

1.2.1 Television Programming on TRT

TRT started its regular, test broadcasting in 1968 in the capital, Ankara, and later broadened its coverage to other cities like Istanbul and Izmir. Ömer Serim states that the very first television broadcast on January 31, 1968 caused a lot of excitement among the residents of Ankara. Because many of them had no television set in their homes, they had to gather in cafes or hotel lobbies to watch the broadcast. Serim explains that the logo of TRT appeared on the television screen at 07.27 p.m. There was a statue of Atatürk on the screen and in the left corner the caption ‘*Ankara Televizyonu*’ (Ankara Television) was seen. (Serim 2007, p. 51)

The transition from radio to television broadcasting was emphasized in the opening speech by Mahmut Tali Öngören who said “until today, as TRT, we addressed you as our listeners (*dinleyici*). From now on, TRT starts its visual broadcast and we will address you as our viewers (*izleyici*).” (Ibid., p. 52) The kinship between radio and television broadcasting was sealed when Öngören’s tongue slipped at the end and he completed his speech by saying “good night, our esteemed listeners” owing to the old habits of radio days. (Ibid.)

After Öngören's speech, a programme on the history of Turkish republican reforms was broadcasted in which the adopted daughter of Atatürk, Prof. Afet İnan, gave a lecture on the republican reforms in the setting of a classroom. Following İnan's lecture, a documentary on the War of Independence was broadcasted. The broadcast ended with the news, weather report, a cartoon film, a documentary about the forests of the city of Antalya, and the closing segments which included the singing of the Turkish national anthem. (Ibid.)

In the following years, television programmes on TRT aimed to disseminate the Kemalist republican ideals. Ömer Serim explains that on the one hand, there were locally produced game shows, music broadcasts, teleplays, entertainment programmes exclusive to the weekends and programmes similar to the news segments which revolved around the issues like village and urban life. On the other hand, there were some programmes that were chosen from the German productions since Germany was among the countries from whose knowledge and technology TRT had benefited. French and British productions also dominated the TV schedule at that time for the same reason. (Ibid., pp. 53-54)

TRT extended its broadcasting time to five days a week and apart from Ankara and Istanbul it started to be received in different cities such as İzmir, Eskişehir and Balıkesir in 1972. (Ibid., pp. 66-67) Children's programmes like *Bizim Sokağımız* (Our Street) and *Çocukların Televizyonu* (Children's Television) started to be broadcasted the same year. These programmes were especially designed for the education of preschool and school-age children. Village programmes such as *Tarım Sohbeti* (Agriculture Talks) and *Köye* (Into the Village) were targeted at farmers and people who live in the rural areas and revolved around issues like silviculture, forestation, and the regulations for erosion control. (Çankaya 1986, p. 28)

Furthermore, programmes like *Kadın ve Ev* (Woman and Home) were included in the television flow in order to attract the interest of women who live in the big cities. These programmes focused on giving 'useful' information such as the benefits and harms of sunlight and the sea. Other programmes which were designed in collaboration with the

Ministry of National Education also touched upon domestic issues from a wide spectrum such as the absence of appetite, aquarium fishes and home birds. (Ibid.)

As it was understood from the content of the television programmes, they were designed for the continuation of the republican reforms. Television coverage of the official celebrations of the national holidays on TRT supported the channel's role in spreading the voice of the nation. Everyday programmes on TRT aimed for the education, discipline and reproduction of the masses, especially the younger generations and the women, for the sake of the progress of the nation. The idealization of the village, the farmers and village life were one of the main goals of television broadcasting. TRT aimed for the creation and preservation of the unity of the Turkish people who should be fostered with the love and ideals of the nation.

1.2.2 The Language on TRT

The Turkish language was very significant for TRT's role in serving the unity of the nation. As previously discussed, the Turkish language had undergone a major linguistic engineering project which aimed to purify the language from Arabic and Persian words which were replaced with the "resurrected Uro-Altaic words of 'Turkic' origin." (Öncü 2000, p. 299) Ayşe Öncü explains that through this movement to purify Turkish or *öz Türkçe hareketi* an attempt was made to clean the slate and write the history of the new nation. She adds that this 'new' Turkish turned into a blend of words from regional dialects, new words from Persian-Arabic origin, European loanwords and rediscovered Uro-Altaic words. It was associated with the young, modern, secular and progressive whereas the Ottoman language recalled traditionalist, conservative and old people. However, as Öncü emphasizes, the loanwords from Arabic and Persian continued to be used in a semi-official way. (Ibid.)

During this process, the nation-state in various ways sought to control and monitor the dissemination of correct and beautiful Turkish (*düzgün, güzel Türkçe*). (Ibid., p. 300) TRT was one of the institutions that played an important role in administering this goal first through radio and afterwards through television broadcasting. By referring to radio

broadcasting, Ayşe Öncü asserts that “the institutional voice of the radio defined not only the rhythms of national time and the national calendar, but also the cadences of standardized, correct and proper speech.” (Ibid., p. 301)

TRT took the responsibility of disseminating the correct and beautiful Turkish from radio and eventually got identified with the usage of this language. Sevilay Çelenk explains that speaking Turkish based on the Istanbul dialect in television broadcasting was one of the essential principles of TRT. In this way, TRT intended to create a unity throughout the Turkish language based on the Istanbul accent and to ‘educate’ people who spoke in different dialects and accents. (Çelenk 2005, p. 137) This language use turned into an important factor in dubbing foreign police procedurals in later years and became a characteristic of dubbed, foreign TV series in Turkey.

1.2.3 TRT’s Policies on Music

Music was another field through which TRT tried to build national unity. Before addressing TRT’s policies on music, it might be useful to give a little background about how music turned into a battleground in Turkey beginning from the early republican period. Orhan Tekelioğlu explains that in the early years of the Turkish Republic, in order to create a new national elite, art institutions were reformed; their activities were organized and new cultural territories were determined accordingly. Whereas the East was considered as taboo, the West was determined as the domain of modernity, future and the model of the new nation. (Tekelioğlu 1996, pp. 194-195)

Tekelioğlu remarks the close attention that was given to music in this process and states that music was one of the main targets of the Republican leaders. Teaching people and making them like polyphonic Western music was the initial aim and radio broadcasting was the major device to achieve this. (Ibid.) Tekelioğlu says “what the new musical elite hoped for was a birth, in the Turkish listener, an enjoyment of polyphonic music which, it was assumed, the ‘modern’ western listener already had.” (Ibid., p. 196)

While imposing their own ideals on people, the modernizing elites denied local tastes. As Meltem Ahıska states the Turkish elites ignored the ‘Turkishness’ of the *alaturca*³ music. For them, even though the Westerners described *alaturca* music as Turkish it was Eastern music but certainly not Turkish. In the 1930s, elites were highly displeased with hearing some versions of *alaturca* music on the radio. It was told that this kind of music came down with ‘alcoholism’, stimulated the ‘sexual appetite’ and it was a shame to listen to the ‘clamour’ of this music. (Ahıska 2005, p. 123)

In 1934, Turkish music was banned from radio broadcasting for 20 months. However, there was an uncertainty about the extent of this prohibition like whether it was binding for all Turkish music or just the Ottoman music. (Tekelioğlu 1996, pp. 194-195) After the ban was lifted, in order to create a national Turkish style of music and monitor the field, with the help of Ankara radio, monophonic folk songs were collected all around the country and written down according to the Western rules of notation. Anatolian melodies were recomposed with polyphonic lines by Turkish musicians who were educated in the West. (Ibid., p. 196) In 1948, the songs which were collected and arranged started to be broadcasted under the programme title *Yurttan Sesler* (Tunes from the Homeland) on the radio (Ibid., p. 207) and later on television under different programme titles.

Tekelioğlu highlights that although it was against the nature of these folk songs, the Turkish state tried to institutionalize the songs by arranging a chorus and had them sung accompanied by a various kinds of Turkish musical instruments called *saz*⁴. He adds that someone had thought that through this kind of ‘orchestrated’ performance and an increased volume, the Western musical practice was applied to Turkish folk music. (Ibid.) This style of choral performances was later transferred to the television screen when the television broadcast started and it became a common musical practice on TRT.

³ *Alaturca* was used as a concept to describe a traditionally Turkish style of music in the Ottoman Empire. Its opposite was *alafranga* which was used to define musical pieces or other cultural performances in Western or European style.

⁴ *Saz* is a plucked string instrument which is frequently used in the Middle Eastern countries for performing traditional style of music. Another name of this instrument is *bağlama*.

After the 1950s, the Turkish state loosened its policies and became much more tolerant for *alaturca* music, especially for Turkish Art Music which might be considered as a version of Ottoman palace music. The Ankara radio even trained its own performers in Turkish Art Music for the sake of not losing its listeners who were tuning their radio receivers to the Arab channels in order to find the music that addressed their tastes. (Ibid., pp. 207-208)

However, in the 1960s, the most challenging development for Turkish radio and television was the popularity of *arabesk* music which got its inspiration from Egyptian melodies. (Ibid., p. 211) *Arabesk* was completely denied by TRT and strictly banned from the radio and television. Yet it was everywhere, beginning from the 1970s. From minibuses and taxis to music halls, *arabesk* music was part of everyday life in Turkey. Meral Özbek says that “Arabesk invaded virtually every private and public sphere, from theaters that showed movies of arabesk singers to thoroughfares where street peddlers sold cassettes.” (Özbek 1997, p. 218)

By denying its popularity and declaring it as a degenerate musical form, TRT continued the ban of *arabesk* until the appearance of the most famous *arabesk* musician Orhan Gencebay on the New Year’s Eve concert in 1979 on television. (Şahin 2014, p. 8) The *arabesk* ban was an indication of TRT’s complete denial of the interests and tastes of the people in order to preserve national unity by applying the criteria that were determined by the republican elites and early nationalist discourse.

TRT had been allocated with a nationalistic responsibility for serving the nation’s best interests. By disregarding cultural diversity and indigenous tastes, TRT intended to support the national project of the modernizing elites to construct a homogenous national identity for the people of Turkey. An ideal picture of the nation was depicted on the television screen as it was imagined by the modernizing elites and TRT was described as a strong, reformist and progressive institution like the nation itself. However, the changing social and political environment in Turkey together with the developments in

television broadcasting worldwide carried television broadcasting to another level and TRT faced a crisis starting in the 1980s.

1.3 COMMERCIAL TELEVISION CHANNELS AND TURKISH NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE 1980S AND 1990S

From the 1980s, political, social and cultural developments changed every segment of life in Turkey. Television broadcasting was one of the segments which got affected the most. Following the military intervention on September 12, 1980, the retired military man Macit Akman became the general director of TRT. As soon as he took office he commanded that he would work for the well-being of the nation by only seizing the principles and goals of 'our' saviour and the founder of 'our' state, the almighty Atatürk and avoiding all kinds of political thoughts and movements. (Serim 2007, pp. 113-114)

One of the main goals of the new TRT administration was strengthening the unity among the citizens who were 'polarized' because of the anarchy and terror that resulted in the military intervention. The monitoring and control over the television programmes were at the highest level and censorship became much more severe. In relation to that, Akman gave a notice to the departments concerning the language of the local and foreign productions and banned the usage of some certain pure Turkish words. (Ibid., pp. 119-120)

Akman acted as the general director of TRT for three years. After the termination of the military government and the election of Turgut Özal as the prime minister in 1983, a new era had started for TRT. In 1984, TRT switched to colour transmission and the second television channel TRT 2 started its broadcasting in 1986. (Ibid., pp. 126-131) However, even though these changes point the way to some serious developments, society had been changing at a much faster pace and TRT experienced some difficulties in seizing the day.

Under the influence of political oppression, TRT's daily schedule was designed to avoid conflict. As Sevilay Çelenk points out, in the second half of the 1980s and in the 1990s, apart from the instructive agriculture programmes as well as the programmes focusing on

issues of health and education, TRT's daytime schedule was full of cartoons and foreign television dramas. The local productions were incapable to attract a wide range of audiences. Documentaries as well as art and culture programmes were mostly considered as elitist, aiming to bring the 'culture' to people. TRT was caught up in the spiral of silence by not making any comments about what was going on in the country, becoming a seemingly apolitical broadcasting agent. (Çelenk 2005, p. 143)

Besides, the 1980s were the period in which Turkey was introduced to the free market economy in real terms. When Prime Minister Turgut Özal took office, before everything he made an amendment to the law regarding the protection of the value of the Turkish currency and allowed the purchase and sale of foreign currencies. New decisions were made concerning import and export in order to lift the control over foreign trade. Before Özal's era, some foreign products could only be smuggled into the country and be illegally sold in the American bazaars or street stalls. However, after the economic developments, people were given the opportunity to find imported goods in any shop window, from cigarettes, chocolates and alcoholic beverages to Levi's blue jeans. Not only common goods but also the latest editions of new technologies and luxurious items like Japanese automobiles or fashion designs of expensive brands appeared on the Turkish market. (Bali 2013, p. 27)

The flood of foreign products into the domestic market created a new culture and understanding in Turkey. Rifat Bali explains that the 1980s were the years when everybody longed for becoming rich and Turgut Özal was the spokesman of this idea. In one of his visits abroad, Özal declared that a rich Muslim is better than a poor Muslim and summarized the state of mind that dominated the 1980s. (Ibid., p. 33) The businessmen underwent an image transformation during that time by appearing in commercials or opening the doors of their offices to the newspapers. In the 1970s, which were the years of strikes and resistance for the Turkish labourers, businessmen preferred to be invisible, living their luxurious lives out of sight. But in the 1980s, with the support of Turgut Özal's government, they decided that it was their time to laugh and they appeared on the media channels with their full presences. (Ibid., p. 35)

Aside from these businessmen, Turkish society harboured a new type of young, yuppie-like white collar workers. In an environment like this, the new young businessmen and the Turkish yuppies would like to live like their Western counterparts by consuming the products with the same brand names and having the same sense of entertainment. (Ibid.) TRT was unable to fulfill the expectations of this new society. It started to be harshly criticized due to its lack of options for different programmes. The inability of its programmes to entertain people carried TRT to the line of fire. (Çelenk 2005, p. 145)

In order to overcome this difficult period, TRT took new steps and updated the variety of its productions. Early Turkish police procedurals like *Kanun Savaşçıları* (Crime Fighters, TRT, 1988) and *İz Peşinde* (In Pursuit of a Trace, TRT, 1989) appeared during this era. However, TRT remained unable to seize the day and to respond to the needs of a rapidly changing society. New options started to be discussed as a consequence of the developments in economy. Turkish government was more than enthusiastic about these changes.

As Haluk Şahin and Asu Aksoy explain “once in power, Özal would take steps toward the privatization of the state monopoly on broadcasting to expedite Turkey’s economy and cultural integration into the globalisation process, which he describes as ‘synchronization with the civilized world’.” (Şahin and Aksoy 1993, p. 33) Although TRT was appointed as the only broadcasting institution by law, in 1990 the President of the Turkish Republic, Turgut Özal, declared that there was no law for broadcasting from overseas. He said that an entrepreneur who rents a TV channel from abroad can broadcast programmes for the Turkish audiences through satellite.

During the following four years, the first private TV channel in Turkish history, Magic Box Star 1, broadcasted from Germany without having to respond to any state regulations in Turkey. Many other new TV channels followed Star 1 and started broadcasting from overseas. This situation caused various legal and ethical complications such as broadcasting the advertisements of political parties during pre-election silence and showing nudity and violence on TV. (Çelenk 2005, p. 179)

Private television channels were legalized in 1994 by means of new regulations. As Ayşe Öncü emphasizes, in three to four years, the whole media scene in Turkey was completely transformed and fell into the hands of vertically organized, giant media conglomerates that owned a series of different corporations from banks to tourism agencies. (Öncü 2000, p. 303) During that period, there were five major private TV channels, *Interstar* (previously, *Magic Box Star 1*), *Show TV*, *TGRT*, *Kanal D* and *ATV*. These channels addressed the majority of Turkish TV audiences and determined the ‘mainstream’ during that period. *Interstar* belonged to the Uzan Group of the Uzan family which also owned electricity companies, banks and a football team. *Show TV* was administered by the businessman Erol Aksoy who also possessed banks, service and financial companies. *TGRT* belonged to Ihlas Holding, owner of banks and marketing companies. *Kanal D* was owned by Doğan Media Group which was also active in the banking industry. *ATV* was jointly owned by the businessman Dinç Bilgin’s Media Group which performed in newspaper and publishing industries and Çukurova Holding, an active member of banking and finance sectors. (Aksoy and Robins 1997, pp. 1947-1948)

Apart from these major TV channels which controlled the majority of the television industry by addressing the general public, Islamic TV channels offered an alternative for the more conservative and Islamic audiences. TGRT, which was established in 1993, was among the pioneering examples of these alternative, Islamic channels but changed its channel identity by the end of 1990s by addressing the general public more and becoming mainstream. (Çelenk 2005, pp. 278-279) In 1994, *STV* which was sponsored by the religious Nur order started its broadcasting and was followed by *Kanal 7* which was associated with the Islamic *Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party) and *Mesaj TV* sponsored by Kadiri order. (Öncü 2000, p. 307)

Ayşe Öncü notes that since these TV channels were sponsored by religious orders they were private but not commercial. Their driving force was not advertising revenues or ratings. They described themselves as ‘civil initiatives’ which react against the ‘moral indecency’ of infotainment channels and the official secularist character of the state run TRT. Although in their early years religious, educative programmes started to be broadcasted on all four channels in primetime, Islamic TV channels soon found the

solution to offer light entertainment programmes with an Islamic touch in order to address more audiences in the niche Islamic market. (Ibid., pp. 307-308)

The binary opposition between the Islamic TV channels and the mainstream, private TV channels mirrored the division between the secular and the Islamic in Turkey in the 1990s. In this sense, whereas the mainstream TV channels which received the most ratings addressed popular and secular tastes, Islamic TV channels addressed a niche, conservative market. Therefore, by considering the fact that *ATV*, *Kanal D* and *Show TV* received most of the advertising revenues in 1999 (Çelenk 2001a), these more secular, majorly watched TV channels described and controlled what was on Turkish television in the 1990s by reproducing the secularist discourse in their national broadcasts in a more liberal and informal way than the state run TRT.

In 1994, the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) was established to regulate television broadcasting in Turkey and penalize the TV channels if deemed necessary. However, during the four years without regulations and RTÜK, these newly established private TV channels presented a very different kind of broadcasting which particularly concentrated on offering entertainment. Together with this, Turkish television audiences met a completely new world which reshaped the understanding of television in Turkey. Private TV channels were new, hip and exciting. In contrast with TRT, they were perfectly in sync with the changing dynamics of Turkish society.

1.3.1 New Forms of Television Programming

Different types of programmes started to dominate the Turkish television scene in the 1990s. Turkish TV series in different global genres appeared on almost every channel. New entertainment programmes hosted by the celebrities as well as magazine programmes and talk shows became quite popular. What was seen on TV was very different from what TRT had offered. The monotonous, instructive programming of TRT had given its place to the more colourful, energetic, entertaining and ‘Turkish-made’ programming. (Algan 2003, p. 175) Şahin and Aksoy adds that “the public liked what Magic Box offered them: new and glitzy American series, soccer matches at home and

abroad, discussion programs (e.g. ‘The Red Armchair’), and talk shows (e.g. ‘Rüstem Batum Show’) in which hitherto taboo subjects were openly discussed.” (Şahin and Aksoy 1993, p. 34)

Gradually, global media formats started to influence the formation of locally produced television programmes. In order to reach the widest range of Turkish audiences “televsual genres of global consumerism, selectively appropriated and redeployed [...], have rendered a concert of cultural alternatives recognizable and hence negotiable in the public arena.” (Öncü 2000, p. 314) For the sake of offering something different, both the public and private TV channels started to imitate the global media channels. The resemblance was apparent even in small details such as the costumes of the female presenters or how the cameras zoomed in. (Şahin and Aksoy 1993, p. 37)

New form of television programming did not only change the Turkish television scene in terms of dominant genres or televsual styles. The establishment of the private TV channels also paved the way to represent what had not previously been represented on TRT such as different identities. Şahin and Aksoy explain that through this new media environment, the tensions concerning ethnic origin, religion and language came to light by means of the new programmes on the private TV channels which operated outside the restrictions of official ideology. In this way, all the taboo subjects such as the Kurdish issue, Kemalism, secularism, religious factions, gender issues and sex were carried to the public arena. (Ibid., p. 35)

As Şahin and Aksoy point out, everything that was not allowed to be on state broadcasting, from the leaders of the Kurdish rebellion and fundamentalist preachers to transvestites, was on private TV. The foreign films which were completely banned or censored in the previous years were also shown there. The American TV series which had been dominating the Turkish television channels for a long time came to be seen as less fascinating since there were soft porn films on television. (Ibid.)

Eventually, as Ayşe Öncü defines, Turkish television offered

an amalgam of forms, formats and genres, 'borrowed' from the television screens of Europe or the USA and 'translated' into local versions of game and quiz shows (with contestants in the studio audience or at home); sitcoms (with or without edited in laughter); talk shows (with or without 'active audiences') and music videos (with or without the possibility of calling in to vote for favourites) flow into one another, interspersed with karate films, Brazilian tele-novellas, cowboy movies and ads of premier soft drinks or detergents in world markets. (Öncü 2000, p. 296).

This flow was highly different from what had been on television before the establishment of private TV channels and mesmerized Turkish TV audiences for being up to date, different and liberating.

1.3.2 Language of the Private TV channels

The appearance of taboo personalities or issues on television programmes was not the only affair challenging the essentials of Turkish national identity when the private television channels were established. The language that came with the private TV channels was not TRT's 'correct' and 'beautiful' Turkish anymore. It included different dialects and accents which were rarely encountered on TRT as well as the everyday language of the people in the way that they speak.

By referring to David Morley's ideas on how 'listening to television' and 'viewing television' are inseparable components of the process of watching television, Ayşe Öncü explains that the private television channels did not only bring new images which were missing from state television. They also conveyed a new language which was really challenging for the officially promoted and circulated national form of the Turkish language. (Öncü 2000, p. 298)

Accordingly, Ayşe Öncü concentrates on the frequent broadcasting of the famous Turkish actor Kemal Sunal's comedy films on private TV channels. (Ibid., p. 307) Kemal Sunal films usually tell the humorous quests of a naive character, played by Kemal Sunal, against a powerful and corrupt villain and they have humanitarian messages that stand against materialism and greed. According to Öncü, the comic elements in the films

generally revolve around the naivety of the characters, performed by Kemal Sunal, which are so straightforward and open that they understand almost everything literally. They seem not to be aware of the double meanings of words or social conventions and say what is on their minds without any hesitation. (Ibid., p. 306) The problems of Kemal Sunal's characters with language appear when they listen to long speeches that were conducted in 'proper' Turkish. It seems like they get what they hear and respond in street slang (*sokak ağzı*) by translating the matters and summarizing them in a few words in 'low' language. (Ibid.)

Before the establishment of private TV channels, these comedy films were banned from the state-run TRT despite their great success in film theatres because the characters that were performed by Kemal Sunal did not speak 'proper' Turkish, among many other reasons. After the lifting of the state monopoly on broadcasting, these films immediately found their place in the primetime slots of the private TV channels in the 1990s. While answering the private TV channels' search for 'light entertainment' and 'the lowest common denominator of public taste' (Ibid., pp. 304-305) they also carried the everyday language of the people to the television screens, together with many other programmes. In this way, private TV channels broke the monopoly of 'correct' and 'beautiful' Turkish and celebrated the new television era in Turkey.

1.3.3 New Policies on Music and *Televole* Culture

Music, one of the 'delicate' matters for the state-run TRT, was another field that indicated the difference of broadcasting on the private TV channels. Although TRT had loosened its policies on *arabesk* music and musicians in the 1980s, it was still not that visible on the television screens until the appearance of the private TV channels. To distinguish the private TV channels from TRT, *arabesk* music and musicians immediately showed up on television screens in the 1990s. However, what appeared on the private TV channels was not the *arabesk* of the 1970s either. The music which once represented the lifestyles, agonies and tastes of the shanty towns symbolized different things in the 1990s.

Meral Özbek explains that with the influence of the neoliberal politics of Özal's Motherland Party in the 1980s, "arabesk lost its utopian connotations and became increasingly associated with pragmatic concerns such registering squatter houses or 'turning the corner without due labour'." (Özbek 1997, p. 220) During the 1980s, *arabesk* also started to signify the lifestyle, taste and perception of the new rich with provincial backgrounds which were considered as the new elites, economically dominant in fields such as commerce, trade and finance. (Ibid.) Özbek emphasizes that intellectuals, bureaucrats and artists continued to declare that *arabesk* was vulgar and degenerate but this time their reasons were altered. It was the music of a 'new' social class that drinks Western whiskey while eating Turkish *lahmacun*. (Ibid., pp. 220-224)

In this sense, the appearance of *arabesk* music videos and *arabesk* musicians on the private TV channels, some of which were private music channels such as Kral TV, might not be considered as 'ground-breaking'. It was not a liberating move that made visible what could not be seen on the state-ran TRT but the invasion of a new kind of popular culture which dominated the Turkish television scene.

This new kind of popular culture was incited by the rising consumerism in Turkey in the 1990s. Apart from cultural developments like the commercialization of *arabesk* music, it brought new products, habits and practices. As Mine Gencil Bek explains, sponsorship started to dominate the art scene during that period. Lifestyle magazines on every path of life from food to holiday and home styling mushroomed everywhere. Television became an inseparable part of everyday life in Turkey. (Bek 2004, p. 375)

Bek considers *Televole* programmes which became very popular with the establishment of the private TV channels as another indication of the permeating wave of consumerism in Turkey. These programmes concentrated on celebrity news by demonstrating their luxurious lifestyles with flashy graphics, fast editing and exaggerated voiceovers. After a period, tabloidization became synonymous with *televole* culture which influenced popular culture and everyday life in Turkey at different levels. For Mine Gencil Bek, as part of this wave, news bulletins started to cover more and more stories of infotainment

in which poor people were portrayed with their tragedies and rich people with their wealth, gossip and luxurious lives. (Ibid., p. 377)

Through the new policies on music, the popularity of the *Televole* culture and the practices of consumerism, a new kind of popular culture was reflected by the private TV channels. Although this new wave paved the way for the appearance of taboo subjects and characters on TV, it was actually not as ‘ground-breaking’ as it was frequently considered to be. As Ayşe Öncü asserts, what was presented on Turkish television was simply banal, that is “the self-evident, taken for granted experience of everyday, what is lived but remains unquestioned.” (Öncü 2000, p. 297) Therefore, it carried all the social, cultural and political dilemmas and conflicts of everyday life as well as the ulterior motives and ideological positions of the media moguls to the television screens.

1.4 THE ‘COMMERCIAL-NATIONAL’ CHARACTER OF THE MAINSTREAM PRIVATE TV CHANNELS IN THE 1990S

In the 1990s, the discussions that surround the topics of secularism and nationalism dominated the agenda of Turkey. For being a significant part of everyday life, private TV channels revealed their true colours on these subjects. Apart from designing their television programmes in accordance with their ideological positions on these issues, private TV channels played a major role in shaping public opinion and motivating the public to take action in certain situations. In this way, private TV channels reproduced dominant forms of nationalist discourses on television screens and formed their programmes accordingly.

Yael Navaro Yashin points out that secularism and Islamism competed with each other in public life in the 1990s. The meanings of ‘Turkish culture’ and ‘nativity’ were questioned in the public arena and Turkey’s ‘proper’ region as well as its position against Europe were the major parts of the discussion. (Yashin 2002, p. 7) Just like in the 1920s and 1930s, the question of ‘what is Turkey’s culture?’ dominated the debates. The proper native Turk was constantly defined by the Islamic and the secularist sides of the discussion. Yashin states that in order to be convincing, both sides had to produce new

discourses concerning the local culture of Turkey. While a lot of people returned to the early Republican resources to describe what Turkish national culture (Ibid., p. 21) was, some people found the answer in the Ottoman past.

The reason behind this accelerated competition between secularist and Islamic points of view to construct different discourses of ‘Turkishness’ was concerned with the victory of the Islamist Welfare Party in the municipal elections of March 1994. Yashin explains that after the elections, which made the current Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan the mayor of Istanbul, ‘what if’ scenarios of the secularist Istanbulites turned into a tale of nightmare. The city was surrounded by an atmosphere of panic, depression and anxiety. People whom Yashin had spoken to and asked their thoughts and feelings about the victory of the Welfare Party expressed their ideas by making jokes in a fearful, imaginative manner about how their lifestyle might be interfered with. The orally created, popular fiction of the Turkish-secularist discourse on Islam spread in a short period. (Ibid., pp. 22-23)

Although the fear of the Turkish secularists circulated through word of mouth and had an imaginative side, Yashin adds that “secularist discourse on Islam to a certain extent contained ‘effects of truth’, in Foucault’s sense of the term, proving to have power in inciting historical change.” (Ibid., p. 32) As she points out, in the first few months of the municipal administration of the Welfare Party in Istanbul, some of the worst nightmares of the Turkish-secularists became realized since the new Islamist municipality tried to push social life indoors by force. (Ibid., p. 39)

The secularist response to the imposition of Islamist lifestyles in urban municipalities like Istanbul was proving their own nativeness and belonging to Turkey. Secularists “wanted to argue that they were Muslims and they did not veil, they did not perform the *namaz*, they drank alcohol, they watched movies, and socialized in public places across gender” (Ibid., p. 40) and still belonged to Turkey. On the other side of the argument, Islamists applied conflicting strategies, sometimes proving that the secularists were right to be anxious and at other times pricking the bubble of their anxieties. However, as Yashin asserts, the nativeness that the Islamists were proud of being the representatives of was

not compatible with the lifestyle of the many inhabitants of Istanbul. Eventually, this clash caused the very questioning of Turkish culture itself. (Ibid.)

Apart from the debates that were going on between Islamists and secularists, the Kurdish issue brought another dimension to the discussion concerning what Turkish culture 'really' was. The Kurdish issue played an important role in the acceleration of Turkish nationalism at that time. Tanıl Bora states that the Gulf War which had resulted in the formation of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq encouraged the Kurdish nationalist movement in Turkey and Turkey's policies concerning the Kurdish issue only included the military solution. For Bora, this was one of the factors that consumed Turkey's self-confidence and fired up the concerns for the survival of the nation while the economic crises that Turkey faced constituted another significant factor. As a result, Bora says "Turkey, which had entered the 1990s with the slogan 'The Twenty-First Century Will Be the Turkish Century,' came face-to-face with the gravest depression in the history of the republic." (Bora 2003, p. 436)

Financially speaking, the private TV channels were not on the safe side during that period. The increasing number of private television channels caused an "intense, cut-throat competition among private channels, trying to capture a share of audience ratings and hence of advertising revenues." (Öncü 2000, p. 303) Şahin and Aksoy explain that in a short period, the financial pressure on the private TV channels paved the way to cost reduction and importing cheap American and Latin American series was the solution. "Foreign series accounted for more than half the program slots in a week, and all the top 10 most-watched programs were quiz shows and comedies, with the exception of two news magazine programs." (Şahin and Aksoy 1993, p. 37) A new kind of homogenization in programming appeared in this process.

Under these circumstances, in order to secure good relations with the governments in power and keep their businesses in other sectors running, private TV channels chose to abandon their controversial programming. But this did not mean that they chose to be apolitical. As Tanıl Bora underlines, nationalistic exhibitionism was highly dominant in public places at that time. National symbols such as the Turkish flag or representations of

Atatürk became trademarks and were consumed publicly. (Bora 2003, p. 450) This exhibitionism was an indication of the secularist-Islamist conflict which fought for acquiring the power over defining what Turkish identity and culture 'really' were. The mainstream private television channels fired up the dilemmas that were built around the 'real' identity and culture of Turkey. As Yael Navaro Yashin emphasizes, "the hype, scandal, and alarm produced by journalists around political issues in the 1990s created successive cultures of panic and fear in public life. In the culture of news, 'the political' was turned into a consumer item." (Yashin 2002, p. 6)

Correspondingly, Yael Navaro Yashin attracts attention to the flag campaign which was initiated by the private TV channels, particularly *Interstar TV* and *Show TV*, accompanied by mainstream newspapers like *Hürriyet*. She explains that the flag campaign was initiated in 1996 after an event that had taken place in a crowded meeting of the People's Democracy Party (*Halkın Demokrasi Partisi, HADEP*) which was established by Kurdish intellectuals and activists. During the meeting, while people were listening to the speeches of the leaders of People's Democracy Party, a young man climbed to the flag pole, untied the Turkish flag and took it down. The moment which was recorded by the cameras of the private TV channels, was presented as a national scandal. (Ibid., p. 128)

As a part of the flag campaign, the citizens were called out by the private TV channels and other media giants to hang Turkish flags at their windows in such a way that they would be visible from the street-side. The intention behind this movement was to protest against what had happened in the meeting. As a result of the 'provocation' of the media, Turkish flags started to be spotted in every corner of the city of Istanbul and the campaign became a 'success'. What was interesting for Yashin was that it was not the state that initiated the campaign but the media. (Ibid.)

This campaign helped the private TV channels to reveal their true colours when it came to political matters. As Yashin points out, the private TV channels were glorified as an important element to develop a civil society against the state and as a platform for free speech in high number of academic writings. However, "the most popular TV channels (those heralded by journalists who support freedom of speech) have also been central to

the production and reproduction of thralldom for the Turkish state. Their hands-on organization of the flag campaign was one such concrete example.” (Ibid., p. 130)

Besides, the lynching campaign that targeted the Kurdish musician Ahmet Kaya in 1999 might be considered as another incident through which nationalist reflexes of the media channels were awakened. The event happened in the award night of the Magazine Journalists Association which is an organization established in 1992 by the reporters, writers and managers who work on the television programmes or other media channels that focus on celebrity news.

During the award night which was broadcasted live on the mainstream private TV channel Show TV, Ahmet Kaya got on the stage to receive his award as the musician of the year and stated that as a Kurdish musician, he would sing a song in Kurdish on his new album and shoot a music video for that song. He said that he was looking for courageous television channels which would broadcast his new music video. The famous musicians, celebrities, businessmen, television broadcasters and newspapermen who attended the night protested against Kaya’s words by hooting and throwing forks and knives at him. They sang along the 10th Year March which was composed in 1933 to celebrate the tenth year of the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Following that night, Ahmet Kaya became an outcast with the support of the media channels. He had to leave the country and died in Paris the next year while he was in exile.

As these examples indicate, instead of reflecting a democratic worldview and supporting diversity in Turkey, private TV channels contributed to the acceleration of nationalism in the 1990s by reproducing and disseminating nationalist discourse. Although they partially managed to give the Kurdish leaders, Islamists and socialists a voice and make them visible in the public’s eyes, their ideological positions, their business relationships with the governments in power as well as their major goal to address the widest possible audience by sharing and reflecting their worldviews influenced the content of their programmes. In this way, nationalist symbols started to be represented on television more vigorously without hesitating to induce controversy. Private TV channels turned into platforms where the commercial interests and the nationalist discourses intertwined.

Sabina Mihelj says “wherever it appeared, television became a national medium par excellence, and functioned as an instrument of national integration domestically as well as a vehicle for national promotion globally.” (Mihelj 2013, p. 23) She underlines that the changing media landscapes in Eastern Europe have been frequently approached with the notions like democratization, civil society and the public sphere by communication scholars. However, eventually, in her own terms, reality fell short. Especially the news media remained politicized and continued to be under the influence of the political elites in power in the post-communist era. The commercialization of the media industry paved the way to the explosion of the new publications but they did not contribute to the democratization or the diversification of the public debates. Instead, they only served personal and private gains. (Ibid., pp. 13-14)

In a similar way, the private television channels which rapidly became vertically integrated in Turkey did not bring democratization and political liberation as it was expected. As Christian Christensen points out, in its early years, commercial media in Turkey offered exciting examples of critical and challenging investigative journalism. However, in Christensen terms, the ‘media honeymoon in Turkey’ did not last very long. In a short period, the major Turkish media companies started to use their companies for their ulterior motives (Christensen 2007, pp. 184-187) similar to what Mihelj highlights. In this way, by designing their television contents in accordance with the dominant nationalist discourses of the era, instead of challenging the republican foundations of the nation as in their early years, private TV channels maintained the status quo.

The formation of global television genres on Turkish television channels was greatly affected by this transformation . On the one hand, global television genres were adapted in the Turkish context for commercial reasons like entertaining Turkish audiences and increasing ratings. On the other hand, their adaptation processes was influenced by the dominant nationalist discourses which were utilized by private TV channels for different reasons such as making global television genres more familiar to the Turkish audiences.

1.5 CONCLUSION

When television broadcasting first started in Turkey in the 1960s it was perceived as a vital device to unite the nation under the ideals of Kemalist republican reforms. The state run television channel, TRT, took the responsibility to inform/educate the public through television programmes which were designed in harmony with the republican ideals of Westernization, secularism and the idea of progress. However, while keeping up with the republican project of nation building through television broadcasting, TRT missed the chance to reflect the everyday realities of the people and address their tastes.

In the 1980s, when the administration of Turgut Özal's government took new steps to open the Turkish economy to foreign trade and influence, TRT became unable to respond the changing needs of Turkish society. Turkish audiences sought for new forms of entertainment in the new political, social, economic and cultural environment that Özal's government designed for them. Private TV channels appeared in the beginning of the 1990s and satisfied their expectations via mimicking the broadcastings of global television channels and airing fascinating programmes, varying from game shows to foreign TV series and films. Apart from providing entertainment, private TV channels gave a voice to the diversified ethnic, religious and cultural identities on television and offered a momentary liberation for people living in Turkey.

Instead of representing a homogenous national identity as TRT did, private TV channels intended to challenge the taboos of republican ideals of national identity and designed the contents of their programmes accordingly. However, this momentary liberation was short lived. In an attempt to address as many people as possible and build beneficial business relations with governments in power, private TV channels tended towards reproducing and disseminating dominant nationalist discourses. Without hesitating to shape public opinion or cause controversies, they contributed to the acceleration of nationalism in Turkey and offered a new televisual system, interwoven with commercial interests and hegemonic national symbols.

Alternatively, as Sabina Mihelj's comparative approach to Eastern European television reveals, television industries all around the world go through more or less interrelated processes. The rift that Mihelj mentions between the elite and popular tastes, choosing to educate people rather than to entertain them through television programming, and the critical approaches to the foreign, mostly American, television programmes, are some of the shared issues which were also addressed in this chapter while sketching the historical background of the Turkish television broadcasting. (Mihelj 2013, pp. 24-25) These commonalities signal the fact that it is not only the national dynamics that trigger the transformative processes in the Turkish television industry. Social and cultural developments worldwide stimulate instant change in local television industries on an equal basis.

For instance, whereas Turgut Özal's semi-legal permission to broadcast from abroad can be accepted as the main reason behind the emergence of the private television channels in Turkey, this development can also be considered as the outcome of the pan-Europeanization of television broadcasting starting from the second half of the 1980s. As Patryk Wasiak states in his study on the Polish audiences' reactions to the Western European television channels, the mid-1980s were the years when the Eutelsat satellites initiated "broadcasting pan-European television transmission of several channels." (Wasiak 2014, p. 69)

The first Turkish private TV channel, Magic Box Star 1, was also broadcasting through two different channels that were rented from the Eutelsat satellite. By means of this link, the transformation that was experienced in the Turkish television industry can be approached as a direct consequence of a global event like the launching of Eutelsat satellites as well. More issues such as the formation of global television genres in the Turkish context get influenced by this dialogic interplay between the global and the local. For that reason, the next chapter approaches to the history of television in Turkey from a wider spectrum and dwells on the impacts of globalisation processes on the Turkish television industry by paying particular attention to the localisation of foreign police procedural TV series.

2 GLOBALISATION OF TURKISH TELEVISION AND THE LOCALISATION OF POLICE PROCEDURAL GENRE

Globalisation processes had a big influence on television culture in Turkey. Together with the other formation of global television genres in the Turkish context, Turkish police procedurals were affected by this influence to a great extent. For that reason, before elaborating on the appearance and characteristics of Turkish police procedurals in the next chapter, it is important to discuss the dialogic relationship between the global and the local together with the changing Turkish television scene under the pressure of globalisation processes.

In order to understand this relationship, this chapter focuses on what kind of world order globalisation forms and the historical processes that global television flows underwent. It concentrates on issues such as Americanization and cultural imperialism which turned out to be the major concerns of communication theorists with the dissemination of global television flows. The chapter discusses the impacts of these issues on Turkish television by periodizing Turkish television history in accordance with John Ellis' approach to television history.

While explaining the transformation of Turkish television under the influence of globalisation, the chapter centres the discussion on how the local coped with the global by localisation and how the global infused into the local as a consequence of the changing world order. On the one hand, the chapter focuses on the localisation processes which were used to make imported police procedurals more familiar for the Turkish audiences. On the other hand, it concentrates on the globalisation processes which transformed Turkish television scene as well as television watching practices in different periods. While explaining these processes, the chapter intends to understand the interplay between the local and the global which played an important role in the production of Turkish police procedurals and to comprehend the discourse that has been generated around the police procedural genre in Turkey.

2.1 GLOBALISATION

Jan Nederveen Pieterse defines globalisation as “the accelerated worldwide intermeshing of economies, and cross-border traffic and communication becoming ever denser.” (Pieterse 2000, p.1) For Nederveen Pieterse, the acceleration of technological change, the globalisation of risks and opportunities, the formation of citizenship as simultaneously local, regional and global, as well as the infusion of all these transformations into everyday life, are all significant parts of the experiences that globalisation offers. (Ibid.)

Immanuel Wallerstein states that a discourse about globalisation dominated the 1990s. Everyone was convinced that the 1990s was the era of globalisation and it was experienced for the first time. For Wallerstein, people were told that everything had changed with globalisation. The power of the nation states was perceived as declining. Resisting the rules of the market became impossible. The stability of all identities started to be questioned and the possibility of being culturally autonomous was cancelled. (Wallerstein 2000, p. 252)

There were a lot of social and political reasons behind the formation of this discourse about globalisation. As John Sinclair, Elizabeth Jacka and Stuart Cunningham explain, people had faced various political transformations in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The end of the Cold War, the protests that happened in the Tiananmen Square in China and the Gulf War were among the markers of this political change. (Sinclair et al. 1996, p. 22) Sinclair et al. also note that from the late 1970s onwards “shifting geopolitical patterns within the world system, most notably the partial dismantling of national boundaries in Europe, the demise of communism, and the rise of the Asian economies, are having a profound effect on cultural ecologies and the consequent receptiveness of many regions of the world to new cultural influences, including new sources and kinds of television.” (Ibid., p. 1)

However, globalisation was actually not something new. Wallerstein points out that the processes that were associated with globalisation have been present in the world for the last 500 years. Therefore, for him, globalisation is a misleading notion. Although the

1990s were full of transformations and a transition period for the whole capitalist world system, it was not a significant time marker when the situation is looked at in a broader perspective. To Wallerstein, what was experienced in the 1990s was the consequence of what happened to the capitalist world economy in two other timeframes, one going on from 1945 onwards, another going on from 1450 onwards. (Wallerstein 2000, p. 252) Wallerstein states that “the capitalist world economy has long maintained itself, as any system does, by mechanisms that restore equilibrium every time its processes move away from it. The equilibrium is never restored immediately, but only after a sufficient deviation from the norm occurs, and, of course, it never is restored perfectly.” (Ibid., pp. 259-260)

While Wallerstein critiques the discourse about globalisation from the perspective of capitalist economy and politics, he also notes that the outcomes of the political struggles in that period are essentially uncertain “and, therefore, precisely open to human intervention and creativity.” (Ibid., p. 267) Following Wallerstein’s statement, it can be claimed that since it is not only capital which travels back and forth among the continents, there is also a cultural aspect of the discussion surrounding the discourse of globalisation through which human intervention and creativity become activated.

From the cultural perspective, migration might be considered as a significant influence on the globalisation of everyday life. People who migrate from one place to another or even simply visit different places than their home countries carry their cultures to other locations and bring their experiences back home. Besides, as stressed by Arjun Appadurai, although people do not migrate, there are a lot of other things that migrate around them such as their neighbours, relatives and friends visiting foreign countries, bringing stories and images with them. Imported films, news or television programmes that travel far away from their original countries also contribute to people’s experience of the global and enable them to practice the deeds of the modern world. (Appadurai 1996, p. 4) Therefore, because of this cultural aspect of globalisation, various questions have been raised about how globalisation affects the production and comprehension of cultural meanings, (Barker 1999, pp. 36-37) especially in terms of television contents.

2.2 GLOBAL TV FLOWS

Beginning from the inception of television broadcasting, television contents were flown from one country to another, hereby assigning new meanings to the concept of 'flow'. As Albert Moran points out, on the one hand, the term 'flow' has been used by Raymond Williams in the 1970s in order to emphasize television's difference from cinema and the continuous, unending stream of varied images and sounds in television broadcasting. (Moran 2009a, p. 12) This conceptualization was adopted and reformed by many others in later years. As Mimi White underlines, his theory "is reconstructed as segmentation (Ellis), as segmentation without closure (Feuer), as the viewing strip (Newcomb and Hirsch), and as the associative textual strategies generative of television's intertextuality (Fiske)." (White 2003, p. 95)

On the other hand, 'flow' is also used in order to refer to the global distribution of television contents. Moran states that this usage finds its base in the research project of Nordenstreng and Varis which was conducted in 1974 and traced the movement of television exports around the world. (Moran 2009a, p. 12) According to Mimi White, several studies were implemented in the 1970s, similar to the project of Nordenstreng and Varis. But they were quantitative studies, analysing the number and range of the imported/exported programs around the world. These studies did not promise to say anything about the reception or interpretation of the imported programmes in the country of destination. However, for White, wherever the concept 'flow' is used in television studies, there has always been an implication of mobility and travel on a global scale. (White 2003, pp. 103-107)

In a similar manner, Albert Moran finds the conjunction of these two different usages of 'flow' noteworthy because by means of this double articulation the term combines the meanings of both carriage and content. Moran says "flow may be thought of as a movement, as the activity that pushes an entity from one place to another, creating or using a channel or stream. Flow may also be imagined as an object, as an entity or content that undergoes such a displacement. In other words, the idea of television flow can be seen to join the notion of transportation with that of communication." (Moran 2009a, pp.

12-13) Therefore, the common articulation of the term ‘flow’ in television studies ascribes a dual meaning to the concept which simultaneously refers to the movement of television programmes between different continents and the possible meanings that are assigned to them in various locations.

By means of licensing and import agreements, television contents can move around the world in ‘canned’ or ‘format’ versions. Canned versions of a programme refers to programmes that were customized in their country of origin but nationalized in another location by dubbing or subtitling. Format versions signals the franchise of a number of services or knowledge in order to allow the adaptation and production of television programmes outside their countries of origin. (Moran 2009b, p. 117)

As Albert Moran explains, in the 1930s remaking a broadcast programme first became an issue for radio in the United States. Radio systems which were nationally operated had powerful international connections in that period. These links contributed to the spread of programme remaking and strengthened the know-how relationships between services. As a result, in the late 1930s, Australian commercial radio broadcasted its own versions of U.S. radio programmes in drama and soap opera formats. (Moran 2009a, p. 18)

At the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, these remaking practices were adopted by television. In that period, American broadcasters were already active in program content development. In the following two decades, when new national broadcast services started to be spread all around the world, “well-established program producers were advantageously placed to license canned programmes for rebroadcast elsewhere.” (Ibid., p. 17) In this dynamic international market, some national television services managed to become major exporters. United States was expectedly at the top of the list but other countries such as the United Kingdom, Russia, Japan, Egypt, Mexico and Brazil were active in the market too. (Ibid.)

One of the oldest trade markets, MIP-TV (International Television Program Market), was first held in this period, in 1963. It started as a gathering for European buyers and American distributors. However, it gradually turned into a completely international event.

As noted by Timothy Havens, today, every year more than 100 nations attend this trade market. (Havens 2003, pp. 23-24) In the same year as MIP-TV, NATPE (National Association of Television Programming Executives) was established as a more national trade market for the U.S. but it grew bigger after a while by turning into an international event. Later, another significant trade market, MIPCOM (International Film and Programme Market for Television, Video, Cable and Satellite) was founded in 1985. (Ibid.)

These trade markets and the rising interest in television formats in foreign locations contributed to the mobility and promotion of television contents. For Moran, in the 1980s formats became much more visible in the international TV programme exchange. Television producers coming to the U.S. from overseas such as South America, Western Europe or Australia even started to tape some television programmes in their hotel rooms in order to imitate these U.S. programmes in their home countries. (Moran 2009a, p. 19) Through these practices, apart from ‘canned’ or ‘format’ versions, television programmes started to travel to various countries through ‘imitation’.

The networking of television producers from all different places, technological innovations, new industrial collaborations and regulations changed television culture drastically in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. (Sinclair et. al. 1996, p. 1) New technologies, deregulation and privatization made canned programme production and export more complicated. The market was expanding and distribution of television contents could not be defined as a ‘one-way street’ anymore. Producers started to be more careful and systematic in distributing their programmes as well as their knowledge and skills. Program remaking turned into one of the strongest components of the cross-border television system as it is today. (Moran 2009a, pp. 17-20)

Consequently, what appeared at the end of this global travelling of television contents was, in Michael Tracey’s description, a complex picture of a ‘patch-work quilt’. In this new television environment, “global, regional, national, and even local circuits of programme exchange overlap and interact in a multi-faceted way, no doubt with a great variety of cultural effects.” (Sinclair et. al. 1996, p. 5) Different theses have been proposed

in order to understand how the processes of globalisation have influenced the formation and articulation of cultural meanings. In the early stages of television broadcasting, the thesis of cultural imperialism and Americanization of global media were among the most given reactions to the global flow of television contents.

2.2.1 Cultural Imperialism and Americanization of the Global Media

Ien Ang states that on the one hand, global culture was conceptualized by appropriating Marshall McLuhan's idea of the global village developed in the early 1960s, through which McLuhan meant unification of distant places by electronic communication devices. However, as Ang explains, this overoptimistic view was criticized and discarded in the 1970s and the 1980s by theorists who approached the situation from the perspective of the Third World countries. This new perspective carried the conceptualization of global culture one step further and raised concerns about the uneven distribution of media flows and the possibility of cultural imperialism. (Ang 1996, p. 128)

What was suggested by Herbert Schiller in 1969 about the world order of that period was that "American power, expressed industrially, militarily and culturally has become the most potent force on earth. Its impact transcends all national boundaries. Directly by economic control, indirectly by trade and a foreign emulation effect, communications have become a decisive element in the extension of United States world power." (Schiller 1992, pp. 206-207)

For Schiller, the 'feeble, backward' states were desperate against the hungry, powerful global business system spreading from the North Atlantic and struggling to reflect their own opinions while making economic and cultural decisions. By means of technological innovations, developed countries could penetrate into the systems of other nations on a vast scale while in poor countries, leaders worked "to secure domestic integration, to recreate cultural identities, and to maintain national individuality in the face of domestic and internationally-generated resistance." (Ibid., p. 114)

According to John Tomlinson, it was Fred Fejes who turned media imperialism into cultural imperialism by specifically using the phrase ‘the cultural impacts’ to explain the influences of transnational media on Third World countries. (Tomlinson 2003, p. 114) Fejes uses the term ‘media imperialism’ to refer to “the processes by which modern communication media have operated to create, maintain and expand systems of domination and dependence on a world scale.” (Fejes 1981, p. 281) Getting his inspiration from the dependency model which relies on the subordinate position of Third World countries in the international political and economic system and their inability to achieve self-sustained internal development, what concerns Fejes are the cultural consequences of transnational media. For Fejes, “generally a perception of the cultural consequences of the content of various media products is based on a view of the mass media as primarily manipulative agents capable of having direct, unmediated effects on the audience’s behaviour and world view.” (Ibid., p. 287)

Since the study that was conducted by Nordenstreng and Varis for UNESCO documented U.S. domination on global television traffic around the world in 1974, U.S. domination and control on communication devices was a part of the reality of the 1970s. Therefore, Schiller’s concerns about the world order or the questions of Fejes about the cultural impacts of travelling media products were relevant in that sense. However, although their assumptions were partially justifiable at that period, cultural imperialism theory was later criticized for two main reasons.

On the one hand, as John Tomlinson emphasizes, the specifically cultural dimension that Fejes describes is different from the economic imperialism that suggests the economic dependency of Third World on First World countries. This cultural dimension has “to do with the content of media texts, the reception of this content, and the impact of the reception, ‘on the lives and human relationships of Third World populations’.” (Tomlinson 2003, p. 115)

In this context, Tomlinson underlines that reception studies such as the works of Ien Ang as well as Katz and Liebes on the American TV classic *Dallas* indicate that watching television is not an individual, isolated practice but involves social interaction and

conversation with others. He states that the fact that “people bring other cultural resources to their dealings with it [mass media], suggests that we can view the relationship between media and culture as a subtle *interplay of mediations*.” (Ibid., p. 129)

Tomlinson explains that media might be a dominant representational feature of modern culture. “But the ‘lived experience’ of culture may also include the discursive interaction of families and friends and the material-existential experience of routine life: eating, working, being well or unwell, sexuality, the sense of the passage of time and so on.” (Ibid.) After all, as Roland Robertson states in reference to Tomlinson, “even ‘cultural messages’ which emanate directly from ‘the USA’ are *differentially* received and interpreted; that ‘local’ groups ‘absorb’ communication from the ‘centre’ in a great variety of ways.” (Robertson 1995, p. 38)

On the other hand, as Ien Ang points out, cultural imperialism’s comprehension of culture as an organic, self-contained, traditionally wholesome and fixed entity “too easily equates the ‘global’ as the site of cultural erosion and destruction, and the ‘local’ as the site of pristine cultural ‘authenticity’.” (Ang 1996, p. 128) However, what has been described as ‘the local’ has never been something solid, unified or intact. Unified and solid culture was the illusion created by nation states which kept people thinking about their local cultures as a fundamental unifying particularity upon which national identity could be built. (Ibid.)

As a part of this discussion which intends to understand the meanings of ‘local’ and ‘global’, the very essence of national identities and nation states started to be questioned. Stuart Hall explains that with the changes that processes of globalisation have brought, nation states which take their power from “excluding or absorbing all differences [...] of class, of region, of gender, in order to present itself as a homogenous entity” (Hall 1991a, p. 22) found themselves under the pressure of new systems of economy and national formations. Because of this shift, which happened with the appearance of the new forms of globalisation, “the nation-state begins to weaken, becoming less convincing and less powerful” (Ibid., pp. 26-27) influencing how people define themselves in terms of national identity.

Stuart Hall describes the old logics of identity as a “continuous, self-sufficient, developmental, unfolding, inner dialectic of selfhood” (Hall 1991b, p. 42) which people never quite reach but are always on their way to reach. Because of this discourse affirming the idea of progress, when Americanization started to be conceived as a threat to local cultures the expectation was that eventually every non-Western nation would move up the hierarchy and completely soak up American culture until every local culture “display the cultural ideals, images and material artefacts of the American way of life.” (Featherstone 1995, pp. 86-87)

However, Hall asserts that with the disappearance of the nation-state the old description of identity has also become unconvincing. (Hall 1991b, pp. 42-43) People had to reconstruct their identities differently by building new connections with the new ‘global’ dynamics and giving new meanings to the old logics of identity. But this new reconstruction did not absorb the ‘dominant’, ‘Western’ cultures as the thesis of cultural imperialism proposes because, in Mike Featherstone’s words, the processes of globalisation do not result in homogenizing everything but instead in making people familiar with diversity and the variety of local cultures. (Featherstone 1995, p. 89)

In a similar way, Stuart Hall underlines that the new forms of global capital do not try to destroy local cultures nor economic and political elites. Their aim is not creating miniature versions of Englishness or Americanness. It needs local capital in order to rule through it. Hall explains that different forms which have their own specificity are not completely destroyed as a consequence of globalisation but “repenetrated, absorbed, reshaped, negotiated.” (Hall 1991a, p. 29) The logic of this new system is celebrating the differences since “in order to maintain its global position, capital has had to negotiate and by negotiate [Hall means] it had to incorporate and partly reflect the differences it was trying to overcome. It had to try to get hold of, and neutralize, to some degree, the differences.” (Ibid., pp. 32-33)

For that reason, as David Morley explains, “the ‘local’ is not to be considered as an indigenous source of cultural identity, which remains ‘authentic’ only in so far as it is unsullied by contact with the global. Rather, the local is often itself produced by means

of the ‘indigenization’ (or ‘domestication’) of global or ‘foreign’ resources and inputs....” (Morley 2003, p. 294) Therefore, as Roland Robertson asserts “the local is essentially included within the global” (Robertson 1995, p. 35) and globalisation does not only involve the linking of localities but also the invention of locality.

2.2.2 New Parameters and Structure of Global Media

In the new media environment that has been designed in accordance with conditions of globalisation, local media systems found themselves in a challenging situation. In order to be penetrated, absorbed, reshaped and negotiated by globalisation processes, local media systems had to be reformed in accordance with the ‘needs’ of the new age and this reform could only be managed by tacitly changing the system and the operation of media corporations as well as the technology that they rely on.

In Ien Ang’s words, with the globalisation wave of the 1990s what was transformed was not the “concrete cultural contents (although global distribution does bring, say, the same movies to many dispersed locals), but, more importantly and more structurally, the parameters and infrastructure which determine the conditions of existence for local cultures.” These changing conditions caused the Americanization of the global media to a certain level since most of the time, the principles and the conventions which are nowadays taken for granted are formed and perfected in the United States. In this way, in such a manner that confirm Jeremy Tunstall’s claim, Ang asserts that media is American. (Ang 1996, p. 129)

Similarly, Sinclair et al. explain that “the cultural imperialism thesis failed to see that, more fundamental than its supposed ideological influence, the legacy of the USA in world television development was in the implantation of its systematic model for television as a medium.” (Sinclair et. al. 1996, p. 9) However, in addition to Sinclair et al.’s proposition, Ang suggests that the media has been American not only in terms of corporate ownership or working principles “but also more flagrantly, in terms of symbolic content: images, sounds, stories, names.” (Ang 1996, p. 135) In order to support her statements, Ien Ang refers to McKenzie Wark’s ideas about his experience of watching

CNN's broadcast of the Gulf War in Australia and explains how difficult it was to not see the war as something that is not American. She also mentions about Wark's "feeling of growing up in a simulated America, resulting in 'a perverse intimacy with the language and cultural reference points which nevertheless takes place elsewhere'." (Ibid.)

According to Ang, this version of Americanization was the result of the commodification of media culture as a global phenomenon. For her, the continuous reoccurrence of the same genres and formats such as the cop show, the sitcom or the soap opera as well as the standard routine of the television schedules were also related to this process all around the world. (Ibid., p. 129) Turkish television was not an exception in that sense. Similar to other television cultures, globalisation changed television programmes in terms of both style and content. Television schedules were also transformed in order to be in sync with the global television systems.

However, proposing that local media culture has been becoming more and more commodified does mean to suggest the homogenization of media cultures. As in different countries in the world, Turkish television culture was also not homogenized when it penetrated the processes of globalisation. Arjun Appadurai claims that "if a global cultural system is emerging, it is filled with ironies and resistances." (Appadurai 1996, p. 29) For him, what has been happening is not simply Americanization but imaginations organized as a "field of social practices, a form of work, [...] a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility." (Ibid., p. 31) According to Appadurai, globalisation uses homogenization as an instrument such as in advertising techniques, language hegemonies and fashion which are absorbed by the local cultural and political economies and sent back to where they have come from in heterogeneous forms of fundamentalism, national autonomy and free enterprise. (Ibid., p. 42)

By getting inspiration from these theories, it can be stated that Turkish media and especially, its television industry were greatly affected by processes of globalisation.

However, instead of causing the formation of a homogenous television culture, Turkish television broadcasters produced heterogenous 'local' forms of the 'global' which were already shaped by the constant interaction between these two concepts. Turkish police procedurals were among these forms which appeared on Turkish television channels as a direct consequence of this interaction. Therefore, in order to comment on their design as 'local' products in a broader context, the inner dynamics of the Turkish television system and its transformation through globalisation should be addressed in detail.

2.3 GLOBALISATION OF THE TURKISH TELEVISION AND FILM INDUSTRY

Although the effects of globalisation on the Turkish television scene became more recognizable in the 1990s, the industry has always been under foreign influence beginning from the inception of broadcasting. As Joseph D. Straubhaar states, in many cases, in the early years of television broadcasting, the program production costs were high because of "the lack of trained personnel and the lack of simple program formats to work with. These higher costs for local production led to a high degree of importation, particularly in the 1960s, when many countries were just beginning television operations." (Straubhaar 1991, pp. 44-45)

Turkey was among those many cases, since in the beginning of the 1970s when the state run television channel TRT started its official broadcasting, economic and political difficulties of producing domestic TV programmes led the public television channel TRT to import TV series, films and documentaries from other countries. (Serim 2007, p. 133) By using the historical periodization of John Ellis, it can be stated that this period was the era of scarcity for the Turkish television industry, during which television's basic generic patterns were developed and the global trade of television programmes started. (Ellis 2000, p. 57)

Although television was a newly established medium at the time, Turkish audiences were familiar with the visual materials coming from the rest of the world, especially from the U.S., because since the beginning of film exhibitions in Turkey importing foreign films

had been a very common practice. However, in order to be exhibited, imported films had to go through certain localisation processes which concerned making these foreign films more familiar and ‘appropriate’ for Turkish audiences. The Turkish television industry adopted various tactics and practices from those film importers in order to localize foreign visual materials. For that reason, before concentrating on the global flows and localisation of foreign contents on Turkish television, briefly mentioning how foreign films entered into the Turkish market might contribute to the discussion.

Cinema was already celebrated as a Western innovation when it was first brought to Turkey. Although controversies and research about the arrival of cinema in Turkey still continue, what the documents and memoirs indicate is that film exhibitions in Turkey began around 1895 in Istanbul’s Beyoğlu district with the exhibition of moving images from distant lands. (Scognamillo 2008, pp. 4-11) In these early years of cinema the public demand was fulfilled by film import. As Giovanni Scognamillo notes, by the end of 1920s, several film importers and distributors had mushroomed in Istanbul. (Ibid., pp. 13-14) Turkish audiences were able to watch German UFA films and French Vichy films from the 1930s. They even saw some Hungarian films and were pleased with that experience at that time. (Erdoğan and Kaya 2002, p. 49)

However, after a small period, Hollywood films started to dominate the market and mesmerized Turkish audiences. In the 1940s, various film magazines were published devoted to the Hollywood film industry. They were full of gossip, publicity materials, interviews and glamorous photographs. Nezih Erdoğan and Dilek Kaya explain that these magazines contributed greatly to the dissemination of the American way of life among Turkish people. (Ibid.) However, there was also a social and political dimension to this issue.

After World War II, the influence of the United States on Turkey’s politics and social life was gradually enhanced. As a strategic tactic against the political moves of the Soviet Union, the United States tried to win Turkey over. In 1947, Turkey became one of the benefiting countries of the Marshall Plan and got financial aid along with European countries. As Erik Jan Zürcher points out, the Marshall Plan was based on three purposes:

“to help the Europeans help themselves; to sustain lucrative export markets for US industry; and to eliminate poverty as a breeding ground for communism.” (Zürcher 2004, p. 209) Together with the changes that these diplomatic relations brought, American culture started to dominate different segments of life in the country. The Turkish film as well as television industries were among the segments which got influenced by this dominance to a great extent.

2.3.1 Americanization of Turkish Film and Television Industry

Under the governance of the newly elected Democratic Party (*Demokrat Parti*) in the 1950, the American influence on Turkey perceptibly increased. The Democratic Party was willing to be the ally of the United States in every sense and reflected this mentality in its governance. As Savaş Arslan explains, during the Democratic Party’s administration, various U.S. military bases were built around Turkey in order to monitor the moves of the Soviet Union. With the presence of these military bases, a new lifestyle infused into everyday life and started to be adopted particularly by the upper middle class in urban centres. (Arslan 2011, p. 101)

Nezih Erdoğan and Dilek Kaya state that Americanism was a fashionable movement in Turkish everyday life at that time. However, they claim that the influence of Turkish popular magazines and Hollywood films was more effective than the U.S. economic aid or military presence because these were the mediators that made the public familiar with American culture and lifestyle. (Erdoğan and Kaya 2002, p. 49) Since European cinemas were still not strong enough to compete with Hollywood on international markets and Russian and Eastern European films were mostly banned by the Turkish Board of Censorship, Hollywood films were the ones that were majorly exhibited in the Turkish movie theatres in the 1950s. (Ibid., p. 50)

Savaş Arslan points out that in the 1970s, with the appearance of television broadcasting, Americanization found itself a new ground through American TV series and films. (Arslan 2011, p. 101) During that period, television programmes on TRT were a mixture of local and foreign productions. Ayşe Öncü explains that more foreign programmes

appeared on television when TRT's broadcasting time increased. In this way, as Öncü emphasizes, Turkish television audiences met with American TV series and serials such as *Star Trek* (1966–1969) and *Mission Impossible* (1966–1973), and BBC productions like *The World at War* (1973) or *Upstairs Downstairs* (1971–1975). (Öncü 2000, p. 301) Along with soap operas and comedies, police procedurals were highly popular at that time. American police procedurals such as *Columbo* (1971–2003), *Baretta* (1975–1978), *Police Woman* (1974–1978) and *McMillan & Wife* (1971–1977) were among the favourites of TRT in the 1970s.

However, although TRT's programme schedule was heavily based on imported programmes and Americanization of the TV schedule was among the realities of that period, Turkish television's relationship with the rest of the world could not be defined as a 'one-way street'. TRT executives were very eager to build business relationships with other countries. In 1974, Ismail Cem who was the general director of TRT at that time, made a great effort to get Turkey elected as a member of the board of directors of the European Broadcasting Union and he became successful in his efforts. According to Cem, by means of this election, various members from other countries visited Turkey in a short range of time. Istanbul was selected as the city for annual board meetings and all these relations contributed greatly to Turkey's introduction to the global television scene. (Cem 2010, pp. 133-138)

The next year, in 1975, Turkey not only attended the Eurovision Music Contest in Sweden under the management of TRT (Serim 2007, p. 79) but TRT also attended MIP-TV for the first time, representing Turkish broadcasting as the only active television channel. The head of the television department Yılmaz Dağdeviren, accompanied by two officers from TRT's film division, were among the representatives coming from 74 other nations gathered in Cannes, France. Dağdeviren, who gave an exclusive interview to the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, conveyed his experience in detail. He explains how they interacted with people from other countries, how they introduced TRT as a new network and how they received discounts for being a 'new' customer. Dağdeviren also adds that their priority was looking for documentaries and children's programmes but he confesses that they bought some entertainment programmes too. He says the programmes that they

bought were generally from the UK, France and Japan but they also got four documentaries from Egyptian television. Dağdeviren states that buying from Egyptian television was also a tactical move to build a good relationship and sell TRT productions to Egypt in the future. (“Dağdeviren: TV Pazarlarına Geniş Gruplarla Katılmalıyız” 1975, p. 10)

Dağdeviren’s willingness to build a relationship with Egyptian television is highly interesting at this point, because Egyptian films were strongly present on the Turkish film market during the Second World War and they were very popular. Egyptian films entered the Turkish film market along with the Hollywood films which could only be imported through Egypt at that time because of the ongoing war in Europe. However, in 1942, the general secretariat of the reigning Republican People’s Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*) declared its concerns about the presence of films in Arabic language on the Turkish market because of their supposed threats to the Turkish language. Therefore, Arab-language films were banned in Turkey. (Arslan 2011, p. 67)

However, when it came to the 1970s, even though *arabesk* music which was a genre of Turkish music inspired by Egyptian melodies was still banned from TRT, Egypt could be considered as a country that could contribute to TRT’s global appearance. In this respect, MIP-TV is described by Dağdeviren not only as a trade market but also as a door, opening to the outside world. For him, TRT should attend this event every year not only to buy but also to sell products. He particularly explains that everybody asked him what they were selling in the market and even ordered a documentary about the Bosphorus Bridge. However, Dağdeviren adds that their chance for selling their products was really low if they continued to shoot in black and white since the programmes that were shot in colour were the ones that aroused most interest on the market. (“Dağdeviren: TV Pazarlarına Geniş Gruplarla Katılmalıyız” 1975, p. 10)

In 1979, another news article reveals that TRT representatives returned from that year’s MIP-TV with a stock of programmes that could be enough for two years. The article indicates that half of the programmes were comedy series and this time, although representatives also bought programmes from European countries and Japan, American

programmes dominated the transaction. What is understood from the list given in the news article is that whereas mostly documentaries and Laurel Hardy films were bought from Europe and the U.S., products that were purchased from Japan were children's programmes. However, most of the TV series that dominate the list were from the U.S. ("Televizyon Nihayet Gülmeye Başlıyor" 1979, p. 12)

Programme manager Sedat Örsel, one of the TRT representatives who attended MIP-TV in 1980, explains that although there was some competition in some sectors such as cartoons, American products still continue to dominate the television series sector by retaining half of the market. ("TV Pazarına Hala ABD Egemen Ama" 1980, p. 11) For that reason, what has been bought from that year's market were also American TV series such as *Dallas* (1978–1991), *Charlie's Angels* (1976–1981), *Little House on the Prairie* (1974–1983) and *Streets of San Francisco* (1972–1977). However, British TV series *The Avengers* (1961–1969) and Japanese cartoons like *Vicky the Viking* (1974) and *Candy Candy* (1976–1979) were among the programmes that were purchased as well. ("TRT Cannes TV Filmleri Pazarından Zengin Döndü" 1980, p. 11) As the inclusion of *The Streets of San Francisco* in the list indicates, police procedurals preserved their popularity on TRT's schedule during that period. In the following years, popular police procedurals and detective series like *Hill Street Blues* (1981–1987), *Cagney and Lacey* (1981–1988), *Moonlighting* (1985–1989), *Dempsey and Makepeace* (1985–1986) and *Miami Vice* (1984–1990) appeared on TRT.

Ayşe Öncü says that "by 1985, programmes of 'foreign' origin had reached 50 percent of broadcasting time." (Öncü 2000, p. 301) TRT was frequently criticised for broadcasting too many foreign programmes and paying fortunes to foreign production companies in order to buy new programmes. ("TRT bol kese" 1990, p. 11) On the one hand, the reason behind these critiques was economic. On the other hand, even though not all the imported programmes that were shown on TRT were American, Americanization was perceived as a silent threat to local culture in such a way to reflect the concerns of supporters of the cultural imperialism thesis.

2.3.2 Discussion of Cultural Imperialism in Turkey

In the 1950s, when Hollywood films dominated the schedule of the Turkish movie theatres, writers of political journals heavily criticized the majority of American films on the market and complained about the lack of European films which were perceived as artistically superior. Turkish producers also perceived the dominance of the American films on the market as a threat to the development of the domestic film industry. (Erdoğan and Kaya 2002, p. 50) Similar kinds of voices started to be heard with the dominance of the American TV series on TRT in the 1980s.

For instance, in 1984 Mümtaz Soysal, politician, newspaper columnist and professor of law, stated in his newspaper column that television series which were broadcasted every night had a negative effect on Turkish people. These fictions which were fabricated overseas metaphorically narcotized the nation with opium, in Soysal's words. If people did not watch the episode of the previous night, they could not be a part of the conversations that went on in the bus, on the train or ferry about *Hill Street Blues* or *Falcon Crest*. (Soysal 1984, p. 2)

In a more direct manner, Mahmut Tali Öngören, one of the cofounders of TRT television as well as a newspaperman and scriptwriter, harshly criticized the dominance of foreign films on TRT's schedule. Öngören explained that although various voices spoke out about the harmful effects of imported programmes on Turkish public television, TRT hid behind the excuse of providing what people demanded. Besides, he stated that foreign programmes did not only have a bad influence on people but also on locally produced programmes by degenerating them. Öngören gave examples such as how when the father of JR died in *Dallas* the news appeared on the headlines of mainstream newspapers or when a teacher asked at school if anyone knew the famous poem of the important Turkish poet and author, Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, about a boat, the students replied by asking if it was *Aşk Gemisi*, referring to the TV classic *The Love Boat* (1977–1987). By emphasizing how television is an influential, even kind of mesmerizing device, Öngören states that because of the choices that were made by the executives of TRT, the culture and the taste of Turkish people were at the risk of complete degeneration. (Öngören 1983, pp. 96-103)

All these critiques coincided with the perspectives of the cultural imperialism thesis. Besides, they were also markers of the intrinsic comprehension of the West both as ‘threat’ and ‘progress’ in the Turkish context. However, the cultural effects of foreign programmes on the local television culture were not only approached from these two angles. For instance, in 1982, while commenting on the imported police procedural TV series broadcasted in Turkey, Murat Belge, who does not find the theories of cultural imperialism very convincing, stresses how certain messages can be received differently by particular target audiences. Belge explains that national and cultural differences between the U.S. and Turkey might lead to interesting outcomes because the reception of the same messages might differ from what they are originally intended to express.

Belge gives an example on how the depression of the wife in the American police procedural *McMillan & Wife* (1971–1977), was perceived by the less educated Turkish audience in their own ways. He explains that whereas the wife’s depression was intended to be perceived as a consequence of her husband’s workaholic tendencies in the original text, Turkish audiences thought that McMillan was a very kind husband who tries to make up to his wife for his overwork and sometimes unnecessarily has to explain himself. Belge emphasizes that understanding the relationship between McMillan and his wife in a way to legitimize McMillan’s workaholism might not be surprising in the Turkish context because patriarchal family is something that is extremely valued in Turkey. Therefore, he suggests that before drawing conclusions like how imported TV programmes impose their own culture on Turkish audiences, the localisation of the exported materials in other countries should be questioned. (Belge 1982, p. 5)

Similar to other television industries around the world, the Turkish television industry was highly dependent on imported television programmes when it was first established. Television executives met their needs of television programmes by attending international trade markets in Western countries during that period. However, apart from buying foreign television programmes to broadcast on TRT, this trade markets gave Turkish television executives the opportunity to become a part of a global network.

After the inclusion of the Turkish television industry in this global network, particular concerns were raised, expressing the anxiety of cultural imperialism and Americanization of Turkish culture. By mimicking the attitudes that came out against the dominance of Hollywood films in Turkish movie theatres, the critiques targeted TRT for importing and broadcasting a high number of American TV series and threatening the ‘authenticity’ of the local culture. Imported police procedurals were listed among these ‘dangerous’ programmes that could degenerate Turkish culture.

This illusive threat can be considered as the reflection of the worldwide concerns about the processes of globalisation and the leading position of the U.S. in the television market. However, as the critiques of the cultural imperialism thesis proposes, these assumptions reiterate a worldview which perceives local culture as a unique and solid entity, always under the threat of outside influences. Within this framework, the global is comprehended as a fixed and powerful force which is imposed on local cultures, causing homogenization and degeneration. However, as stated earlier, global and local are not separate concepts operating independently from one another. Whereas globalisation processes contribute to the invention of the local as an ‘authentic’ entity, local responses transform the global by creating its heterogeneous forms.

For that reason, the influences of globalisation on Turkish television scene can be questioned in two interconnected ways. On the one hand, the localisation of the global can be discussed by focusing on the impact of industrial practices such as dubbing, scheduling and re-titling on imported TV series. On the other hand, the globalisation of the local can be examined by concentrating on the transformation of the local television scene through adapting to the global media systems and creating indigenous responses to the global.

2.4 LOCALISATION OF THE GLOBAL IN THE ERA OF SCARCITY

Television programmes which were imported from foreign countries went through certain localisation processes before they appeared on Turkish television channels. These processes constituted the backbone of maintaining the connection between the global and

the local on Turkish television, especially in the era of scarcity. As it can be commonly found in other countries, these processes included industrial practices like dubbing, subtitling and re-titling. However, instead of being mechanical procedures, these practices were frequently bound up with local dynamics which were formed in accordance with nationalist discourses.

Experiences of the film importers were among these local dynamics which inspired television broadcasters in localizing foreign TV series. This inspiration usually exceeded the scope of a know-how relationship and marked the continuation of evoking nationalist reflexes, anxieties and concerns in localisation processes. For that reason, before concentrating on how foreign police procedurals have been localized by practices like dubbing, subtitling and retitling, experiences of early film importers should be shortly addressed in order to make more sense of how foreign TV series were made more familiar for national audiences.

2.4.1 Localisation Practices of Turkish Film Importers

Early Turkish film importers majorly used dubbing in order to localize foreign films. As explained by Ahmet Gürata in his article on the translation and cross-cultural reception of American films in Turkey at the beginning of 20th century, dubbing was used as a method to make foreign films more familiar for Turkish audiences. (Gürata 2007, p. 338)

In order to explain how the cultural adaptation and translation worked through dubbing in Turkish film industry in the 1940s, Gürata gives the example of how the voice actor Ferdi Tayfur dubbed Laurel and Hardy speaking Turkish with a broken, American accent. Because the members of the studio agreed upon the idea that the acts of Laurel and Hardy were ‘too American’ for Turkish audiences, who might have difficulties to understand what was going on in the films, they decided to make them speak with a broken American accent without paying much attention to one of them being British. While their voices were altered in order to make their acts more fun and understandable for the Turkish audiences, the contexts of the films were also changed to keep the balance between dubbing and the narrative. For instance, Tayfur who is quoted by Gürata, says that in one

of the films, Laurel and Hardy bought the shadow of Galata Tower in Istanbul or in another one Hardy sang a Turkish folk song and was compared to a local musician by Laurel. (Ibid., p. 339)

These kinds of strategies were very common in adapting foreign films to the Turkish context. Gürata states that specific features were added to the voices of the characters by Tayfur who used local pronunciations and accents as well as vernacular idioms in his performances. Especially, while dubbing comedy films like those of the Marx Brothers, the ‘ethnic role-playing’ of characters was adapted to the local contexts. For instance, the names of Jewish Groucho Marx and WASP Margaret Dumont were changed with Armenian names and the Italian immigrant Chico was turned into a tough Turkish man. In this way, instead of representing the characters with their original ethnic background, local stereotypes were used and dubbed accordingly. (Ibid., p. 341)

However, whereas in the dubbing of comedy films the accents were adapted to the Turkish context since they were one of the most significant parts of the comic acts, films that belonged to other genres were dubbed with a uniform Istanbul accent by the voice actors who were trained in Istanbul State Theatre. Even so, in both comedy films and other genre films, dubbing functioned as a way to wipe out the national signifier in the original film and the illusion of sharing one uniform national language was enforced. (Ibid., p. 342) Eventually, the films were promoted as if they were local products.

Publicity was used as another tactic to localize imported films. As explained by Gürata, during this process American film titles were translated in Turkish by being adapted to the local contexts. Gürata gives the examples of how Cecil B. de Mille’s *The Crusaders* (1935) was shown under the title of *Selahattin Eyyübi ve Haçlı Seferleri* (Salahaddin-i Ayyubi and the Crusades) in Turkey in order to attract the interests of the audiences in the role of the Abbasid Sultan in the film. (Ibid., pp. 336-337)

Besides, indigenous ways of exhibiting films were used in order to offer a familiar experience to local audiences. Ahmet Gürata explains that in 1935, film exhibitions included a Turkish short film, a Fox Movietone newsreel and one feature film in

Istanbul's Türk movie theatre. The two hour programmes of American movie theatres were also standard in Turkey and some movie theatres in Istanbul offered two films, each lasting one hour, for the price of one as a part of this standard programme. However, some owners were hesitant to exceed this two hour limit. Therefore, if the films, newsreels and the Turkish short films could not fit in this programme all together they just cut scenes from the films to go along with the programme. (Ibid., p. 337)

Removing scenes from imported films was a commonly used tactic for different reasons. For instance, Ahmet Gürata states that in the 1940s and the 1950s, songs and dance scenes were removed by the distributors because Turkish audiences did not like musicals. Later, these films were shown by inserting locally produced scenes into the original film, shot with local singers and dancers. Gürata explains that inserting these kinds of domestically produced scenes was usually used to alter Egyptian and European films but some of the U.S. products were distributed in this way as well. In reference to film historian Alim Şerif Onaran, Gürata clarifies that by means of inserting locally produced scenes to the imported films, distributors tried to give the impression that the films were shot in Turkey. (Ibid.)

Censorship played an additional role in removing particular scenes from the original films. Ahmet Gürata says that the members of the censorship committee decided how the films should be modified in order to be accepted for exhibition. (Ibid., pp. 343-345) The Regulation about the Control of Films and Film Screenplays was formed in Turkey in 1934 and implemented until 1977 with minor revisions. What concerned the members of the censorship committee including a police and a military officer was not only the content of domestic films but also imported productions. (Erdoğan and Kaya 2002, p. 54)

Films could be banned from screening if the committee confirmed that they made political propaganda contradicting the ideology of the national regime or moral values as well as insulting or devaluing military forces. The board members were also very strict about the dissemination of messages from communist countries. Even the appearance of the Cyrillic alphabet on the screen was not tolerated. A lot of American films were banned from

screening from the 1950s till the 1970s, or accepted on certain conditions as in the cases of *Ben-Hur* (1959), *Zorba the Greek* (1964) and *Love Story* (1970). (Ibid.)

Revision requests coming from the committee generally included removal of specific scenes or dialogues and re-titling. Without the consent of the distributor, revisions could not be carried out. But most of the distributors gave their consent to the revisions and modified the films in order to prevent financial loss. However, sometimes these revisions changed the whole course of events and overall meaning of the films. For instance, since the censorship committee wanted the removal of all love scenes in *Love Story* (1970), the narrative of the film revolved around a totally platonic love affair in its exhibition in Turkey. (Gürata 2007, pp. 343-345)

With the appearance of imported TV series on Turkish televisions, most of the tactics that were used by Turkish film importers were transferred to television. By using dubbing, subtitling, retitling and removing certain scenes, foreign TV series were made more familiar and ‘appropriate’ for the Turkish audiences. Besides, apart from making foreign text more recognizable and suitable for Turkish morals, these practices were utilized to turn foreign TV series into tools of the republican modernization project, similar to domestic programmes in the era of scarcity.

These changes transformed the conventions of police procedural genre in Turkey by creating a particular vocabulary and legendary police figures. The reminiscence of this transformed conventions played a significant role in producing Turkish police procedurals in later years. For that reason, in order to understand how these additional conventions were transferred to ‘local’ police procedurals, localized forms of ‘global’ police procedurals in the era of scarcity should first be discussed.

2.4.2 Dubbing on TV

As it was explained in the first chapter, in order to control the language that was used on television TRT took extreme measures. Dubbing was one of the methods that TRT practiced to disseminate the ‘uniform’ language of the nation. By means of dubbing, while

making foreign programmes more familiar for the local viewers TRT also contributed to the propagation of ‘correct’ and ‘beautiful’ Turkish through television. The broadcasting of popular police procedurals was greatly influenced by these practices.

According to Christina Adamou and Simone Knox, although it is commonly assumed that dubbing and subtitling are translated equivalents of the texts that are produced in another language, there is no such thing like an ultimate equivalence; not only because it is problematic to presume that there is only one ‘correct’ meaning of texts but also because dubbing and subtitling should be approached as transformative practices. (Adamou and Knox 2011, p. 1) This transformative feature of dubbing was utilized in the Turkish context in two different ways.

On the one hand, dubbing was used to annihilate the national differences between the characters in foreign police procedurals and unite all characters under one national category who speak the same language in a uniform manner. Dubbing that was done for the British police procedural *Dempsey and Makepeace* provides a good example to clarify how dissemination of the uniform language of the nation had an impact on the broadcasting of the series.

Although dubbing had transformed all imported police procedurals in the era of scarcity, it was more problematic for TV series such as *Dempsey and Makepeace* or *Taggart* (1983–2010) in which the accents of the main characters carry particular importance. While commenting on the effects of dubbing on the manifestation of different accents, Miguel Mera exemplifies how the use of Scottish accents in *Braveheart* (1995) is not expressed in the Spanish dubbed version of the film. Although the Scottish accents orient the English speaking audiences in a certain geography in the original version of the film, in the Spanish dubbed version, all characters speak with a central Castilian Spanish accent. Therefore, a certain element embedded in the film is lost in the dubbed version. (Mera 1999, p. 81)

In a similar manner, when the original and the dubbed versions of the first episode of the first season of *Dempsey and Makepeace* are compared, it can be seen that the accents of

the characters are completely wiped out. This situation causes lots of problems in comprehending the original atmosphere of the series because the dialogues that highlight the culture clash between the characters and the sexual tension that is built through it are mostly lost in translation or altered. For instance, at the end of the first episode, Dempsey's and Makepeace's different pronunciations of the word 'lieutenant'/'leftenant' become an issue. In the original sequence, Dempsey insists on making Makepeace pronounce his title in an American way to which Makepeace resists. However, in the dubbed version of the same sequence, Dempsey insists on making Makepeace address him as 'teğmen'/'lieutenant' when Makepeace calls him just Dempsey. Since using different accents was not favoured by the state run TRT, the 'national' dilemma among the characters could not be expressed in the dubbed version. In this way, their dialogue turns into a struggle for highlighting their professional titles and power positions instead of their national identities. The 'original' dilemma between the characters was eliminated for the sake of representing a homogenous national identity for every character on television, regardless of their being 'local' or 'foreign'.

On the other hand, the transformative impact of dubbing on the broadcasting of foreign police procedurals revealed itself in the translation of particular expressions on Turkish televisions. In the era of scarcity in which dubbing savoured its golden age, English swearwords or American expressions such as 'damn it', 'go to hell' or 'rot in hell' were translated in Turkish in certain ways. Whereas 'damn it' or its more vulgar variations were translated as '*lanet olsun*', 'go to hell' was translated as '*canın cehenneme*' in Turkish. Common or even stereotypical American forms of addressing that could be encountered in many American films or TV series like 'hey buddy' or 'hey guys' were also translated as '*hey dostum*' (hey, my friend) or '*selam millet*' (hello folks).

These translations which were possibly taken from the literary translations of pulp novels in other languages were included in the dialogues of imported TV series but were not commonly used in everyday language in Turkey. Therefore, they manifested themselves in dubbing as something damaging the verisimilitude of the narration. However, since these expressions were repeatedly used in almost every series, they not only gradually found themselves a place in everyday language but also created a specific vocabulary for

the police procedural and action genre. Although more creative and harmonious ways of translating these expressions have been tried out in contemporary television scenes, these expressions are still used in both dubbing and subtitling.

As it is seen in these examples, the comprehension of the police procedural genre in the era of scarcity was closely related to how police procedural TV series became localized through dubbing. The uniform, sterile and ‘culturally proper’ Turkish that was used in dubbing not only localized particular TV series but also contributed to the representation of the characters in foreign police procedurals in a homogenous manner without any differentiating national or ethnic characteristics. Every character in foreign police procedurals was included in a homogenous mass and united under the dominant national identity by means of dubbing. In this way, the police procedural genre in Turkey turned into a textual category which coalesces all characters in a singular national identity similar to domestic programmes. The reminiscence of these transformative processes later revealed itself in the production of Turkish police procedurals.

2.4.3 Publicity, Re-titling and Scheduling on TV

Similar to the Turkish film industry at that time, publicity was a big part of the Turkish television scene in the era of scarcity and contributed to the localisation of the imported television materials. Newspapers, television guides and magazines were full of photographs and gossip about the foreign television stars who were consistently addressed as ‘friends’ or ‘guests’ in these columns.

Almost every character on television was popular during the period. However, among the imported police procedurals, *Columbo*’s popularity outstripped the others by a long way, especially in the 1970s. *Columbo* was so popular that when actor Peter Falk, starring as Columbo, was invited to a ball arranged by Film-San Foundation in Istanbul and did not get off the plane, everybody was devastated. In the news that was narrated by Yalçın Pekşen, a resentful reproach was expressed, addressing both the actor, Peter Falk, and the fictive character, Commissar Columbo, whose characteristics blend into each other throughout the text. (Pekşen 1976, p. 7)

For that reason, it was not surprising that when the *Milliyet* newspaper announced the last episode of *Columbo* on TRT, it was narrated as a farewell to a beloved guest. (“Columbo ekrana veda ediyor” 1992, p. 8) The same expression was used when the last episode of the celebrated TV series *Moonlighting* was broadcasted on TRT (“Dostlara güle güle” 1989, p. 13) or the reruns of *Streets of San Francisco* appeared on the private TV channel Teleon in 1992. (“Eski dostlara merhaba” 1992, p. 21) In a similar sense, in 1984, *Baretta*’s celebrated star Robert Blake’s film *The Big Black Pill* (1981) was advertised on the *Milliyet* newspaper’s television page under the title ‘Welcome Baretta’. In the text, Robert Blake is addressed as ‘an old friend’ and instead of focusing on the film which would be aired that night, the news concentrates on Blake’s comments on his role as a policeman in *Baretta*. (“Hoş geldin Baretta” 1984, p. 4)

The representation of these TV stars in the newspapers as ‘beloved guests’ or ‘old friends’ supported their position in everyday life as ‘localized’ characters. Instead of being perceived as ‘foreign’ characters by means of which American culture and lifestyle were imposed, these mostly American cop figures were conceived as significant, memorable characters in people’s private lives.

Furthermore, as a borrowed technique from the film industry, almost every imported TV series was re-titled for the television broadcasts. Sometimes, re-titling was not only used to make the TV series more familiar for the Turkish audiences. When re-titling was combined with publicity it also contributed to make the programmes more alluring and interesting for the locals. For instance, when *Cagney and Lacey*, which was renamed in Turkey as *İki Arkadaş* (Two Friends), took over the slot of (11.00 p.m.) *Hill Street Blues* in 1985, the series was announced by highlighting the beauty of Tyne Daly and Sharon Gless, co-starring in the series. (“Güzel polisler görev başında” 1985, p. 4) The same series were introduced in the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper under the title as ‘one precinct, two women cops’. In the text while highlighting the youth and beauty of the actresses, in an almost eroticized manner, the newspaper article underlines that they are daring too. (“Bir karakol, iki kadın polis” 1985, p. 4)

Seriality and scheduling were other factors that influenced the localisation of the imported police procedurals. Whereas police procedurals like *Columbo* and *McMillan & Wife* were originally scheduled in the United States on prime time on Tuesday nights under the title ‘the NBC Mystery Movie’, there is no stable time slot for these shows in TRT’s schedule. Although they were usually broadcasted in prime time after the news when they first appeared on television, at the end of the 1970s police procedurals started to be scheduled after 10.00 p.m. For instance, *Baretta* which was originally broadcasted at 9.00 p.m. on ABC, was scheduled to 11.00 p.m. on TRT.

Additionally, the seriality of the imported TV series was also questionable. Plots of the coming episodes which were published weekly in the newspapers reveal that some of the series may not have been broadcasted serially. When the episode guides that were published in the *Milliyet newspaper* (“TV’de Bugün” 1989, p. 15) and *TV’de 7 Gong* (“Kaçırılan Kız” 1989, p. 9) TV magazine on 19 May 1989 and 26 May 1989 are compared it can be seen that the weekly schedule of *Dempsey and Makepeace* jumps from the 6th episode of the 3rd season to the 10th episode of the same season. An audience complaint that was published in the *Milliyet newspaper* on April 30, 1989, even claimed that a full episode of *Dempsey and Makepeace* had been cut into two different episodes by TRT. (“Tele Görüş: Kurallara Uyulmuyor” 1989, p. 17) Although the reliability of these episode announcements in the press is questionable as well, they raise concerns about respecting the order of episodes in television broadcasts.

In a similar manner, in August 1989 when *Moonlighting*’s farewell to the television screens was announced in the *Milliyet newspaper*, the news was declared as if it was the finale of the series. However, the plot that was included in the news belonged to *Moonlighting*’s 12th episode of the 4th season (“Dostlara Güle Güle” 1989, p. 13) which ends with a passionate kiss and a possible unification of Maddie and David. So, even though it was neither the season finale of the series nor its ultimate finale in TRT’s own scheduling, *Moonlighting* ended with the union of the detective duo.

As a result of these practices of publicity, retitling and scheduling, the police procedural genre was formed and became known to the Turkish TV audiences in accordance with

the dynamics, regulations and principles of Turkish television broadcasting. Police figures of the well-known police procedurals were glorified and occupied a prominent place in Turkish popular culture. Police procedurals were made more interesting by publicity, earned their own time slots in television schedules and even had their own order of episodes in the Turkish context. These habits had some minor impacts on the production and scheduling of Turkish police procedurals in later years.

2.4.4 Censorship on TV and the *Columbo* Incident

As the difficulties that Turkish film importers had encountered indicate, censorship has been a part of the localisation process of foreign products from the second half of the 1930s. Since the representation of police officers has always been a delicate issue in Turkey, broadcasting imported police procedurals was also a complicated process and fictional ‘misrepresentations’ of police officers caused problematic situations as it did with the broadcast of the 8th episode of the 3rd season of *Columbo*, entitled *A Friend in Deed*, on TRT in 1976.

In this episode, the chief of police who murders his wife to inherit her money uses his power to obstruct justice and tries to blame someone else for his crime. But thanks to *Columbo*’s efforts, at the end of the episode, his plan is revealed and justice is served. Because in this episode a police chief happened to be a murderer, it was perceived as an insult to the Turkish police department and the executives of TRT opened an investigation against the employees who decided to broadcast this episode.

In his column in the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, Oktay Akbal attracts the attention to this incident and questions the reasons behind this investigation. He asks “Couldn’t a police officer commit a murder? Isn’t he a human being like all of us? Hasn’t he got any anger issues, gratifications or pains like we have?” (Akbal 1976, p. 2) Akbal continues his article by humorously putting the blame on *Columbo* for bringing his superior to justice instead of covering the case by arresting the thief that was wrongly accused in the episode. (Ibid.)

Although Akbal sarcastically criticizes the investigation that TRT opened against its own employees and reveals the ridiculousness of this situation, in the era of scarcity censorship was something that the producers and broadcasters had to deal with every day. For that reason, even though criticizing the power that the police institution obtains or expressing the moral weaknesses of police officers are significant issues that the police procedural genre dwells on, regulations of censorship rarely allowed to broadcast these kinds of ‘controversial’ issues in Turkey. So, this ‘critical’ attribute of the genre was experienced by the Turkish audiences to the extent that it was permitted by the censorship committee operating in the era of scarcity.

In the era of scarcity, foreign police procedurals were localized through the practices that are listed above in order to be made more familiar for the Turkish audiences. As a result of these efforts, on the one hand, the transformative characteristics of dubbing culminated in wiping out all ethnic, national and cultural differences between the characters and uniting them under a homogenous category in accordance with the ideals of republican modernization project. On the other hand, practices such as scheduling, retitling and publicity made the police procedural genre more popular and recognizable in the Turkish context through familiarizing the characters and designing the series in keeping with the morals, rules and regulations of Turkish television broadcasting.

Consequently, through this perpetual localisation of foreign police procedurals as many other imported programmes, the Turkish television industry caught up with the interplay between the global and the local. This dialogic interaction paved the way for the constant negotiation of local and global features in the texts, causing a continuous transformation of the global and invention of the local. In this way, by being localized, imported police procedurals extended their global scope of generic conventions in the Turkish context and simultaneously disclosed local dynamics that were bound up with national tensions and reflexes.

2.5 GLOBALISATION OF THE LOCAL IN THE ERA OF AVAILABILITY

As the localisation practices continued to systematically transform imported television programmes, the dialogic relationship between the global and the local led up to changing the local television scene with a much quicker pace at the end of the 1980s. As comprehensively discussed in the first chapter, following the appearance of private TV channels in Turkey, the Turkish media scene was completely transformed in a very short period. It was the time in which the era of scarcity was replaced by choice that could be managed and the transition from the era of scarcity to the era of availability was completed. As John Ellis points out, in this new television era daily conversations shifted from ‘what did you think of the programme last night?’ to the question ‘did you see that programme last night?’ (Ellis 2000, p. 71)

However, in this period of transition, it was not only the private TV channels that changed the television environment in Turkey. At the end of the 1980s, the new social and cultural atmosphere that was disseminated with the politics of the ruling Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi*) and its political leader Turgut Özal created a new scene in Turkey. The increasing visibility of the lifestyle of wealthy businessmen in media, the growing hunger for Western goods in society, and changing symbols of wealth and taste created new demands in the public. (Bali 2013, pp. 146-181) In Nurdan Gürbilek’s words, in the 1970s, people who were struggling with the restriction of individual freedom, limitation of individual happiness and defeat against power demanded justice. But in the 1980s, they started to demand freedom. However, for Gürbilek, the demand for freedom brought nothing but new captivities such as a freedom to consume and a constantly growing gap between the rich and the poor. (Gürbilek 2001, p. 24)

Under the pressure of this political and economic atmosphere, the social and cultural scene rapidly changed. On the television front, the newly established private TV channels began to offer the TV audiences the entertainment that they had been craving for. In order to meet the demands of this changing society and to be prepared for the coming age, public television channel TRT felt itself obliged to change and open up to the world. New potential alternatives of broadcasting compelled TRT to take some new steps and develop

new strategies to survive both in the local and the global market. By the implementation of these new strategies, the local television scene and productions started to be transformed in order to be more like the global television systems.

In 1988, TRT executives came up with a new export strategy for opening up to the world. Sedat Örsel, who became the general director of exports and co-productions, explained that TRT had expected to achieve great success in selling their productions that year. Örsel declared that TRT had produced 17 programmes to be promoted in the trade markets and in 1988 they would attend NATPA in Los Angeles aiming to achieve success in the U.S. market. Programmes that TRT planned to shake the U.S. market were mostly documentaries that focus on the history, traditions and ‘authentic’ life of Anatolia. Some of them were even co-productions with Austria, France, Jordan and the U.S. (“TRT’nin Hedefi: ABD Pazarı” 1987, p. 14) In this sense, in order to become successful in the global market, TRT felt obliged to invent the ‘authentic’, local life in Turkey.

Örsel also noted that new productions including TV series had been produced by keeping international standards in mind. Until that time TV productions were designed for the local market. However, neither the techniques that were used in the production nor their durations made it possible to label them as ‘exportable’. Örsel stated that in order to export more products, not only advanced techniques started to be used in production but also documentaries that were planned to be sold were dubbed in English. Örsel said that they managed to sell a lot of products in MIP-TV in 1987 and in the autumn of the same year they planned to build new collaborations with the Gulf and Arab countries as well as with countries in the Asian Pacific and Far East. (Ibid.)

In the 1990s, TRT continued to follow the same plan. In 1991, TRT attended five trade markets, NATPE’91 and CITECH’91 in the U.S., MIP-TV’91 in France, Internationalmedia Market’91 in Germany and Sovexport’91 in the Soviet Union, in order to sell its productions including TV dramas, documentaries, children and music programmes. (“TRT’nin Dışa Açılımı” 1991, p. 6) In the same year, TRT’s stand in MIP-TV’91 attracted the attention of several broadcasters including Egypt and Japan but the record belonged to Abu Dhabi television which bought 15 programmes from TRT. Abu

Dhabi was followed by the Greek television channel Mitropoulos with 11 programmes and Albania. These countries bought TV series, documentaries and cartoons from TRT. (“17 Ülkeye 91 Program” 1991, p. 21) In 1994, TRT became stronger in the world television market by selling 7 documentaries, 4 children programmes, 4 concerts and 3 TV series to 13 different countries. Whereas Danish television was interested in documentaries, channels from Sweden, Austria and Indonesia purchased TV series from TRT. (“TRT’den 13 Ülkeye Rekor Satış” 1994, p. 25)

During that period, TRT also benefited from new technologies and opened up to Europe, North Africa and Central Asia, aiming to reach Turkish speaking audiences as well as the Turkic republics which were formerly part of the Soviet Union and recently became independent. Since TRT’s sole competitor STAR-1 was already broadcasting from abroad and was addressing the Turkish migrants living in Europe, TRT had no choice but to follow the new technological innovations. In 1992, TRT expanded its limits by establishing a new TV channel called Avrasya TV specifically addressing the Turkic republics of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizia, and Kazakhstan. Şahin and Aksoy state that “TRT’s venture opened a new chapter in global broadcasting, forging pan-national links between, in this case, ethnically related but spatially separate groups of people.” (Şahin and Aksoy 1993, pp. 38-39)

In the following year, Turkey initiated to launch its first satellite. During that period, with the establishment of Avrasya TV, the Turkish model of development was extensively publicized as a model for other Muslim countries in order to show them what they could achieve if they followed the Western model. Şahin and Aksoy emphasize how the launching of the Turkish satellite, TURKSAT, played an important role in the creation of this image in 1993. “The project was sold to the public as the way for Turkey to enter into the information age. By offering fast, reliable, and high-quality mass communication services to its people at home as well as to Turkish-speaking people in Europe and Asia, Turkey was prepared to enter the new century armed with the tools of global information.” (Ibid., p. 39)

In this new television age, on the one hand, the earlier practices to localize foreign TV programmes continued. On the other hand, technological developments, privatization and new regulations brought new issues to be discussed in relation to the presence of imported TV series on Turkish television channels. In this era of availability and transition, whereas localisation practices transformed global television texts in an attempt to make them suitable and recognizable, globalisation practices altered the local television scene by offering variety, increasing competition and changing both the style and the content of domestic television programmes.

2.5.1 Increasing Variety of TV Programmes

In the era of availability, the variety of television programmes quickly increased. Especially, the newly established private TV channels introduced several new programmes, including TV series, game shows, reality shows, talk shows and live broadcasts, either locally or globally produced. Foreign television series found themselves a new platform when the number of television channels multiplied. TV series from different countries started to be offered to the Turkish audiences. American TV series continued to dominate the schedules of television channels. However, Latin American telenovelas such as *Manuela* (1991) and *Alcanzar una estrella* (1990) on TRT as well as the Mexican telenovela *Marimar* (1994) on STAR-1 attracted great attention.

The police procedural genre maintained its popularity in this new television era. Turkish police procedurals started to be formed by local producers but imported police procedurals outnumbered these locally produced programmes. To increase the number and popularity of the foreign shows, in 1991 STAR-1's new police procedurals were announced by the *Milliyet newspaper* with joy. TV series, including *21 Jump Street* (1987–1991) and *Twin Peaks* (1990–1991), were added to the 24 hour broadcasting of the channel. ("Star'dan Dizi Yağmuru" 1991, p. 21) In the course of time, private TV channels started to purchase new seasons of the popular police procedurals which were previously shown on TRT and proliferated the variety of their programmes. However, this situation resulted in the intensification of the competition between the private and public channels.

According to John Ellis, in the era of availability, at least in Europe, the typical competition among the public service channel and its commercial challenger was replaced by the competition between various providers that have different characteristics. (Ellis 2000, p. 61) Similarly, in Turkey, apart from the struggle between private and public broadcasters, the increasing variety of television programmes caused a cut-throat competition among high number of television channels. Interestingly, imported police procedurals which were highly popular at that time played a significant part in this battle for keeping the audiences tuned in and gaining the highest ratings.

2.5.2 Competition

The new competitive environment which became one of the most concrete realities of the 1990s brought new issues to understand and conquer the television market as well as new tools and tactics to eliminate competitors. With the attempts of AGB Nielsen Media Research Company and the consent of the Television Audience Research Committee Joint Stock Company (TİAK), Turkey had already initiated TV audience measurement in 1989, before the establishment of private TV channels. (Çelenk 2005, p. 222) Audience measurement became one of the most useful tools both for television producers and advertising companies after the establishment of private TV channels. Measurements were used to develop new tactics to beat the competition and secure advertising revenues.

In order to gain more audience and announce their new shows, private TV channels started to place advertisements in newspapers. (Ibid., pp. 193-194) At the same time, brand identity became an issue especially for private TV channels since they were more bound to the rules of competition and market economy. (Ibid., p. 273) The prime time slot instantly turned into a battle ground. In order to secure audiences, Turkish TV channels started to seize ‘international’ tactics such as questioning the compatibility of certain programmes for the time slot or trying to form a habit. Questions like what are the most popular programmes and genres in particular time slots, what should one do to turn viewing a programme into a habit, or what should one do when the most popular programmes were shown on competing channels, started to be concerns for the Turkish TV executives. (Ibid., pp. 263-264)

Police procedurals continued to be among the popular genres of the newly established private television channels. They were not only included in the TV schedules as a tactic to address as many people as possible but also to construct brand identity. Along with other imported TV series, police procedurals were what had been entertaining on the public television channel, TRT, without being informative or educating at the same time. For that reason, when private TV channel STAR-1 was established since its brand identity was completely built on offering entertainment, police procedurals turned into a significant part of this promise. For being what TRT was not, one of the strategies that STAR-1 adopted was bringing back the popular shows that TRT discontinued broadcasting. Popular police procedurals and crime series of the 1980s like *Murder She Wrote* (1984–1996), *Miami Vice* (1984–1990) and *Moonlighting* (1985–1989) were among these shows and some of them symbolically represented the rating battle between TRT and STAR-1.

In the 1980s, *Murder She Wrote* was introduced to the Turkish audiences by highlighting that Peter S. Fischer, the scriptwriter of the series, previously wrote the scripts of police procedurals that were favoured by Turkish audiences such as *Columbo*, *Baretta* and *McMillan & Wife*. (“Yaşlı kadının merakı...” 1986, p. 2) Although the series was a big success it was only on air for approximately three months on TRT. (“Jessica veda ediyor” 1986, p. 2) Until it was bought by STAR-1 years later, *Murder She Wrote* did not find a place in the TV schedule.

When *Murder She Wrote* returned to Turkish television in 1992 it became a part of the advertising campaign of STAR-1 (“Katil kim? Birlikte bulalım” 1992, p. 22) and it played an important role in the great competition between TRT and STAR-1. While announcing the ratings of the shows that were broadcasted in the first week of February 1991, *Murder She Wrote* was listed one of the top five programmes that was included in the schedule of STAR-1. (“Zirveyi zorlayanlar” 1991, p. 19) Although the ratings of the programmes on TRT were much higher in comparison with the programmes on STAR-1, the success of *Murder She Wrote* was especially stressed in order to show the executives of TRT what they had missed by losing the series to STAR-1. In the section of the *Milliyet newspaper*

that published audience remarks, TRT was continuously blamed for letting popular shows like *Murder She Wrote* slip from its hands. (“Telegörüş” 1991, p. 17)

In a similar manner, when *Miami Vice* which was shown on TRT in 1986 was bought by STAR-1 in 1990, the announcement was made by emphasizing how another TV series that TRT failed to keep possession of had been transferred to STAR-1. TRT’s ‘inexplicable’ attitude was targeted as the main reason for *Miami Vice*’s transfer to STAR-1 despite its popularity in Turkey. (“TRT kaçırdı STAR-1 kaptı” 1990, p. 19) Eventually, in 1992, TRT was criticised for being a resource to the private television channels. Research conducted by TRT itself proved that a certain number of imported TV series shown on private television channels were previously broadcasted on TRT. The reruns of these series were aired on private TV channels with the dubbing that was produced by TRT. (“TRT, 1992’de özel TV’lere kaynak oldu” 1993, p. 10) As a consequence of this situation, TRT had to find itself a new role and create a new channel identity, similar to the European public broadcasters which struggled to survive in the era of availability. (Ellis 2000, p. 61)

2.5.3 Local TV Programmes

The competitive environment that was brought by the new television era in Turkey directed the attention of the television channels to producing local programmes. The research by Joseph D. Straubhaar on television production in Brazil indicates that Brazilian lower classes “seem to prefer nationally or locally produced material that is closer to and more reinforcing of traditional identities, based in regional, ethnic, dialect/language, religious and other elements.” (Straubhaar 1991, p. 51) Turkish audiences were not different from Brazilian viewers in that sense. As Sevilay Çelenk’s study on programme schedules shows, Turkish TV audiences also preferred to watch local programmes when available. (Çelenk 2005, p. 272)

As a consequence of grasping this information, the anxiety to reach as many viewers as possible and the economic ability to invest more in production led Turkish television channels, especially TRT, to produce local programmes. In order to invest more in locally

produced programmes, a new regulation was already passed by TRT in 1988. By means of this regulation, TRT executives received the authorization to purchase new local TV programmes from production companies which were not legally related to TRT. Encouraged by this new regulation, TRT management, administered by Tunca Toskay, ordered various local TV series from private production companies. (Serim 2007, p. 142)

In the same year, when Cem Duna was assigned as the new chief editor of TRT, the first action he took was extending the broadcasting hours to 01.00 a.m. and more programmes were ordered from private production companies, including TV series. TRT was strongly criticized for paying billions to the private companies and wasting the state's money. (Ibid., p. 153) Despite these critiques, during this process the number of locally produced TV series increased considerably.

Private TV channels did not fall behind TRT in producing local programmes. As Şahin and Aksoy point out, in the 1990s global media was influential in modelling the format of locally produced programmes on the private TV channels. (Şahin and Aksoy 1993, p. 37) Although they limit their research by concentrating on private TV channels, public channel TRT appropriated televisual genres of global consumerism as much as its competitors. For the sake of offering something different and attractive to the Turkish audiences, both public and private TV channels resorted to producing local variations of global televisual genres which resulted in the diversification of Turkish police procedural TV series. In this way, the relationship between the global and the local did not only intensify and become more complicated but also, as Şahin and Aksoy point out, global media exercised its hegemonic power and was accepted as the norm. (Ibid.)

Drastic changes on the political and economic fronts paved the way to the transformation of social life and popular culture in Turkey in the era of availability. During this period of transition, the impact of globalisation on local television scene started to be sensed more intensely. Television channels struggled to overcome the anxieties that this new era brought and developed strategic tactics.

By feeling the urge to seize the day, the state-run TRT opened up to the world by attending international trade fairs and making new attempts to become an exporting power. TRT executives adopted new strategies to make their programmes more 'exportable' by following the popular trends of the era. In this way, global media systems gradually infiltrated into the Turkish television industry by influencing both the content and the style of local productions. Together with the appropriation of global television genres, early Turkish police procedurals were produced in this period.

With the establishment of private TV channels, the Turkish television scene was rapidly commodified and started to be determined by new challenges. As the number of private TV channels quickly increased, Turkish TV audiences were introduced to a variety of new programmes. The audiences were free to switch between channels and choose whatever they wanted to watch among the variety that was offered to them. This situation brought new concerns like constructing brand identity, audience measurement and coping with the cut-throat competition.

In order to overcome these concerns, both public and private TV channels developed different tactics to keep the attention of the audiences on their programmes. Police procedurals played a significant role in this struggle as they were among the most popular genres of the era. Private TV channels, especially STAR-1, resorted to bringing back the popular imported police procedurals that were previously broadcasted on TRT with an attempt to get ahead in the competition. Under these circumstances, producing local TV programmes turned into an important tactic to have high ratings.

In this way, as a response to the globalisation of the Turkish television scene, the number of local TV series which were formed by appropriating global television genres promptly multiplied. Turkish police procedurals were among these programmes, which were broadcasted side by side with their foreign counterparts. This togetherness of the global and the local productions enhanced intertextuality between different programmes, influencing the content and style of Turkish police procedurals which were willing to survive in the highly competitive television environment of the new global age.

2.6 ACCESSING THE ‘GLOBAL’ IN THE ERA OF PLENTY

After the era of availability, new technologies, challenges and uncertainties that the era of plenty brought to the industry changed the scene of television in Turkey as in many other countries. (Ellis 2000, p. 163) Sevilay Çelenk explains that by the end of the 1990s, the Turkish television industry gradually became integrated into the global media industry, parallel to the changes in media ownerships and regulations in Turkey. Quoting from the *Mediascape* report that was released in 2000, Çelenk states that from the beginning of the 1990s, family-owned corporations that operate in the fields of newspaper and magazine publishing were replaced by the vertically integrated holdings which do not only operate in the field of media but are also active in other sectors such as banking, finance, automotive, textile or construction. (Çelenk 2005, p. 249)

As it is indicated in the *Mediascape* report, these vertically integrated holdings strengthened through the partnerships that they established with global companies. This broad network came to everybody’s attention with the publishing of the Turkish editions of foreign fashion and wellness magazines and was extended with the proliferation of the transnational broadcastings of the national television channels. (Ibid.) This situation was carried to another stage with the establishment of CNN Türk, the Turkish branch of CNN International, as a result of an agreement between Doğan Medya Group and Time Warner in 2000. The same year, another partnership was built between the local TV channel Kanal E and the global company CNBC, (Büyükbaykal 2004, p. 26) further contributing to the integration of Turkish television in the global media industry.

In a short while, the appearance of cable and satellite channels as well as digital television services and subscription-based channels in Turkey opened a whole new world full of infinite choices. John Ellis categorizes the new forms that television offered in the era of plenty as ‘premium services’ and ‘genre-defined branded services’. For Ellis, the first category which offers premium services are channels which define themselves as ‘terrestrial broadcasters’ and usually deal with films and sport. Sometimes, these services might require subscriptions or one-time fees. However, in the era of plenty which is the time of new multi-channel services, not every broadcaster offers premium services. (Ellis

2000, pp. 163-164) The second category of channels are specialized in a single genre and build their brand identity on this kind of programming. Ellis includes Discovery Channel which offers programmes on wildlife, nature and outdoor activities, the Sci-Fi Channel that only includes science fiction and the Cartoon Network in this second category. (Ibid., p. 164)

Both types of broadcasting services have become known to the Turkish audiences from the end of the 1990s. As time went by, the number of channels and services that fell in the scope of these broadcasting types became countless. Alongside the limitless number of open-access private TV channels, thanks to these services provided by different companies the most popular foreign police procedurals continue to appear on Turkish television channels.

2.6.1 Premium Services in Turkey

By means of the premium services that started to be offered from the end of the 1990s, Turkish TV audiences were given the opportunity to access foreign entertainment programmes on global television channels any time they wanted. The broadcast of undubbed TV series and films blended into the flow of local programmes or was interrupted by commercial breaks on these new channels and Turkish TV audiences started to experience a simulation of watching an entirely global television channel on a local basis.

In 1993, Turkey's first television channel that offered premium services called Cine 5 was established. Cine 5 only broadcasted foreign, mostly American films and premier league football matches but its broadcasting was ciphered. In order get the encryption off, the subscribers had to pay a monthly fee and buy a decoder. (Büyükbaykal 2004, p. 26) Following the initiative of Cine 5, the first Turkish digital platform, Digiturk, was established in 1999 and started its broadcasting the next year. Digiturk offered more than 300 channels including the mainstream Turkish TV channels as well as foreign channels such as BBC, CNN International and National Geographic. Apart from these, it also offered premium channels for watching foreign TV series.

By means of the TV channel *Dizimax*, Digiturk broadcasted foreign, mostly American TV series 24 hours a day. In 2012, new channels were launched for watching specific genres such as science fiction (*Dizimax Sci-fi*), comedy (*Dizimax Comedy*), drama (*Dizimax Comedy*) and crime TV series (*Dizimax Vice*). By 2016, on *Dizimax Vice*, Digiturk subscribers can follow contemporary crime series such as *True Detective* (2014-), *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* (1999-), *Bones* (2005-), *Hawaii Five – 0* (2010-) and many others in their original language with Turkish subtitles.

Apart from Digiturk, other digital platforms such as D-Smart and Türksat Kablo TV offer their subscribers the possibility to watch premium TV channels that broadcast foreign TV series for 24 hours in digital high definition image and stereo sound quality. The subscribers of these platforms have different package options with different pricing. They also have the opportunity to watch premium TV channels including *FX* (Turkish branch of the American TV channel, available since 2008), *Dizi TV* (TV channel with a specific focus on broadcasting foreign TV series) and *FOX Crime* (Turkish branch of Fox International's thematic channel, available since 2011).

On these TV channels which are available through premium subscriptions, contemporary police procedurals and crime series like *Justified* (FX, 2010–2015), *Bones* (FX, 2005-), *Copper* (FX, 2012-), *Ripper Street* (Dizi TV, 2012-), *Wallander* (Dizi TV, 2008), *Bron/Broen* (Dizi TV, 2011-), *CSI* franchises (Fox Crime), *Elementary* (Fox Crime, 2012-), *The Killing* (Fox Crime, 2011-2014), *Luther* (Fox Crime, 2010-2015), *Backstorm* (Fox Crime, 2015) and many others are available to Turkish audiences. Although some of these series are dubbed in a uniform Turkish accent, thus keeping the TRT tradition alive, the digital technologies that these premium services provide allow the audiences to watch these series in their original language with Turkish subtitles.

2.6.2 Branded Services in Turkey

Kanal E which was established in 1995 was among the first branded services in Turkey. The channel, which broadcasted economy news during the day and foreign TV series and films at night, became a partner of the global company CNBC in 2000 and together they

were united under the name of CNBC-E. As Zeynep Kaban Kadioğlu explains, the partnership between CNBC and Kanal E was based on an association of know-how instead of capital investment since CNBC did not have any capital investment in this newly generated channel. (Kadioğlu 2014, p. 29) CNBC-E maintained the scheduling policies of Kanal E by showing programmes, newscasts and talks on economy and stock exchange in the daytime and broadcasting foreign films, TV series and cartoons in the weekdays after the stock market is closed and for 24 hours in the weekends.

The inception of this TV channel meant a breaking point for the broadcasting of imported police procedurals on Turkish television since CNBC-E turned into the heart of the police procedurals in the beginning of 2000s. Its schedule was full of contemporary, highly popular police procedurals and crime series and it was an open-access channel in contrast with the premium channels of Digiturk. CNBC-E did not broadcast any local programmes. Its schedule was composed entirely of imported TV series and films. Therefore, CNBC-E provided the Turkish TV audiences with the experience of watching a global television channel without paying a fee.

Popular police procedurals such as *NYPD Blue* (1993–2005), *CSI: NY* (2004–2013), *Law and Order* (1990–2010), *Without a Trace* (2002–2009), *Boomtown* (2002–2003), *Cold Case* (2003–2010) and many others were aired in their original language with Turkish subtitles alongside popular series belonging to other genres. Until very recently, popular police procedurals like *Sherlock* (2010-), *Fargo* (2014-), *Major Crimes* (2012-), and *Rizzoli & Isles* (2010–2016), were shown on CNBC-E and its fellow channel E2. In November 2015, CNBC-E was sold by Doğuş Media to Discovery Communications and the channel turned into the Turkish branch of TLC. Whereas some of the police procedurals that were previously shown on CNBC-E and E2 continue to be broadcasted on TLC, this new channel has a new broadcasting policy and added new series as well as reality shows and docusoaps to its schedule. Some of these programmes are dubbed in Turkish instead of being broadcasted with subtitles.

2.6.3 Piracy in Turkey

Apart from directly accessing the ‘global’ through premium and brand services, Internet is used as a significant tool to watch foreign TV series in Turkey. As Abigail De Kosnik explains, television and Internet have become increasingly interconnected in recent years. Legal downloading services like iTunes, Amazon Video on Demand or legal streaming services such as Hulu and Netflix offer a wide range of options for watching TV today. (De Kosnik 2010, p. 2) Among these services, only Netflix has been introduced in Turkey in 2016 and is still accessible. Apart from Netflix, a Turkish, subscription based streaming website, BluTV, was established in Turkey by Doğan Media Group as its major competitor. However, since using illegal streaming websites to access global television contents as well as films and music happened to be the norm in Turkey, commercial streaming services like Netflix are not very popular. (Bozdağ 2016, p. 131)

Although imposing some legal sanctions was put on the agenda of the Turkish government in recent years (“Korsan film ve müzik indirmenin cezası adrese teslim” 2013) no serious action has been taken against illegal downloading. For that reason, piracy is a highly widespread practice in Turkey, especially when it comes to access global TV. As the 2014 Special 301 Report on Copyright Protection and Enforcement of the International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA) indicates, “Online piracy is carried out using cyberlockers, deeplinking sites, peer-to-peer (P2P) filesharing services, forums/blogs, and BitTorrent sites. The Entertainment Software Association (ESA) reports that in 2013, Turkey ranked eleventh in the world in terms of the number of connections by peers engaging in the unauthorized filesharing of select ESA member titles on public P2P networks.” (International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA) 2014) For that reason, Turkey remains on the watch list of IIPA.

Although there may be several reasons for choosing to download television programmes illegally, as Abigail De Kosnik points out, being able to access global TV might be considered as one of the primary motivations. By focusing on television audiences in the United States, De Kosnik states that although some British television programmes are made available by some downloading and streaming services, the majority of the non-

U.S. television programmes cannot be accessed legally in the United States. Therefore, in order to watch programmes such as *Project Runway Canada* (2007-), *Australia's Next Top Model* (2005-), the U.K. version of the *X-Factor* (2004-) or Colombian telenovelas, television audiences choose to download these programmes illegally. (De Kosnik 2010, p. 10)

On the one hand, the same motivation might be behind the high ratio of illegal downloading in Turkey. Even though some of the most popular television series are available through subscribing to premium services such as Digiturk or Türksat Kablo TV, usually people have to wait for watching these shows since they are not aired right after they are broadcasted in the United States or in another country. Additionally, because Turkish television channels have to follow the rules that are legislated by RTÜK, popular TV series like *Game of Thrones* (2011-), which was shown right after the U.S. broadcast on CNBC-E, might be subjected to censorship because of their sexual content. In order to watch the uncensored episodes of the shows, Turkish television audiences might turn to illegal downloading.

Besides, Abigail De Kosnik adds that eliminating the fee for accessing specific content among the reasons for illegal downloading. Although people pay for high-speed internet connection, software and hardware in order to download materials, piracy is relatively cheaper than subscribing to premium services or legal downloading services (Ibid., p. 13), which can be considered as another motivation behind the high illegal downloading ratio in Turkey. Since most of the foreign TV series are available on the television channels that can be watched by subscribing to premium services, television audiences might turn to illegal downloading to eliminate the subscription fees and continue watching global television shows including the police procedurals they like.

In the era of plenty, technological innovations introduced new ways of watching television to the Turkish audiences. By means of branded and premium services, Turkish TV audiences were given the opportunity to directly access global television materials.

Whereas watching the dubbed or subtitled versions of imported TV series turned into an optional decision on television, the Internet opened a whole new world for Turkish audiences. Through the devices that this new age brought, the global turned into something that could be easily and instantly reached.

The police procedural genre preserved its popularity on Turkish television channels in the era of plenty. As the high number of imported police procedurals on premium and branded services indicates, Turkish TV audiences had the chance to watch the most popular and recent foreign, mostly American, police procedurals any time they wanted. This strong presence of the global televisual materials on Turkish TV channels caused challenging situations for Turkish police procedurals which were frequently compared to their foreign counterparts. This issue is discussed in detail in the later chapters, together with the other reasons behind this recurrent comparison.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The global and the local cannot be approached as separate concepts. They depend on each other in defining the emergence of a global cultural system and the invention of local cultures as a response to this appearance. Since the Turkish television industry relied on foreign technology and knowledge from its establishment, this dialogic interaction between the global and the local played a significant role in the formation and dissemination of a television culture in Turkey.

When the television industry was first introduced in Turkey it mostly relied on imported television contents due to lack of financial resources. The images of the global infused people's houses through these imported TV contents with certain twists. Industrial practices such as dubbing, scheduling and retitling transformed these global television materials and made them more familiar and recognizable for Turkish TV audiences. However, these were not automated practices which simply translated 'global messages' into 'local language'. National anxieties, reflexes, traditions and values played major roles in redesigning imported television programmes and these 'global' texts were transformed in their country of destination in order to be more familiar and appropriate

for the local audiences. Through these transformations, the Turkish television industry created its own conventions and norms which had a great impact on the comprehension of the police procedural genre in Turkey.

While localisation processes transformed global televisual materials before being broadcasted in Turkey, global dynamics compelled the Turkish television industry to change in order to survive in the new television era. The growing influence of the free market economy and consumer culture in Turkey not only created new needs and demands in terms of television contents but also forced the Turkish TV industry to open up and change its infrastructure to be aligned with global television market. This transformation brought new dilemmas and concerns like constructing brand identity, measuring audience reactions and dealing with cut-throat competition to the Turkish television industry.

In this competitive television environment, producing domestic programmes turned into a tactic for keeping the audiences tuned in. The growing financial resources and new regulations allowed to create local variations of popular global television genres and Turkish police procedurals were born out of this continuous relationship between the global and the local. Although the explicit influence of the Western, mostly American, police procedurals on the Turkish products could not be missed, this influence was not a direct imprint. Conventions of the police procedural genre as they have been transformed by localisation processes were adopted in designing Turkish police procedurals as a reflexive move.

Apart from these features, Turkish police procedurals reflected particular national elements which were designed in accordance with the dominant nationalist discourses of that period in order to build a familiar connection with the audiences and avoid controversies with the governments in power. These national elements played a major role in the formation of Turkish police procedurals which were recirculated on the global market as one of its heterogeneous forms. For that reason, the next chapter concentrates on this issue in detail together with the examination of dominant nationalist tendencies

and popular televisual trends in the 1990s during which the production of domestic TV series peaked.



3 TURKISH TV SERIES AND NATIONALIST DISCOURSES IN THE 1980S AND 1990S

Under the influence of globalisation, the Turkish television scene rapidly changed in the 1980s and 1990s. As a consequence of this transformation, the number of Turkish productions increased considerably. However, together with new developments in the Turkish television industry this rising number brought new issues to be discussed concerning the definition and categorization of Turkish TV series.

This chapter focuses on the development of Turkish TV series, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s. It broaches the subject by giving some historical details about the development of Turkish TV series from the 1970s. Following this section, the chapter concentrates on how Turkish TV series were approached and discussed by the scholars who tried to make sense of the new cultural forms which were developed in close contact with the forces of globalisation.

After criticizing the attempts to define Turkish TV series as entities that are not influenced by globalisation, the chapter dwells on the question where the national is situated in Turkish TV series in the 1980s and 1990s. Without overlooking the new definitions that scholars found to identify these new cultural forms, it concentrates on the implicit, everyday signs of the national in Turkish TV series during that period and proposes some national elements which make these series visually, textually and sensationally familiar for the Turkish TV audiences.

Once this necessary background is set to discuss the formation of the police procedural genre in the Turkish context, the chapter focuses on the early examples of Turkish police procedural TV series by pointing at the presence of the national elements in their narratives as well the critiques that these series had to face when they first appeared at the end of the 1980s.

3.1 INTRODUCING TURKISH TV SERIES

Larry Landrum explains that in the mid-1950s, writers of popular American fiction developed texts that were taken as models by television formats. These novels revolved around the stories of people who hardly knew each other but were still caught up in some dramatic situations which ended up influencing all characters at once. (Landrum 1984, p. 94) In a similar manner, according to Joseph D. Straubhaar, the development of film genres in the 1920s and the 1930s as well as radio genres in the 1930s and 1940s affected television programming since it led to the adaptation of radio genres to television. He says that “the combination of the film and radio industrial bases led to further development of TV genres in the 1950s and 1960s, with the boom in television exports in the 1960s.” (Straubhaar 1991, p. 45)

Apart from the expansion of television exports, as Silvio Waisbord explains, the wide networking between television professionals worldwide or attending annual trade meetings created similar and familiar kinds of tastes and critical judgments since with the new, expanded boundaries that globalisation offers “what works in one television system could be adapted elsewhere.” (Waisbord 2004, p. 364) Waisbord says that “in standardizing the structure of television, globalisation encouraged the tendency towards imitation and reluctance to promote innovation that underlies commercial broadcasting.” (Ibid.) Eventually, what has appeared is the global television scene which could not only be described as a “wall-to-wall format,” (Ibid., p. 359) full of transnational format adaptations of television programmes which are designed in different continents but also as a wall-to-wall-genre.

In a similar manner, Sevilay Çelenk explains that before the appearance of imported TV series on public television TRT in the 1970s, serial narration had already been a familiar form for Turkish people through newspaper serials, known in Turkey as *tefrika*⁵, comic books and radio plays in the 1940s and the 1950s. Çelenk also points out that Yeşilçam films which frequently cast the same actors and actresses in specific roles created an

⁵ By the end of the nineteenth century under the reign of the Ottoman Empire, many novels were serially published on newspapers in *tefrika* form which was a literary tradition that was also pursued after the foundation of Turkish Republic.

attachment to the same faces on the screen and contributed to the formation of a sense of seriality in the film industry. Action films such as Kartal Tibet's *Karaođlan* (1965-1972) and *Tarkan* (1968-1973) as well as Cüneyt Arkin's *Malkoçođlu* (1966-1973) and *Kara Murat* (1972-1978) series, romantic comedies of Ayhan Işık and Belgin Doruk such as *Küçük Hanımefendi* (Little Lady, 1961) and Zeynep Değirmenciođlu's *Ayşecik* (1960-1971) films were among the pioneering works that introduced seriality as a visual form to the Turkish audiences. (Çelenk 2010, p. 21)

In the 1970s, people got familiar with the TV series format mostly through American TV series such as *The Fugitive* (*Kaçak*, 1963–1967), *Columbo* (1971–2003), *Dallas* (1978–1991), or *The Love Boat* (*Aşk Gemisi*, 1977–1987). However, as Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver explains, during that time, TRT was highly aware of the fact that old Turkish films or foreign productions could not fulfil audience demand by themselves. (Tanrıöver 2001, p. 94) For that reason, the first attempts to broadcast locally produced TV series on Turkish television were initiated when İsmail Cem, the general director of TRT at that period, took the initiative. In 1974 *Kaynanalar* (Mother-in-laws, TRT, 1974), a local sitcom explaining the struggles of a family that migrated from an Anatolian rural town to the big city, started to be broadcasted weekly. However, the most significant step in developing Turkish TV series was taken when İsmail Cem invited renowned directors of Turkish cinema to make television adaptations of the classical Turkish novels for TRT.

In Ayşe İnal's words, the inspiration behind these limited attempts were the BBC's TV adaptations of classical novels. (İnal 2001, p. 275) Eventually, five directors including important figures such as Lütü Akad, Metin Erksan and Halit Refiğ adapted different novels from Turkish literature. Among these adaptations, the one that made the biggest impact was Halit Refiğ's adaptation of Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil's *Aşk-ı Memnu* (Forbidden Love, TRT, 1975) for television. (Yağcı Aksel 2011, p. 18)

Aşk-ı Memnu was shot on 35 mm film and broadcasted for six episodes in 1975. (Sivas 2011, p. 191) The shooting lasted for seven months. In comparison with the conditions of filmmaking at that period, the high budget and the time that was allocated for the production indicate that *Aşk-ı Memnu* was not produced for commercial reasons. As noted

by Ala Sivas, *Aşk-ı Memnu* was perceived both by its director Halit Refiğ and the critics of the era as a product that the Turkish state supported to elevate the cultural level of the public. Together with *Yorgun Savaşçı* (Tired Warrior, TRT, 1978), another film that Refiğ directed for TRT in 1978, *Aşk-ı Memnu* was a new step that Refiğ took to create a ‘national’ cinema. (İbid., pp. 193-194)

In order to achieve the quality that both Refiğ and the TRT executives aimed for, the production of the series was not outsourced but undertaken by TRT because İsmail Cem thought that when the project is outsourced the commercial concerns of a private company might negatively affect the quality of the production. (Yağcı Aksel 2011, p. 18) Due to similar concerns among many others, Sevilay Çelenk states that until the beginning of the 1980s, TRT had never directly accepted any programme from an independent production company except Turkish films and advertisements. (Çelenk 2001b, pp. 317-318) Apart from TRT’s concerns about quality, this choice was also related to the control and preservation of the homogenous and fixed ‘national’ identity that was reflected by the programmes.

When the interest in Turkish TV series grew, TV audiences started to demand for more productions. Since political violence had been a major problem in Turkey in the 1970s and the conflicts between left wing and right wing youth groups made the streets unsecured (Zürcher 2004, pp. 263), people had been spending more time at home in front of their television sets. This situation might be considered as the reason behind the growing interest in television series. Sevgi Can Yağcı Aksel explains that audiences started to send letters to TRT to express their demand to see a Turkish TV series every night and for them, the duration of the TV series should be at least 45 or 50 minutes since they were not satisfied with the 25 minute format that TRT was following at the time. (Yağcı Aksel 2011, p. 19) TRT addressed the demands coming from the audiences and TV audiences came across a lot more Turkish TV series in the 1980s.

In 1984, the celebrated poet, scriptwriter and journalist Atilla İlhan wrote the script of *Kartallar Yüksekten Uçar* (Eagles Fly High, TRT, 1984) which explains the financial and cultural conflicts of two wealthy families, one from a big, cosmopolitan and other from a

small, rural city. *Kartallar Yüksekten Uçar* became the longest running Turkish TV series for being broadcasted for 12 episodes. Apart from its success, the high budget of this series was also very often commented upon in the newspapers. (Ibid., p. 24)

Kartallar Yüksekten Uçar was frequently compared to *Dallas* and even named as ‘local *Dallas*’ (‘yerli’ *Dallas*). However, Atilla İlhan reacted to this ascription by stating that *Kartallar Yüksekten Uçar* was born from the realities of the Turkish culture and opened a discussion about the differences between the bourgeois lifestyle represented in *Dallas* and the social reality that was reflected by *Kartallar Yüksekten Uçar*. (Ibid.) İlhan’s reaction and response indicate how important it was for him to produce something ‘national’ that explains the conflicts and realities of the Turkish nation. However, since *Kartallar Yüksekten Uçar* followed the generic conventions of a soap opera and told the story of two wealthy families similar to *Dallas*, which was extremely popular at that time, the comparison between the two series was not that surprising.

In 1984, TRT’s main purposes were listed as diversifying television programmes, addressing the audiences with different social backgrounds and eliminating the ‘negative’ effects of the foreign television broadcasts that were available in border towns of Turkey. In order to achieve these goals, in 1985 TRT executives declared that they would save Turkish TV audiences from the longing that was expressed in the question, “are we ever going to have a TV series of our own?” (Çelenk 2001b, pp. 317-319), as if there were none before. The same year, Turkish and foreign TV series started to dominate the schedule of TRT with a percentage of 30 per cent. During that time, 7 Turkish TV series were shown on television per week. (Yağcı Aksel 2011, p. 23)

Among these were novel adaptations and historical dramas such as *Kuruluş/Osmancık* (Independence/Osmancık, TRT, 1988), *Ateşten Günler* (Days of Flame, TRT, 1987) and *Fosforlu Cevriye* (Cevriye, the Luminous, TRT, 1989). Whereas *Kuruluş/Osmancık* explained the foundation of the Ottoman Empire, *Ateşten Günler* told a heroic story from the years of Turkish War of Independence. Among them, *Fosforlu Cevriye* was the only one without a historical narrative, telling the tragic story of a sex worker. However,

gradually it became extremely difficult for TRT to keep up with audience demands and to afford the expensive production costs of such TV series at the same time. (Ibid., p. 26)

Therefore, as a new tactic to produce more TV series and spend less money, TRT started to broadcast small budget TV series for families which were eventually defined as ‘mahalle’/ neighbourhood series. In these series, the family is placed at the centre of the narrative and everyday life of the family members is represented in its most simple forms without an emphasis on politics or economic problems. Popular TV series of the 1980s and the 1990s such as *Perihan Abla* (Sister Perihan, TRT, 1986-1988), *Bizimkiler* (Ours, TRT, STAR TV, Show TV, 1989-2002) and *Kuruntu Ailesi* (Kuruntu Family, TRT, 1983-2002) may be considered among the most memorable ones. (Ibid.)

In an interesting way, except *Kuruntu Ailesi*, the production of all these new neighbourhood series was outsourced to independent production companies, as the new TRT regulation that was passed in 1988 allowed TRT executives to order television programmes from independent production companies. Therefore, the proliferation of independent production companies and the partial expansion of TRT vitalized the Turkish TV series industry at the end of the 1980s. As Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver points out, *Perihan Abla* was a cornerstone in the development of Turkish television series. After its broadcasting, the Turkish television series industry started to expand considerably and *Perihan Abla* turned into a modern myth in Turkey in later years. (Tanrıöver 2001, p. 94)

The popularity of Turkish TV series peaked in the 1990s. As Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver explains, in the mid-1990s, approximately 20 Turkish TV series were shown weekly in prime time. (Ibid.) The growth of the Turkish television industry with the establishment of private TV channels played a significant role in this proliferation. However, as Yağcı Aksel explains, in the beginning of the 1990s, daytime family series *Ferhunde Hanımlar ve Kızları* (Missus Ferhunde and her Daughters, TRT, STAR TV, 1993-1999) and primetime family series *Bizimkiler* as well as reruns of popular series like *Perihan Abla* gave TRT an advantage in the ratings. But when the competition between TRT and private TV channels heated up, TRT lost these TV series to private channels. (Yağcı Aksel 2011, pp. 30-32)

After their legalization in 1994, mainstream, private TV channels became active in producing Turkish TV series by drawing a secular portrait of the nation in their productions. According to Sevilay Çelenk, the complexity of the production processes and high production costs of employing full time personnel were difficult and expensive for the private TV channels. Therefore, Turkish TV series were frequently ordered from independent production companies. This practice brought the role of the independent production companies into prominence and these began to have a say in creative processes of production. (Çelenk 2001b, pp. 322-323) By the end of 1999, there were around 50 production companies that worked on producing TV series in Istanbul and almost all Turkish series were produced by independent production companies. (Çelenk 2001c, p. 178)

The growing Turkish television industry and TV series market peaked during that period. As Eylem Yanardağoglu explains, “at the end of the 1990s there were around forty primetime serials per week on television. TV dramas became the major output of commercial television in this period, ranging from seasonal series with thirteen or twenty-six episodes to longer ones that have been on air for at least five seasons.” (Yanardağoglu 2014, p. 52) Eventually, watching TV series in prime time after the news became a new way of entertainment in the evenings and spending time with the whole family at home. (Çelenk 2010, pp. 21-22)

3.2 DISCOVERING TURKISH TV SERIES: GENRE PRODUCTION IN THE 1990S

By means of the rising role of independent production companies in the Turkish television industry and the enthusiasm of the newly established private TV channels, global television genres started to be explored by the Turkish broadcasters. In a short while, these new forms of TV series in police procedural or sitcom formats replaced the historical literary adaptations that had dominated the TRT schedules for a long time.

The appearance of different genres in Turkish television schedules directed the scholars to investigate the distinctive features of these new forms. Without giving any particular

examples, Sevilay Çelenk suggests that the global genres which she prefers to call the sub-genres of the TV series format have never been produced in Turkey in their ‘classical’ forms. For Çelenk, what has determined the trends in Turkey was not the appearance or disappearance of a sub-genre but the popularity of a specific ‘theme’ in a specific time period. Çelenk gives the example of how in the second half of the 1990s, the popularity of the format adaptation of the U.S. sitcom *The Nanny* (1993–1999) paved the way for the production of various sitcoms that depict the everyday problems of upper middle class Turkish people. However, after a short period these sitcoms gradually lost their popularity. Different kinds of TV series started to dominate television schedules with a specific focus on the traditions, social values and relations of wealthy families living in rural Anatolia, (Çelenk 2005, pp. 304-305) which generally followed the soap opera formula.

Even though, by stating that the dynamics of the Turkish television industry are determined by short living ‘themes’ and ‘trends’, Çelenk intends to reveal the fundamentals of the Turkish television industry on the edge of great expansion, it cannot be said that following popular themes and trends is something unique to the Turkish television industry. In a television environment in which global and local dynamics are extremely integrated, television industries all around the world pursue contemporary themes and trends popular within their own countries as well as outside their own territories, getting inspiration from one another.

Besides, even the themes and trends mentioned by Çelenk are constructed by following some specific televisual formulas that global genres offer such as Turkish sitcoms or Turkish soap operas with their rural, Anatolian settings. Therefore, from another perspective, Çelenk’s attempts of differentiating the dynamics of Turkish television series might be interpreted as an effort to find something that makes Turkish television series intrinsically ‘local’.

Affirming this attempt, Çelenk refers to research she conducted in collaboration with Nilüfer Timisi in 2000. In this research, they constructed five ‘thematic sub-genres’ that are intrinsic to Turkish TV series. These are 1) family series that depict the life of a

specific family and their relatives, 2) neighbourhood (*mahalle*) series that choose an apartment building or a neighbourhood to set their narratives, 3) singer/star series in which famous singers or artists re-enact their life stories, 4) series with a specific focus on the events and relations in a work place, among which they include the workplaces of police, lawyers and journalists who fight against crime and 5) the series that concentrate on the lives of wealthy people. (Ibid., p. 307)

Apart from Çelenk and Timisi, a similar attempt comes from Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver who proposes her own categorization in order to classify the ‘subgenres’ of Turkish TV series in 2001. For Tanrıöver, these ‘subgenres’ could be a combination of several worldwide recognized subgenres or might be completely different, intrinsically Turkish. She forms three categories parallel to Çelenk and Timisi’s categorizations, namely adventure series, family series and star series which cast famous singers as their protagonists. (Tanrıöver 2001, p. 94)

However, as expected, by means of the accelerated developments in the Turkish television industry after 2000 these categorizations gradually became outdated. For instance, the singer/star series which were highly popular at the end of the 1990s in parallel with developments in the growing Turkish popular music industry, disappeared after a short while. Crime series with lawyers and journalists as their protagonists were also favoured at the end of the 1990s but vanished from the television scene in the following years. Turkish TV series which told the stories of wealthy families of the rural towns of Anatolia also disappeared briefly, even though they were the next big trend of the early 2000s by being replaced by political/historical dramas.

All these transformations that happened in the Turkish television industry affirm Sevilay Çelenk’s determination about how the Turkish TV industry has been built upon short living themes and trends. However, although the themes and trends that are mentioned extinguished, global genres such as soap operas, sitcoms, police procedurals and dramedies which can be retrospectively used as labels for the popular shows of the 1990s did not disappear from the Turkish television scene but instead continued to be practiced by the Turkish producers in different ways.

Therefore, in other respects, the hesitation of the scholars to associate Turkish TV series with global genres in their categorizations says something important about how the ‘locality’ of the Turkish TV series has been approached as something that has to be separated from the ‘global’ and studied as an unsullied entity. For instance, instead of stating that the soap opera genre is practiced by Turkish television producers, Çelenk and Timisi prefer to generate a new category for series that tell the stories of wealthy people. In a similar manner, rather than referring to police procedural or crime genres as different categories, they try to gather all series set in a workplace like a police station, a newsroom or a law office in an actually ‘nameless’ category. For that reason, from a different point of view, all these attempts and hesitations could be interpreted as the struggles to ‘indigenize’ or ‘authenticate’ Turkish TV series against the forces of globalisation.

However, as Ayşe Öncü asks while questioning the futility of conventional dichotomies such as domestic and import, local and global or national and foreign, “Are karate films Asian? Is *Çarkıfelek* (the Turkish name for Wheel of Fortune) domestic or foreign?” (Öncü 2000, p. 296) There are no simple answers of these questions. Correspondingly, while commenting on the well-known popularity of the Latin American telenovelas which have their origins in American soap operas, or the changing face of Japanese fast food culture, Ien Ang says “what such examples do indicate is that the apparent increasing global integration does not simply result in the elimination of cultural diversity, but, rather, provides the context for the production of new cultural forms which are marked by local specificity.” (Ang 1996, p. 130)

For that reason, although it is impossible to deny that Turkish TV series have some significant textual and stylistic attributes which give them their own ‘national’ character, it is not constructive to treat them as unsullied items that are totally free from the influences of global forces. Therefore, approaching Turkish TV series as if the local was some kind of indigenous source which could only be understood if it was separated from the global and evaluated in its own system of values, might not be very helpful to carry the discussion about Turkish TV series to a next level. Instead, as it is profoundly debated in the previous chapter, Turkish TV series should be approached with the

acknowledgement of how the local is frequently shaped in contact with the global by indigenizing or domesticating it.

Therefore, rather than approaching the ‘local’ by disassociating it from the ‘global’, looking back upon the history of Turkish television series and trying to understand how Turkish TV series responded to global genres might be much more constructive. For instance, instead of stressing the ‘authenticity’ of the neighbourhood (*mahalle*) series, as Zeynep Gültekin Akçay does, these series could be straightforwardly described as dramedies which is a combination of comedy and drama (Akçay 2011, pp. 53-54) and it could be questioned how this genre is practiced in the Turkish context.

So, it is not possible to think Turkish TV series apart from the influences of the global. However, what all these attempts to define Turkish TV series by creating new labels or categories indicate is that there is something typically national in these series. It is not necessary to create a whole new system of generic categorizations for Turkish TV series or to suggest new definitions and names in order to make sense of these differences, but finding what makes these series ‘national’ can be useful to understand the adaptation of global genres such as police procedurals in the Turkish context.

In order to elaborate more on this issue, briefly focusing on filmmaking practices in Turkish cinema’s Yeşilçam period could be enlightening since Turkish television producers frequently applied the experiences of Yeşilçam filmmakers in creating Turkish TV series. Yeşilçam films, which were highly popular among the public, inspired Turkish producers not only in terms of content and style but also in the sense of finding an experimented method for producing a maximum number of productions in a short time span with little budget. These practices which were adopted from Yeşilçam filmmakers gave Turkish TV series a ‘national’ character by having a great impact on them in terms of style and content and offering the audiences familiar experiences.

3.3 FILMMAKING PRACTICES DURING THE YEŞİLÇAM PERIOD: TURKIFICATION AND MELODRAMATIC MODALITY

From the second half of the 1990s, the growing demand for Turkish TV series led the TV producers to resort to the practices of Yeşilçam. In order to cope with the demands, similar to Yeşilçam filmmakers, TV producers found remedy in Turkification practices. These practices included taking inspiration from foreign texts and adapting their contents in accordance with the tastes and interests of the Turkish public. In order to make these contents more familiar for the Turkish audiences, Yeşilçam filmmakers used particular tactics like casting recognizable characters, respecting Turkish morals and infusing melodramatic modality into the texts which were reproduced by television producers. This reproduction gave Turkish TV series a familiar, national character as if the Yeşilçam tradition had been continuing in TV series format.

The Yeşilçam period of Turkish cinema could be considered as an extensive visual and textual repository of national types, customs, styles and industrial practices. The label ‘Yeşilçam’ refers to a street name in Istanbul’s Beyoğlu district where all film companies were located, from the 1950s. Since Yeşilçam Street was the heart of Turkish cinema during that period, the industry was named after this location. The Yeşilçam period of Turkish cinema began at the beginning of the 1950s and its golden age lasted until the late 1980s. But its influence on Turkish cinema as well as television production continued much longer.

Asu Aksoy and Kevin Robins state that “Yeşilçam was a production line for cheap-budget formulaic movies – adventures, comedies, musicals- which were sensational, sentimental, and melodramatic in tone.” (Aksoy and Robins 1997, p. 1943) By means of the rapid production of global genres, Yeşilçam contributed to the formation of a popular culture in Turkey which could address the feelings and expectations of Turkish audiences. This popular culture had nothing to do with the formal tone of official Turkish nationalism which was imposed on the public from above by the Kemalist, modernizing elites. Aksoy and Robins say that “it was the dramatic and emotional quality of these genre films that

resonated with the marginalised elements in Turkish society: they expressed feelings and moods that found no correspondence in the cold reason of the ‘official’ culture.” (Ibid.)

Aslı Kotaman states that in Yeşilçam films, typecasting was a common practice. Narratives were repetitive and rather than being original, these films told different variations of the same stories. Therefore, instead of producing different answers or solutions to the same problem, there were several films that repeated identical responses to the same issues. For Kotaman, the stories that were told in Yeşilçam films were fixed. Themes like love affairs between upper and lower classes, the conflict of traditional with the modern, dilemmas concerning migrating from the villages to the big cities and stories about moral duties were continually told either one by one or all together. (Kotaman 2011, pp. 153-155)

3.3.1 Melodramatic Modality

Savaş Arslan relates the feature of Yeşilçam films to the melodramatic modality that constantly infuses into the narratives. He defines melodramatic modality as the persistence of melodrama in other genres (Arslan 2011, p. 93) and claims that melodrama as a genre does not only dwell on the assertion of being innocent and pure. According to Arslan, melodrama relates the features of innocence and purity with national identity but also builds upon this relation for nationalism. For him, melodrama could be understood as a process of purification, “pitting us against them and good against evil.” (Ibid., p. 95) By means of this process, the drama of nation building is purified and its violence and crime are justified for being in the name of greater good.

However, apart from reflecting nationalist ideas, melodrama points at the failures of modernist projects that intended to build a high and proper culture. For being a popular genre, it responds to the discontinuities and seizures that modernist projects caused while breaking up with the past and its traditions. (Ibid., p. 95) In this sense, melodrama could be described as a genre which both evokes nationalist feelings by encouraging the ‘us’ and ‘them’ binary and comments on the residual sensations that remained as the markers of the crime and violence of nation building processes.

Benefitting from the flexibility of melodrama, melodramatic modality contributed to the formation of Yeşilçam films as a mixture of various elements representing both official and unofficial national identity. The in-betweenness of Turkish national identity that comes and goes between being Western and Eastern while simultaneously being traditional and modern was embodied in Yeşilçam films through melodramatic modality. Yeşilçam films were despised by the elites for being popular and dull. However, as Arslan states, by managing to combine the features of official and unofficial national identity, melodramatic modality helped Yeşilçam cinema to reflect the republican dream of being traditional and modern as well as Western and non-Western at the same time. (Ibid., pp. 95-96)

Melodramatic modality was utilized in various ways by Yeşilçam filmmakers who tried to implement cinema as a Western medium in an Eastern country like Turkey. As Savaş Arslan explains, “on a more fundamental level, cinema, as a Western medium with its particular technological and ideological history, demanded a creative response from non-Western filmmakers and spectators.” (Ibid., p. 80) For Arslan, the response coming from Yeşilçam included practices like “vernacularization, domestication, adaptation, reinvention, imitation, mimicry and simple plagiarism” (Ibid.) and melodramatic modality was employed as a technique to create familiar sensations and feelings for Turkish audiences while implementing these practices.

3.3.2 Turkification

During the Yeşilçam period, the filmmakers who struggled to keep up with the demand and cope with the pressure of making 150 films with very limited facilities resorted to making ‘Turkish’ versions of foreign films as well as TV shows, (Ibid.) which resulted in the production of numerous remakes in a wide spectrum varying from Turkish *Tarzan* films to a *Star Trek* remake. However, as the devoted scriptwriter of Yeşilçam films Bülent Oran explains, the difference of moral codes, cultural values and contexts made the process of remaking of foreign films very difficult because as Ahmet Gürata states, these remakes which tried to draw a picture of urbanized Turkey in a culturally and

morally homogenized form, resisted the values that were reflected by their source texts. (Gürata 2006, p. 252)

In Arslan's terms, foreign films were 'Turkified', by which he refers to the German word, 'getürkt', literally meaning Turkified in English, to explain how "things are Turkified (*getürkt*) either by being transformed in a Turkish way or manner or by being made unruly or unlawful." (Arslan 2011, p. 81) In this way, Arslan explains how Turkish filmmakers found new ways of producing films in high quantities by bending the rules of filmmaking and modifying Western forms. He explains that "Turkification relied on melodramatic modality in Turkifying Western texts. Often the foreign sources are put into the functional mold of melodrama: pure evil and pure good, an intrigue, a spectacular clash." (Ibid., p. 86) For instance, a motivational love story and various scenes with songs were added while Turkifying crime or spy stories. (Ibid., p. 87)

3.3.3 Early Turkish Police Procedural Films and Yeşilçam Practices

Early Turkish police procedural films like *Dikkat Kan Aranıyor* (Attention, Blood Donors Wanted, dir. Temel Gürsu, 1970), *Cemil* (dir. Melih Gülgen, 1975) and *Beyaz Ölüm* (White Death, dir. Halit Refiğ, 1983) were created under the influence of these Yeşilçam practices. While explaining stories of crime and punishment, these films based their narratives on the extreme polarization of good and evil as well as including intriguing subplots, motivational love stories and tragic events which could make the audiences cry.

Dikkat Kan Aranıyor portrays the story of a devoted police commissar (Ekrem Bora) who frequently neglects his pregnant wife as he is busy catching criminals. The narrative focuses on one particular night during which the commissar struggles between doing his job and searching the hospitals to find the rare type of blood for his pregnant wife in labour. The commissar's tight situation is explained in a tragic manner by the dramatization of the events and the glorification of the commissar's devotion to his job.

In a similar manner, *Cemil* tells the story of a heroic police commissar Cemil (Cüneyt Arkın) who finds a young girl's body on a beach after he answers a call on duty. During

autopsy, commissar Cemil meets the father of the young girl and is touched by his tragedy. He decides to investigate the young girl's 'supposed' suicide. During his investigation, he discovers that an international drug cartel has a finger in the girl's death and does not give up until he catches every man related to the cartel. Cemil's nationalist motivation, his *Dirty Harry*-like resentment against the degeneration of the social order and his monologues about what it means to be a police officer increase the tone of melodramatic modality in the film.

Beyaz Ölüm revolves around the intriguing love story between the young, courageous police commissar Yılmaz (Tarkan Akan) and the beautiful show girl Meral (Ahu Tuğba) who is also a drug addict. Yılmaz, who fights against the drug cartels in the country, finds a young girl's body after an overdose. Yılmaz interrogates Meral after the girl's death since the girl was working for Meral. The leader of the drug cartel asks Meral to get close with Yılmaz in order to find out about his plan in advance. Even though Meral's secret messages to the drug cartel causes Yılmaz to fail a few times, she gradually falls in love with Yılmaz and decides to help him to overthrow the cartel. Apart from the tear jerking representations of drug addicts and their families, Meral's tragic death at the end of the film contributes to build a discourse around the inner enemies of the nation. The film's overemphasis on how the 'Turkish youth' is poisoned by the drug cartels adds an explicit nationalist tone to the narrative and glorifies the duties of the police officers who do not only fight against criminals but also work to save the nation.

In all these examples, the usage of musical sequences and the high tone of melodrama which is enhanced by an emphasis on the heartrending personal stories of the police officers and the families of the victims give primacy to tragedy over police investigation. The feelings of regret, melancholy, revenge and rage are combined with nationalist sensations like doing the right thing, serving the nation and protecting the public from its inner and outer enemies. These nationalist feelings are justified by the discourse of 'pitting us against them as well as good versus evil'. All these attributes reveal the infusion of melodramatic modality into the narratives and make the filmmaking practices of Yeşilçam noticeable in these films. In this way, the police procedural genre gets its

shares from Yeşilçam's characteristic touch which is eagerly adopted by the Turkish television industry in the 1990s.

Filmmaking practices of Yeşilçam directors like Turkification and melodramatic modality transferred to television when Turkish TV series production peaked in the 1990s. By relying on the idea that whatever works on another television network could be successful in the local market, Turkish producers created Turkified versions of foreign TV series. In this way, “American TV series such as *Dharma and Greg* (1997–2002), *Married with Children* (1987–1997), *The White Shadow* (1978–1981), *The Jeffersons* (1975–1985), *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch* (1996–2003) *Dawson's Creek* (1998–2003), *Bewitched* (1964–1972) and *Who's the Boss?* (1984–1992) as well as films like *She's Out of Control* (1989)” (Kesirli Unur 2015, p. 141) were Turkified and broadcasted on television.

However, similar to the remaking processes of Yeşilçam films, these TV series were not scene-to-scene adaptations but they took some essential elements from the foreign narratives such as the character traits, major conflicts and the general settings, and harmonized these with the cultural and moral values of Turkish society. In most of the cases, if the adaptation was successful (which means in harmony with the Turkish values and ways of storytelling) after a few episodes the narratives tended to follow their source texts more loosely by creating new sub stories and characters. Melodramatic modality frequently came to the rescue of the producers. Intriguing conflicts of the good and the evil as well as impossible love stories were added to the narratives, together with stylistic elements like musical sequences, in order to make these series Turkified.

These Yeşilçam practices which were adopted by television producers did not only ensure the continuity of traditional methods of storytelling on television but also served the same ideological purposes. Melodramatic modality was embedded in the narratives of Yeşilçam films either to reflect on the in-betweenness of Turkish national identity and/or to Turkify foreign texts. As Savaş Arslan states, during the Yeşilçam period Turkish

audiences chose to watch the technically poor domestic films which were produced by Turkified tactics because “people saw themselves in those films. Unlike the foreign, unfamiliar stories and morals of the American films and reliance on characters like television artists, bankers, and gangsters, domestic films reflected people’s own lifestyles, issues, and music.” (Arslan 2011, p. 79)

According to Aslı Kotaman, audiences in Turkey who search for their lost innocence and childhoods in Yeşilçam’s melodramas tend to watch Turkish TV series for the same reason. The setup of Yeşilçam films in which good people always win at the end is reinterpreted in Turkish TV series and the eternal rivalry of good and evil is revitalized by taking a position in favour of the good. (Kotaman 2011, p. 158) For that reason, Turkification and melodramatic modality might be considered among the familiar tactics of Turkish storytelling which tacitly infuse into the narratives of Turkish TV series. In this way, Turkish TV series manage to reflect on the complexity of their in-between positions among the West and the East, the modern and the traditional, and respond to the globalized forms of television production. Together with these inherited practices, national elements that are embedded in the narratives contribute to create the feeling that these series are ‘of our own’.

3.4 DEFINING ‘TURKISHNESS’ IN THE 1990S AND NATIONAL ELEMENTS IN TURKISH TV SERIES

Contemporary fiction is considered by Enric Castello, Alexander Dhoest and Hugh O’Donnell among the genres that continuously refer to national elements and contribute to the constant construction of national identities. (Castello et al. 2009, p. 3) Even though questions surrounding the homogenization of media cultures and the disappearance of older forms of national identity are still debated in relation to globalisation, Castello et al. assert that “the national is still often reconfirmed on an everyday basis, in a common sense way of perceiving the world as divided into nations, a phenomenon which Billig (1995) names ‘banal nationalism.’” (Ibid., pp. 1-2)

Michael Billig explains that nationalism is frequently perceived as something political, emotional, extraordinary and threatening to the established national daily routine which is acknowledged as “banal, unexciting politically and non-nationalist.” (Billig 1995, p. 44) It is approached as something that belongs to ‘others’ whereas ‘our’ nationalism is regularly forgotten and dismissed. (Ibid., p. 49) However, Billig states that apart from the days of national celebrations during which nationhood is sufficiently flagged and national flags are consciously saluted “the identity is part of a more banal way of life in the nation-state.” (Ibid., p. 46)

According to Billig’s definition of banal nationalism, people do not forget their national identities because they are constantly reminded of their nations. (Ibid., p. 93) For him, “banal nationalism operates with prosaic, routine words, which take nations for granted, and which, in so doing, enhabit them. Small words, rather than grand memorable phrases, offer constant, but barely conscious, reminders of the homeland, making ‘our’ national identity unforgettable.” (Ibid.) So, it is these implicit, unwaved, unsaluted reminders of the nationhood which appear in everyday life without any significance that constitute the banal forms of nationalism.

Billig considers television screens as among the mediators that reflect the national symbols. (Ibid., p. 40) However, when the issue comes to television, according to Castello et al., the real question lies where the national is situated. Scholars who very often raise this question in relation to international adaptations of reality show formats appear to agree upon the idea that a ‘national’ or ‘local’ level to express the preferences of the local audiences and contexts lies underneath the standardized formats. They say “many elements ‘indigenise’ formats by either deliberately ‘flagging’ the nation or (more often) invisibly referring to it in a form of ‘banal nationalism’.” (Castello et al. 2009, pp. 2-3)

Apart from adapting international reality show formats, parallel to other countries around the world, Turkey has been producing domestic TV series by following the conventions of global genres, especially from the 1990s. However, while sharing elements with global genres, these domestic TV series are still strongly based on national elements. As Castello

et al. state, these elements could point at the national either very explicitly by ‘flagging the nation’ or very implicitly in the form of banal nationalism. (Ibid., p. 3)

On the one hand, Turkish TV series could flag the nation by referring to national celebrations in their course of events or by reflecting symbols of hot nationalism with their emphasis on contemporary political or military issues. On the other hand, expressions of banal nationalism could be seen in certain themes, trends and styles in Turkish TV series. Ayşe Öncü defines commercial television in Turkey as simply banal for reflecting the mundane, ordinary and trash of Turkish culture. (Öncü 2000, p. 297) Therefore, the mundane and ordinary themes, trends and styles that Turkish scholars utilized to construct ‘indigenous’ categories for Turkish TV series such as ‘family’ and ‘neighbourhood’ could be listed among the markers of the national in Turkish TV series. By considering the fact that scholars took an interest in these subjects in order to define what is ‘ours’ in the newly emerging forms of Turkish TV series in the 1990s, these themes, trends and styles could offer an insight into the question of where the national is situated in Turkish TV series.

However, before elaborating on the elements of banal nationalism in Turkish TV series in the 1990s, the mundane, ordinary and banal symbols of ‘Turkishness’ should be reconsidered with a particular concentration on the political environment in Turkey in the 1990s. As discussed in the first chapter, in the early years of the Turkish Republic, Turkish national identity was formed by the Kemalist elites by imposing modernization and Westernization from above without paying much attention to the traditions and practices of the people in Turkey. As Asu Aksoy and Kevin Robins state “from the perspective of the elite, these constituted a set of values in which all Turks could participate equally, and modern Turkishness would be constituted through this equal participation.” (Aksoy and Robins 1997, p. 1938)

However, as Aksoy and Robins explain the ‘real’ culture of the people which was religiously, ethnically, linguistically and culturally plural was neglected during this process. Therefore, even though the ‘real’ culture was heterogeneous and plural, the official culture which was imposed on people to form a unified national identity was

extremely homogenous. (Ibid.) Beginning from these early years of the Turkish Republic, national traditions and symbols have been disseminated for binding the nation. Symbols such as the Turkish flag, national anthem, representations of Atatürk or military marches were used in official national celebrations but also circulated at every branch of daily life as the ordinary markers of the Turkish nation.

By following Soner Çağaptay, Aslı Çırakman explains that by the 1930s, Turkishness was described in reference to three overlapping categories. First of all, the ‘territorial/secular circle’ defined all people living in the territories of Turkish Republic as Turks regardless of their ethnicity and religion. Secondly, all Muslims such as Kurds, Laz people and Circassians were accepted as potential Turks. Last but not least, the ethno-religious description of the nation basically denied the existence of other ethnic and religious identities. Çırakman states that later in the 1960s, the ultra-nationalist, Nationalist Movement Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*) built its political agenda on the idea of pan-Turkism. In this way, apart from its ethnic and racial connotations, Turkishness started to be associated with a Sunni Muslim identity. (Çırakman 2011, p. 1896)

These principles which were formed in the early years of the Turkish Republic constituted the backbone of Turkish nationalism in later years. To glorify the Turkish nation’s belonging to Turks on an everyday basis, national symbols were made explicitly visible in every segment of social life, from public squares to institutions like schools, hospitals or police departments. National symbols maintained their positions as the reminders of the denial of diversity and were used as shields against inner and outer threats to the unity of Turkish nation.

In a national setting like this, the Turkish flag could be seen hanging on the windows of shops, apartments or cars on ordinary days in Turkey. But the nation could be ‘flagged’ in order to protest against the inner and outer enemies such as “Kurds, the European Union, the USA, or political Islam, depending on the specific political agenda of the day.” (Ibid., p. 1898) So, although the visibility of national symbols on an everyday basis makes encountering these symbols ‘banal’ to a great extent, the line between banal nationalism

and hot nationalism is really thin in the Turkish context because hanging a Turkish flag at a shop window could easily turn into an extraordinary, passionate demonstration of hot nationalism against ‘the inner enemies’ of the nation and become a part of a ‘national’ movement.

Alternatively, Umut Özkırımlı explains that as the idea of a homogenous nation is a myth there is no single type of Turkish nationalism. He states that “the emergence of ‘Turkish nationalism’ was not a foregone conclusion but the product of a protracted process during which a number of alternative projects were in competition with each other.” (Özkırımlı 2013, p. 77) These alternative projects did not vanish after the foundation of the Turkish Republic. They continued to make new plans and waited for the right moment to come into power. Therefore, “in examining nationalism in contemporary Turkey, it is important to understand the struggle for hegemony and the ways in which different elites defend and promote their project.” (Ibid., p. 78)

Following Tanıl Bora’s determinations on Turkish nationalism, Özkırımlı lists five different nationalist discourses in Turkey in the 1990s: ‘official nationalism or Atatürk nationalism’, Kemalist nationalism or *ulusçuluk*, ‘liberal neo-nationalism’, ‘Turkist radical nationalism’ and ‘nationalism in Islamism’. Among these, ‘official nationalism or Atatürk nationalism’ is determined as “‘the root-language’ of Turkish nationalism.” (Ibid.)

In reference to Tanıl Bora, Özkırımlı states that this official nationalism pretends to be ‘civic’ with its emphasis on citizenship and territoriality. However, its approach to foreign disputes, national causes and issues of popular culture such as international sports competitions is highly essentialist and aggressive. Özkırımlı says that “pervaded by a perception of constant threat, which feeds a state of vigilance, this nationalism leans ultimately on the army and takes it to be its guardian/protector.” (Ibid.) Following Bora, Özkırımlı adds that this type of nationalism uses a highly rigid and stereotyped language. In order to compensate for this weakness, symbols of the nation state such as the national anthem, images of Atatürk, the Turkish flag and its emblems like the star and the crescent are consumed frantically in public life. (Ibid.)

Liberal neonationalism which is described by Bora as the offspring of the strong modernist-Westernizing vein of official nationalism with Kemalist nationalism (Bora 2003, p. 440) became the dominant nationalist discourse in Turkey in the 1990s. On the one hand, parallel to the modernist-Westernizing vein of official nationalism, liberal neonationalism believed in Turkey's elevation to the level of the developed, wealthy, Western countries and envisioned that this elevation could be achieved through Turkey's integration within the global market economy. On the other hand, its alliance with Kemalist nationalism equipped its discourse with Kemalist nationalism's reactionary attitude against the Islamic movement. (Ibid., pp. 438-439)

Correspondingly, parallel to the discourse of liberal neonationalism, the term 'White Turk' started to be used in Turkey in the 1990s and contributed to the "'market fetishism', 'welfare chauvinism' and 'class racism'" (Özkırımlı 2013, p. 79) that liberal neonationalism's emphasis on economic achievements caused in a short period. 'White Turk' was used in order to define the secular, urban classes who took advantage of the new economic policies of the government and enjoyed Turkey's integration with the global market economy. Different from the distanced tone of the discourse of classical elitism, White Turk discourse had a much more arrogant and aggressive language. With the appearance of the term White Turk, features of classical middle class elitism were transformed and "a bourgeoisie consciously limited by its dependence on the state and its artisan ideology was replaced by a bourgeoisie which knew no limits." (Bora 2013, p. 88)

Tanıl Bora explains that as a part of the White Turk discourse, "the naïve respect shown by the educated middle classes towards knowledge and culture was replaced by notions of success, career, efficiency and monetary value." (Ibid.) Lifestyle turned into a site of discrimination and showing off and the social 'others' started to be publicly ridiculed. Whereas the images of stylish, sexy women and good looking, smooth-faced men were presented as the portrayals of new Turkish people, the "caricaturized image of the hick or roughneck (*maganda* in Turkish) popularized the ill-treatment of dark, weak, and poor rural people with underdeveloped bodies." (Ibid., p. 89) Bora adds that clearly this image was promoted with an intention to express the otherness of Kurdish people and the lower classes. The low intensified war that was going on in the south-eastern region of Turkey

with the Kurdish PKK as well as the rising power of the Islamic thoughts and politicians could also be listed among the reasons behind the creation and promotion of these images as well as a discourse based on hate and ridicule.

The dominance of liberal neonationalism and its White Turk discourse in the 1990s directly influenced the representation of national specificities in media which was described by Arus Yumul and Umut Özkırımlı as a constant reminder of nationhood in Turkey. According to the research they conducted in 1997, nationhood is flagged in Turkish newspapers through the usage of the Turkish flag or the map as logos of the newspapers. The slogans that newspapers used beside their logos such as ‘Turkey for the Turks’ directly associated the readers with national identity. Besides, an explicit nationalist language was used in the coverage of national victories in international sports events or international achievements in other fields. ‘Home’ and ‘foreign’ were constantly divided by newspapers in their narration of the news. The inner and outer enemies were identified through the creation of an ‘us’ and ‘them’ dynamic and people were warned against the traitors as well as internal enemies. (Yumul and Özkırımlı 2000, pp. 789-800)

Mainstream television⁶ was not very different from the Turkish press in disseminating the nationalist discourse of the 1990s. In Turkish TV series of the 1990s, Turkishness continued to be reproduced in a homogenous, singular way either by neglecting or othering the diversity and plurality of the nation. Representation of Turkish national identity as a supranational identity and lack of ethnic/religious references from the narratives contributed to reproduce the nationalist discourse based on official nationalism on an everyday basis. This discourse was supported by the emphasis of Turkish TV series on certain themes and settings.

In the 1990s, Turkish TV series paid particular attention to representing their characters in small neighbourhoods or in large families. Kaya Akyıldız and Barış Ünlü state that people learn how to be and behave like a ‘Turkish’ person through certain channels like media, school, military, (Akyıldız 2012, p. 15) neighbourhood (*mahalle*), family and

⁶ As discussed in the first chapter, five television channels, Interstar (previously, Magic Box Star 1), Show TV, TGRT, Kanal D and ATV determined the mainstream in Turkey in the 1990s by addressing the highest number of audiences.

mosques. (Ünlü 2012, p. 23) Therefore, the emphasis of Turkish TV series on these themes and settings cannot be considered as accidental. Apart from choosing neighbourhoods or family houses as their settings, Turkish TV series intuitively reproduced ‘Turkishness’ through different channels such as the representations of sexuality and class distinctions. Especially in the second half of the 1990s, representations of sexuality were always monitored either by the state or by the TV broadcasters themselves through auto censorship and the emphasis on middle class characters on television series kept the secular, Westernized, ‘white Turkish’ image of the nation alive.

According to Alexander Dhoest, domestic fiction which functions as a mirror for the audiences allows them to look at themselves and reflect back their identities. However, this process is not as straightforward as it is frequently imagined. Dhoest says “television fiction is part of the national imaginary, not simply by ‘reflecting’ national specificities, but rather by constructing particular images, drawing on national culture, which, in turn, become part of this (socially constructed) culture.” (Dhoest 2007, p. 61)

National elements that are mentioned above constitute the foundations of banal nationalism that is embedded in the discourse of Turkish TV series in the 1990s. By both referring to and shaping the national imaginary, these national elements contribute to the dominant nationalist discourse of the period and shift in accordance with the political, economic and social changes in Turkey. Therefore, by keeping the specificities of the dominant nationalist discourse in Turkey in the 1990s in mind, these national elements are examined closer in the next sections as the constant reminders of the nationhood and its values.

3.4.1 Representation of ‘Turkishness’ as a Supranational Identity

From the beginning of television broadcasting in the 1970s, the state run TV channel TRT pursued the path of official Turkish nationalism. TRT controlled the content of television programmes strictly by monitoring the language and music that were used in the programmes. In this way, it continued to implement the modernization project of the

Kemalist elites from above (Aksoy and Robins 1997, pp. 1939-1946) and Turkishness was represented as a supranational identity on television.

Changes that came with the economic expansion and globalisation had a great impact on Turkish politics and culture in the 1980s. Asu Aksoy and Kevin Robins explain that as a consequence of these changes, the diversity of the ethnic and religious identities as well as the unofficial and repressed popular culture of the peripheries started to become more visible. The newly established private TV channels constituted a highly convenient platform to bring those identities into the forefront in the beginning of the 1990s. (Ibid.) Since their broadcasts were transmitted from abroad, private TV channels were not bound up with state regulations until their legalization in 1994. By means of this temporary freedom in decision making, they managed to represent the religious and ethnic diversity which was previously repressed by TRT.

The purpose behind representing the ‘real’ culture of the society was not ideological and mostly motivated by commercial as well as competitive reasons. (Ibid., p. 1945) Besides, as Sevda Alankuş Kural notes, even though sensational characters like the members of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) were shown on the private TV channels, the main purpose behind these representations was uncovering the enemy or forcing them to show their ‘true faces’. (Alankuş Kural 1995, p. 101) For that reason, the broadcasting decisions of private TV channels did not end up being a liberation movement. (Aksoy and Robins 1997, p. 1950) However, despite their flaws, the satellite broadcasts of the private TV channels played a significant role in giving repressed cultures and identities a voice. The officials of Turkish government were highly disturbed by this situation and their concerns did not only comprise the broadcasts of private TV channels. Since they could not control any broadcast coming from outside the country, the programmes of international TV channels also constituted high risk for them.

Aksoy and Robins refer to the concerns of the director of the Radio and Television Commission who says “if tomorrow CNN or some other channel were to broadcast *Midnight Express* [which was then banned in Turkey]; or what if the mayor of Los Angeles [who was an Armenian by origin] makes a speech attacking Turkey?” (Ibid.)

They also underline the incident with the London-based Kurdish channel MED-TV, which had to be removed from Eutelsat for a while because of pressure coming from the Turkish government. These concerns, which were raised as a consequence of the declining power of nation states under the influence of globalisation, paved the way for the creation of new threats which aimed at the unity of the nation.

In order to eliminate these threats, ‘Turkishness’ was reinvented as a supranational identity on Turkish television. Especially after the legalization of private TV channels in 1994, the nationalist discourse started to dominate mainstream television and all programmes were designed accordingly. As a consequence of this design, private TV channels continued to reflect the ‘real’ culture of Turkey by offering colourful entertainment programmes but they intended to avoid controversies by eliminating particular subjects which could be challenging for the dominant nationalist discourse. Therefore, apart from representing ‘Turkishness’ as an all embracing identity which comprised everybody living in Turkey regardless of their ethnic origins, cultures and languages, television channels frequently preferred to ignore diversity in an attempt to achieve this goal.

In a television environment like this, on rare occasions in which characters from different ethnic backgrounds appeared on television they were extremely stereotyped. Whereas many stereotypes were borrowed from Yeşilçam films which functioned as a character repository for Turkish TV series, their features differed from one ethnicity to another. The characters with a different ethnic background were majorly made known by their accents while speaking Turkish but other qualifications also played a significant role to represent them in a stereotypical way. These features changed depending on the agenda of Turkish politics of the period, according to which ethnic stereotypes were associated with good or bad qualities. In this way, the ‘others’ of the society were shaped in the way that the Turkish state would like to remember, recognize or define them.

As a part of this dynamic, ethnicities such as Istanbul Greeks or Laz people from the Black Sea region of Turkey were included in the narratives of Turkish TV series in stereotypical roles to fulfil certain duties. As Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver states, when non-

Muslim minorities appeared in Turkish TV series as side characters they were frequently depicted as performing some stereotypical jobs with which they were almost united. For instance, whereas Orthodox Christian, Istanbul Greek women usually appeared as tailors, men were seen as the owners of taverns (*meyhane*). (Tanrıöver 2008, p. 219) By means of performing these 'lost arts' of Istanbul's past, non-Muslim minorities were generally treated as rare antiques who were precious parts of the historical, cultural, touristic and folkloric 'mosaic' of Turkey. (Alankuş Kural 1995, p. 96)

Apart from depicting religious minorities as nostalgic, folkloric elements to remember Istanbul's past, (Tanrıöver 2008, p. 219) Laz people were recurrently included in the narratives of the Turkish TV series to function as comedy elements. Laz people's embracing the Turkish national identity as a supra identity by pushing their ethnicity into the background has always been represented as exemplary behaviour. For that reason, different from other ethnicities, Laz characters could be seen on major roles as they did in the popular Turkish TV series of the 1990s, *Mahallenin Muhtarları* (Mukhtars of the Neighbourhood, Kanal 6, ATV, Kanal D, STAR 1, 1992-2002). However, this did not change the fact that they were stereotypically depicted as restless, stubborn, chatty and less clever, (Alankuş Kural 1995, p. 103) even when they appeared as main characters.

In contrast with Laz people who have always been associated with naivety, goodness, loyalty and trustworthiness, Kurdish characters were usually depicted as rude, untrustworthy, sneaky and unintelligent. (Ibid., pp. 102-103) The rising Kurdish nationalism and the low-intensified war between Turkish state and the Kurdish PKK in the south-eastern region of Turkey had a great impact on these stereotypical representations. As Kural notes, in the 1990s it was impossible to see a Kurdish character in a Turkish TV series with a concentration on family relations or workplace issues. Kurdish characters could only appear in rare examples of Turkish crime series as 'external others' rather than as everyday people like government officials, neighbours or workers. (Ibid.) *Tetikçi Kemal* (Hitman Kemal, Kanal 6, 1993), starring the famous actor of Kurdish descent İbrahim Tatlıses, could be considered as an example of these early Turkish crime series.

Except these stereotypical roles, religious and ethnic diversity was not reflected in Turkish TV series in the 1990s. The main tendency of the mainstream television channels was to reproduce Turkishness as a supranational identity by neglecting the ethnically, religiously and culturally diversified nature of the country. By taking its power from the majority and the dominance of the Turks in the country, Turkish TV series on mainstream TV channels preferred to overlook diversity and plurality by presenting the all-embracing, homogenous and singular representation of Turkishness as the banal norm.

3.4.2 Representation of Islamic Figures and Practices

Religion has always been a problematic issue for television broadcasting in Turkey. By following the principles of the official, Kemalist nationalism which associates Islam with backwardness, TRT had always kept its distance from representations of Islam as well as issues concerning religion. After the establishment of private TV channels, apart from the sensational appearances of religious leaders on mainstream TV channels, Islamic TV channels solely focused on religious practices and topics by addressing a niche, conservative group of viewers. However, mainstream TV channels continued to keep their distance from these subjects by maintaining the TRT tradition. For that reason, Turkish TV series turned a blind eye to Islamic identities in the 1990s.

On the one hand, even though there were no visual indicators, the dominance of Islam as a theme among the characters was always present in series in the 1990s. Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver emphasizes that religious expressions like '*inşallah*' (if God lets) or '*Allah'ın izniyle*' (if God allows) were frequently used verbally. (Tanrıöver 2008, pp. 217-219) On the other hand, Tanrıöver adds that although the characters in the series were accepted as Muslims as a non-spoken fact, religious practices and lifestyles were almost never depicted. Women wearing their headscarves in Islamic ways or someone that makes a pilgrimage were not present in the narratives. Religion only became an issue in the series during the month of Ramadan. Even in that month, only the elderly were seen practicing religious fasting. In the religious holidays, even though the series mentioned the holidays their discourses generally referred to cultural practices such as visiting the elderly or reuniting with estranged relatives rather than religious practices. (Ibid.)

In this sense, whereas unveiled, secular female characters with an implicit Islamic identity dominated the narratives on mainstream channels, the representation of veiled women whose Islamic identities were visually distinguishable was not something that could be regularly found in Turkish TV series. In reference to Nilüfer Göle, Sevda Alankuş Kural explains that the veiling or unveiling of women was placed at the core of the Westernization of Turkey. In this sense, in the political and societal life of Turkey which was built on the dichotomies of traditional and modern as well as Westernized and Islamic, the unveiling of women has become the symbol of modernization or civilization whereas their veiling has been perceived as an opposition of these processes and having an Islamic identity. Therefore, for a long time veiled women had not been represented in any programme on television which was conceived as a mediator of modernization. (Alankuş Kural 1995, p. 97)

Alternatively, Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver explains that there were a lot of Turkish TV series that represented veiled women, imams, little boys who go to Friday prayer with their fathers, little girls who embroider for their future marriage or characters who perform prayer on Islamic TV channels such as STV or Kanal 7 in the 1990s. These TV series reflected the lifestyles of the middle class, conservative people living in the big cities or small parts of Anatolia in a much more realistic manner and audiences with more conservative and traditional lifestyles more easily identified with the characters in these series. (Tanrıöver 2008, pp. 231-232) However, even though these images were present on Islamic TV channels, they were not mainstream.

This difference between the mainstream and Islamic channels contributed to the conflict between the joint presence of diverse comprehensions of Turkish nationalism on television. On the one hand, mainstream TV channels reproduced the principles of official Turkish nationalism and designed their programmes accordingly. Religious practices and Islamic identities were ignored in Turkish TV series on these channels as a banal, everyday marker of official Turkish nationalism. On the other hand, Islamic TV channels which defined Turkish national identity with Islamic references challenged the dominant nationalist discourse with Turkish TV series that represent Islamic identities. By means of this separation, representing Islamic figures and practices was utilized to differentiate

secular and Islamic TV channels which built their brand identities on their diverse perceptions of ‘Turkishness’.

3.4.3 Representation of Sexuality and Public Morality

As one of the significant ingredients of Turkish national identity, public morality has always been a controversial subject for Turkish television broadcasting. For being among the major determinants of censorship and auto censorship, public morality was considered as an important criterion for adjusting the limits to represent intimate relationships and sexuality on television.

In the early years of the 1990s, during the short period of deregulation, together with many other issues sexuality stopped being a taboo on television. Apart from the soft porn films from Europe (Şahin and Aksoy 1993, p. 35) which were shown with the warning of a ‘red dot’ on the television screen, imported erotic programmes such as *Tutti Frutti* (1990-1993) appeared on Turkish TV channels. Some TV channels even produced their own erotic programmes like *Gece Jimnastiği* (Night Gymnastic, STAR 1) in which a Turkish actress, Yasemin Evcim, performed an erotic dance in aerobic outfits when the musical piece of Black Machine’s “How Gee” (1992) was heard in the background.

However, the Turkish state did not fall behind for taking this blast of eroticism under control with the establishment of RTÜK (Radio and Television Supreme Council) in 1994. (Kejanlıoğlu 2001, pp. 332-334) The era of ‘sexual revolution’ which began with the establishment of private TV channels ceased with the termination of the period of deregulation the same year. The ‘decency’ of television contents was ‘guaranteed’ by RTÜK. After that, the representation of sexuality on Turkish televisions became a problematic issue. Whereas imported films and TV shows were relatively less monitored, even seeing a couple kissing on the lips was rarely witnessed in Turkish TV series. ‘Decent’, ‘well-behaved’ young women were represented as if they were exempt of sexual desires. Homosexuality continued to be a taboo during that period and pre-marital sexuality was represented as something intrinsic to men and immoral, corrupted women or only mentioned as a part of a tragic scenario.

By internalizing the codes of censorship from Turkish films produced during the Yeşilçam period, (Özgüç 2006, pp. 316-318) Turkish TV series reproduced the taboos about representing sexuality on Turkish televisions. By means of RTÜK,⁷ the images of sexuality and nudity as well as the appropriateness of the images for public morals were always monitored. However, the relatively more limited control over foreign films and TV series in terms of their representation of sexuality created a binary opposition between what is ‘Turkish’ and what is ‘foreign’. This difference contributed to the banal nationality reflected from Turkish TV series and a line was implicitly drawn between what was appropriate for Turkish and ‘foreign’ characters to do.

3.4.4 Representation of Class Dynamics

Turkish TV series of the 1990s frequently depicted the “urban middle-class and upper-middle-class portrayals of private and public spheres in a secular manner.” (Yel and Nas 2014, p. 580) Dramedies such as *Bizimkiler*, *Ferhunde Hanımlar*, *Süper Baba* (Super Father, ATV, 1993-1997) or sitcoms which were frequently adapted from popular U.S. TV series revolved around the secular lives of the Westernized middle class characters who are described by Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver as kind and modest. (Tanrıöver 2008, pp. 225-226) Being middle class was the norm of that period and it was represented by certain symbols based on secular values. Dichotomies such as modern and traditional, urban and rural or Westernized and non-Westernized reflected everyday dilemmas of the Turkish nation and were utilized in Turkish TV series in order to point at class distinctions.

The headscarf which symbolized religion, backwardness and ignorance in the official nationalist discourse was frequently attributed to female characters from lower classes. Whereas middle or upper class, young, educated Turkish women were always unveiled, veiled female characters, who were only seen wearing their headscarves in a ‘traditional’ or rural way rather than in an ‘Islamic’ way, happened to be either the senior members of the family or lower class members of society such as home workers, wives of janitors, or residents of shantytowns. (Alankuş Kural 1995, p. 98) In this way, not only stereotypical

⁷ RTÜK is supposed to be unbiased in principle but since its directors are appointed by Turkish government its neutrality is a regularly debated issue in Turkey.

images of veiled women were created through class distinctions but also ‘White Turkishness’ found a ground to be represented in the image of the secular, Westernized, upper middle class characters in the Turkish TV series of the 1990s.

3.4.5 The Conception of Family

In Turkish TV series of the 1990s, family was regularly presented as a significant platform through which shared national values and public morals were learned and performed. In most of the series, the values and morals that were shared and performed by the members of the family were glorified. Especially the middle class family was portrayed in an idealized way, to be taken as an example of how to behave and relate to each other.

Especially in dramedies which focused on community relations, the middle class family was depicted as the core of goodness and love through which all these values could spread to the whole community. Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver states that in these kinds of series, despite the small tensions between family members, everything could be worked out for good. Mischief always comes from outside the family and goes without damaging the core of family and community relations. (Tanrıöver 2001, pp. 94-99)

Family values were glorified in other genres apart from dramedies. In Turkish crime series which revolve around mafia leaders and their enforcers, the family was represented as a place where the protagonists finally had a chance to relax. The importance of the family was directly emphasized in these series with the depiction of villains without a family. (Ibid., p. 96) In this sense, having a family and spending time with family members have been represented among the daily routines of national life and have contributed to the banal nationalist discourse reflected by Turkish TV series.

3.4.6 The Conception of the Neighbourhood (*Mahalle*)

Mahalle might be considered as a distinctively national element in the Turkish context. As Amy Mills explains, “in Turkey, the traditional urban neighbourhood is a space which extends the interior space of the family to the residential street; it is a space of belonging

and collectivity.” (Mills 2007, p. 336) Mills adds that *mahalle*, which signifies intimate space and extended family, is also a part of collective identity. Therefore, *mahalle* is a place in which Turkishness is evidently performed and provides a useful setting for Turkish TV series as it is a highly familiar and significant feature of everyday life in Turkey.

As Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver asserts, in the 1990s, *mahalle* was used in Turkish TV series to represent a unity and a natural passage from one place to another by transferring a feeling of safety to its audiences who find similarities in the series with their real lives. *Mahalle* provided continuity between indoors and outdoors as well as between private and public space. A character in a series could be frequently seen going out from his home, greeting his or her neighbour on the way and doing grocery shopping in the neighbourhood store, as in real life. (Tanrıöver 2001, p. 95)

Additionally, *mahalle* was not only useful to build a connection with the everyday lives of the audiences but also practical to include multiple characters in the narratives. According to Sevilay Çelenk, community relationships were especially emphasized in Turkish TV series in order to include characters from diverse professions such as doormen, apartment managers, fruit sellers, grocers, housewives or teachers, as well as different social roles like fathers, mothers or students. In this way, the producers tried to present a variety of characters for each audience to easily identify with and to increase ratings. (Çelenk 2001b, p. 329) *Mahalle* served this purpose greatly since it contained a variety of characters from diverse professions, genders and ages.

In this sense, *mahalle* offered the opportunity to depict the families, neighbours, residents and shopkeepers in the neighbourhood as members of an extended family who were always ready to help each other out and be there for each member of the neighbourhood in good and bad days. (Tanrıöver 2001, p. 95) The significance of this element was even reflected by the titles of popular dramedies such as *Bizim Mahalle* (Our Neighbourhood, TRT 1, 1993- 2002) and *Mahallenin Muhtarları*. Due to these features, *mahalle* was an ideal setting for reproducing Turkishness in accordance with the principles of official nationalist discourse in an implicit way. By accepting each character as a member of the

community, *mahalle* reflected the ideal image of the Turkish nation in which everyone lived in peace and harmony without any ethnic or religious difference and in obedience with national values.

By means of the national elements that are listed above, Turkish TV series not only attract the interest of Turkish TV audiences but also evoke the feeling that Turkish TV series are ‘our own’. Alexander Dhoest states that “while all TV fiction does refer to recognizable national clichés and ‘typical images’ to a certain extent, its real power lies in the less noticeable representations of everyday. These may not be perceived as ‘typically national’ by the viewers [...], but still lead to recognition.” (Dhoest 2007, p. 73) Affirming Dhoest’s remarks, Turkish TV series frequently practice the conventions of global genres such as dramedies, soap operas and police procedurals by basing their narratives on the national elements. These elements do not grab the attention at first sight but contribute to the indigenization of global genres via creating a ‘local’ level. By being banal reminders of the nationhood, they become the unwaved, unsaluted markers of official Turkish nationalism which constitutes the backbone of the dominant national discourse of the 1990s.

The ‘local’ level is achieved in Turkish TV series in the 1990s by reproducing Turkishness as the supranational identity. These series avoid including ethnically, religiously diversified characters and Islamic figures to their narratives in order to support the homogenous, secular and all-embracing articulation of Turkish national identity. Besides, they enable the performance of Turkishness in a banal manner by depicting the characters in relation to their families and neighbours as well as allowing the reproduction of cultural and moral values without any challenge.

These ‘less noticeable’ national elements clearly point out where the ‘national’ is situated in Turkish TV series and constitute the backbone of the indigenization of the global genres. Early Turkish police procedurals which are formed as local responses to the global police procedural genre are born out of this perpetual interplay between the global and

the local. However, since this formation is not an automatic practice, the indigenization process brings other issues and reactions to be discussed.

3.5 EARLY TURKISH POLICE PROCEDURALS

As Margaret Rogers cites from John Tulloch, the television police genre is formed by national discourses rather than global discourses as its iconography which is composed of specific uniforms, vehicles, equipments and weapons as well as a particular police jargon and urban landscapes, reflects national attributes and cultural contexts. (Rogers 2008, p. 81) However, in addition to these iconographic discourses, national elements and familiar tactics of storytelling were embedded in early examples of the Turkish police procedural genre to ensure cultural verisimilitude and address as many viewers as possible. In this way, they achieved to offer a generic fictional world while simultaneously reproducing particular norms and values of ‘Turkishness’ and evoking familiar sensations.

The police procedural genre started to be practiced on Turkish television at the end of the 1980s. However, since archiving is one of the significant problems of the Turkish television industry it is not possible to access all episodes of the early Turkish police procedurals. Some of them are mentioned in newspaper columns and television pages or in interviews with the television broadcasters of the late 1980s, but their visuals cannot be reached although some of them can be unexpectedly found on online repositories like YouTube or Daily Motion.

For instance, *Kanun Savaşçıları* (Crime Fighters, TRT, 1988) is among the earliest Turkish police procedurals broadcasted on TRT for 243 episodes. However, except its opening credits and its music which was composed by Cahit Berkay, a highly famous and respected Turkish musician, there is no footage of the series in online repositories. What can be assumed is that since it was shot on 35 mm film it was archived by TRT in its original form but it was not digitized. Besides, due to the fact that TRT charges an exorbitant fee for bringing out these visual materials from the archives, it is not possible to watch *Kanun Savaşçıları* today. However, the episodes of *İz Peşinde* (In Pursuit of a

Trace, *TRT, 1989*), which was produced following *Kanun Savaşçıları* and broadcasted on TRT for 20 episodes, can easily be found online. Therefore, when the issue comes to Turkey and the archives, finding archival footage is usually all about accidents and coincidences.

What can be inferred from watching early Turkish police procedurals like *İz Peşinde* is that these series follow the global police procedural formula and reflect national attributes at the same time. Apart from presenting familiar iconographies which are designed in harmony with the national context, most of the national elements that are mentioned above are tacitly embedded in their narratives.

3.5.1 Pointing at the ‘National’ in *İz Peşinde*

Since *İz Peşinde* is the most easily accessible series it constitutes a valid case study for shortly discussing how national elements are embedded in the narratives of early Turkish police procedurals in the 1990s. *İz Peşinde* explains the investigations of three police officers from the homicide bureau, two plain clothed male partners Tuncer (Mehmet Aslantuğ) and Esat (Osman Yağmurdereli) who are active in the field and one female cop Naşide (Gülen Karaman) who usually helps them in the premises of the precinct. *İz Peşinde* usually follows the ‘whydunnit’ formula in which the criminals are known to the audiences from the beginning and the police investigation reveals why they committed the crimes. The reasons behind the murders that these police officers investigate vary from inheriting a fortune to drug abuse and espionage.

Stylistically, *İz Peşinde* offers a recognizable look to the Turkish audiences. The nationalist undertone hidden in the reactions of the characters against the committed crimes contributes to the ‘us’ and ‘them’ dynamic between the cops and the criminals. This dynamic is visually supported by the influence of melodramatic modality on the narrative. By means of shooting techniques such as camera movements, acting, lighting and editing, *İz Peşinde* represents the drama of policing as a national duty in certain ways. In this way, the series evokes familiar sensations by ‘looking like’ late Yeşilçam films.

In terms of content, for being broadcasted on the state-run television channel TRT, *İz Peşinde* represents the attributes of the official, Kemalist national identity. Turkishness is frequently reproduced in the series as a supranational identity by the lack of ethnically diversified characters. Only in episode 6, a famous singer and actor from Kurdish descent, İbrahim Tatlıses, shortly appears as a guest star. His south-eastern accent and usage of everyday slangs like ‘*bacım* (my sister)’ in addressing women constitutes great contrast with the ‘correct’ and ‘beautiful’ Turkish spoken by the police officers. His songs in the *arabesk* genre are briefly heard in the background. However, instead of being included in the cast as a fictional character, Tatlıses plays himself in a subplot in which Naşide organizes a special night of entertainment for the police department. As a part of this subplot, Tatlıses is invited to sing as the special guest of the night. When Tatlıses talks to Naşide on the phone he accepts the invitation by stating that he is always at the service of the police department. In this way, the series reproduces an ‘acceptable’ version of Kurdishness as a part of which Turkish state and its departments are honoured and respected.

By contributing the official, Kemalist nationalist discourse, *İz Peşinde* ignores the presence of Islamic identities and practices in a similar manner. Although as in episode 6, the characters frequently use expressions like ‘*annen seni Kadir Gecesi mi doğurdu?* (did your mother give birth to you on *laylat al-qadr*?’, ‘*senin de hangi kibleye namaz kıldığın belli değil* (it is impossible to guess which direction of Mecca you turn towards in performing prayer)’ which have Islamic references. In this respect, Islam as the dominant religion of the nation is referred to as a national element in the narrative of *İz Peşinde* as an implicit marker without being visualized.

Apart from these, family relations and everyday lives in neighbourhoods are occasionally mentioned in the narrative of the series as national markers. Since the private lives of the main characters are insignificant there is very little emphasis on these issues. However, the importance of the family is implicitly underlined by Naşide’s humorous remarks on Esat’s lifestyle in episode 1. Esat’s only concern is to hang out in taverns after work and have casual relationships with different women. Naşide, who is introduced in the very beginning of the show as an engaged woman soon to be married, does not approve of

Esat's lifestyle and thinks that it is time for him to get married and have children. Besides, Tuncer who is a married man himself frequently makes fun of Esat's bachelorhood which is presented as an inappropriate lifestyle.

The significance of the neighbourhood and family is also underlined in the dialogues of the side characters like the victims or the suspects. For instance, in episode 3, when a male friend offers a young female university student a lift home she declines the offer by stating that she lives in a conservative neighbourhood with her family and if people saw them together they might talk. In a similar way, the class dynamics are not brought to the forefront but included in the cases that the police officers work on. Different lifestyles of upper and lower class characters contribute to the liberal neonationalist discourse of the 1990s. Whereas upper class characters are seen drinking alcohol on a regular basis, spending time in discos and restaurants or having 'Westernized' hobbies like horseback riding, lower class characters are depicted as living modest lives. Female characters from lower classes are usually seen covered, wearing their headscarves in a traditional or rural way.

By means of these features which banally point at the 'national' in the series, *İz Peşinde* harmonizes global conventions of the police procedural genre with local particularities on a textual and stylistic level. The series also underlines that it functions as a local response to a global genre which is mostly accepted in the Turkish context as an 'American' invention due to the high number of imported American police procedurals on Turkish TV channels. This reflexive self-acknowledgment of being a response is particularly emphasized in episode 6, when Esat tries to break into the apartment of a suspect. In an attempt to open the door, Esat routinely inserts his police identity card into the lock. When Tuncer asks him what he is doing he replies that this is the method that is used in the American films. He says that he knows that the method works but does not know the trick. After a brief experiment with the lock, he gives up. At the same moment, Tuncer realizes that the door is already open and gives Esat a mocking look.

This ambivalent dispute with the American police procedurals frequently infiltrates in the narratives of Turkish police procedurals and reveals itself in the form of an intrinsic

rivalry or a repressed yearning to be recognized and appreciated by Western countries, particularly by the U.S. The behind the scene stories of the television producers who created early Turkish police procedurals explicitly disclose this ambivalent linkage which plays a significant role in the development of the police procedural genre in Turkey.

3.5.2 Behind the Scene Stories: Creating Police Procedurals like the American Ones

The ‘behind the scenes stories’ of the producers frequently reflect the yearning to create Turkish police procedurals equal in quality with the imported, mostly American, ones. By expressing their ambitions and goals in interviews or newspaper articles, Turkish producers do not only reiterate the banal dichotomy between ‘national’ and ‘foreign’ but also contribute to the formation of an implicit nationalist discourse outside the texts. They also expose the hidden tension and the complex dynamic between ‘global’ and ‘local’ which has been embedded in the narratives of Turkish police procedurals almost as a theme in later years.

For instance, in an interview conducted with Emin Gerçeker, the director of *Kanun Savaşçıları*, he explains that his fundamental goal is to make people say ‘we can create good police procedurals too.’ When the interviewer mentions that police procedural is not a common genre in Turkey and asks Gerçeker how the team has been prepared for the show, he replies that the police procedural genre is an essential part of the film and television industries in an international sense and adds that “although we did not encounter popular police procedurals in Turkish cinema and television very often we are not going to discover America all over again. When we take a look at film history Commissar Maigret which was performed by Jean Gabin, police characters that were played by Alain Delon, or police figures in Humphrey Bogart’s films in the earlier periods were remarkable. Crime films have templates such as action, thriller, atmosphere, lighting and verisimilitude. We are going to apply these templates.” (“Emniyet dosyalarından” 1988, p. 4)

Gerçeker's statements concerning the production of *Kanun Savaşçıları* reveal the influence of the 'foreign' on Turkish police procedurals. According to Gerçeker's words, the narrative formulas of the popular imported police procedurals of the 1970s and the 1980s together with the American and European crime films were taken as 'models' for the formation of Turkish police procedurals. The aspirations of these early producers to make police procedurals of equal quality to the Western, mostly American, ones pointed at a much more sensitive dilemma embedded in the formation of Turkish national identity and revealed the ambivalent discourse that Turkish nationalism formed on the idea of the 'Western other'. The profoundness of this issue is supported by the correspondence of the ambitions of Turkish TV producers with the motivations of the Yeşilçam filmmakers whose only dream was making films like Hollywood.

While explaining the textual and industrial dynamics of Yeşilçam, Savaş Arslan applies the concept *hayal* which refers to the Eastern screen that is used in Karagöz shadow plays and literally means "image, imagination, dream and spectre" (Arslan 2011, p. 18) in Turkish. By doing that, Arslan explains how cinema in Turkey has developed by the interweaving of the traditional and the modern as well as the realistic and the spectral. Yeşilçam's aspiration to be like Hollywood and its desire to make films like those that are made in the West are intertwined with the processes of nation building in *hayal* which as a concept expresses how cinema as a Western form is developed in a non-Western country in relation to "its own particularities and peculiarities." (Ibid.)

However, as Arslan explains, "considering the illusionistic, three-dimensional realism of Western cinemas, Yeşilçam faced the impossibility of success in its dream of making films like those of Hollywood" (Ibid., p. 148) and created local films with Turkified tactics which were preferable for the Turkish audiences. Similar to the realization of Yeşilçam filmmakers, early broadcasters of Turkish police procedurals already knew that they could not compete with the works that they aspired to. Affirming this realization, in an interview conducted with Cüneyt Arkın, the legendary actor of *Cemil* (1975) and the leading actor of the police procedural TV series *Polis* (Police, STAR TV, 1992), he was asked if Turkish police procedurals can compete with the foreign ones. Arkın gives an evasive reply by saying that these foreign TV shows are produced by very well developed

industries with big budgets (“Gerektiği Kadar Vurup Kıracağım” 1992, p. 20) implying that Turkish police procedurals did not have a chance in this competition from the start.

Despite this realization, similar to Yeşilçam films, police procedurals continued to be produced by Turkish producers with Turkified tactics. By means of these tactics, global conventions of the police procedural genre were harmonized with particular elements that banally point at the ‘national’ in the narratives and traditional ways of storytelling. Like Yeşilçam films, the outcome of this combination offered Turkish TV audiences a television experience which was familiar and interesting. Therefore, Turkish police procedurals kept their places on Turkish television channels but also faced very harsh critiques.

3.5.3 Criticizing Early Turkish Police Procedurals

In the 1990s, the motivation to create police procedurals like the American ones resulted in the constant questioning of Turkish police procedurals in terms of quality. The early works of the genre were persistently compared to their Western counterparts by the critics who sometimes found them lacking, wannabe or copycat regarding both their narratives and production. In 1997, a newspaper reporter, Bahar Tanır, prepared an exclusive column, entitled “we are down and out of police procedurals” in order to answer the question, ‘why police procedural TV series of high quality cannot be produced in Turkey’.

The report is constituted of the responses of three Turkish screenwriters. Necef Uğurlu says that whereas police procedurals in the West criticize the police department as an institution, in Turkey, while explaining the decency of the police department, very ‘primitive’ methods have been used. Tarık Dursun K. says that there are no police procedural TV series of high quality in Turkey because the crew members do not work meticulously. He adds that even in a low budget Hong Kong film, the filming is supervised by an expert. Avni Özgürel explains that the important thing is creating verisimilitude, raising social awareness and moulding public opinion, (“Polisiye Fakiriyiz” 1997, p. 28) from which it may be inferred that these are the qualities that are not fulfilled by the Turkish police procedurals. In this way, Turkish police procedurals

were not only found to lack in quality due to the financial and organizational incapability of the Turkish television industry but they were also perceived as inferior in comparison with their Western counterparts.

Later in the 2000s, Sevilay Çelenk approached the situation from another perspective. Rather than focusing on the quality of the series, she proposed that even though Western police procedural TV series such as *Simon and Simon* (1981–1995), *Detective Marlowe* (1983–1986) and *The New Mike Hammer* (1984–1989) were aired in the 1990s on Turkish television channels, they do not have an original connection with ‘our’ indigenous traditions of storytelling. For Çelenk, despite some exceptional works, crime fiction has been a popular genre neither in Turkish literature nor in Turkish cinema or television. Although she appreciates Turkish police procedural TV series such as *İz Peşinde*, *Rıza Beyin Polisiye Öyküleri* (Police procedurals of Mr. Rıza, TRT, 1988) and *Karanlıkta Koşanlar* (Runners in the Dark, TRT, 2001), she claims that these are exceptional works and generally there are no works in Turkey that satisfy the generic conventions of the police procedural/detective TV series. She asserts that after the establishment of private TV channels in Turkey some executives tried to produce Turkish police procedural TV series but they were not successful because of socio-cultural factors which prevented the genre to preserve its traditional structure. (Çelenk 2005, pp. 294-295)

Çelenk claims that police procedural/detective TV series rely on class conflicts that require an extreme polarization of differences and discrimination. However, for Çelenk, the relationships between lower classes that are constituted of servants, chauffeurs, cooks, waitresses or babysitters and privileged upper classes are generally very different in Turkey in comparison with the West. Çelenk asserts that in Turkey the relationships among these different socio-cultural classes are not transitionless and have not been institutionalized. According to her, upper classes can dine, communicate and be friends with lower classes in Turkey, which limits the construction of side stories in police procedural/detective narratives, prevents the formation of a mysterious atmosphere and disrupts verisimilitude. Therefore, these relationships can only appear as humorous elements in Turkish productions. (Ibid., p. 298)

For Çelenk, the narratives of police procedurals which heavily rely on analytic and scientific reasoning correspond with the social relations and lifestyles of the societies in which the police procedural genre has been developed; thus the requirements of crime narratives such as creating a tension through collecting evidence, interrogating and researching can find a correspondence in the ‘realities’ of these societies whereas in Turkey they cannot. Çelenk mentions that although there are very well developed forensic science departments in Turkey, the processes of collecting evidence etc. cannot be properly managed in real life. Therefore, even though forensic science is a significant method that is used in crime solving, it cannot be properly used in Turkish police procedurals because when forensic science is used in Turkish narratives it does not seem ‘realistic’. (Ibid., p. 299)

Additionally, Çelenk says that because in Turkey there have been no private detectives until very recently, Turkish police procedural/detective narratives as well as TV series are not well developed. She believes that in Turkey, even in literature, rather than focusing on forensic events and affiliations, only the stories of marginalized lives, subcultures and experiences of ‘societal others’ were told in the narratives. For her, in Turkish TV series such as *Yılan Hikayesi* (Endless Story, Kanal D, 1999-2002) in which police officers, commissars and law enforcers are the protagonists, the narratives are detached from the generic requirements and codes of the police procedural/detective series. (Ibid.) For that reason, Sevilay Çelenk suggests that the police procedural genre cannot be successfully adapted in the Turkish context because of the incompatibility of Turkish culture with the generic conventions of the genre.

Çelenk’s statements regarding the status of the police procedural genre in Turkey correspond with her attempt to define the new forms that appeared on Turkish TV channels in the 1990s by separating them from their ‘global’ inspirations. By means of this attempt, Çelenk intends to define Turkish TV series as an ‘authentically’ local category, unsullied from outside influences. In a similar manner, the critiques that target Turkish police procedurals for being less qualified than their Western counterparts or for imitating them embody an intrinsic yearning for an ‘authentically’ local TV series which would be much better in quality than imported police procedurals but also freed from their

impacts. Instead of trying to understand the blend of ‘local’ and ‘global’ elements in Turkish police procedurals, these assertions aim to ignore this productive intermingling in an attempt to separately define the global and local features of the police procedural genre in an essentialist manner.

However, when Turkish police procedurals are approached from another perspective which reckons with the interplay between the global and the local, the discussion about the status of the police procedural genre in Turkey could be pursued in a much more constructive manner. For instance, by adopting this approach, and contrary to Çelenk’s statements, it can be claimed that *Yılan Hikayesi* is a significant example which combines the atmosphere of a precinct and police work with a highly traditional subject like honour killing in a distinctively Turkish way.

Yılan Hikayesi tells the story of a police commissar, Memoli (Mehmet Ali Alabora), whose character closely mimics Martin Riggs (Mel Gibson) in *Lethal Weapon* (dir. Richard Donner, 1987) which was regularly broadcasted on Turkish television channels in the 1990s. Memoli, who lost his son in a shooting incident which was related to a case that he worked on, is suicidal, similar to Riggs who lost his wife in a car accident. Following Riggs, Memoli does not care about living and puts himself in danger by behaving recklessly at work but prevented by his strongly optimistic partner Commissar Cem (Nail Kırılmaz) and his Chief Commissar Kemal (Süleyman Turan).

In the first episode, Memoli meets a young village woman, Zeyno (Meltem Cumbul), who is actually from Memoli’s village. Zeyno was married to Erkan (Emre Kınay) in order to stop the honour killings that had been going on between their families for ages. However, Erkan was only married to her in order to take her virginity and leave her with a tarnished reputation. It was a part of the revenge plan that he conducted with his family. In the morning of the wedding night, Zeyno wakes up alone and finds out about Erkan’s plan. So, she leaves her village to go to Istanbul in order to find Erkan and kill him. In this way, Erkan who started to work for his uncle’s criminal organization in Istanbul becomes the common point between Zeyno and Memoli.

Its slight imitation of *Lethal Weapon* and its Turkification of this appropriation by using national elements, traditional themes, motivational love stories and melodramatic modality might be considered as an exemplary work of how the police procedural genre is adapted in the Turkish context. For that reason, Turkish audiences kept watching *Yılan Hikayesi* until it turned into a phenomenon in Turkey. After that, almost every TV channel started to broadcast a Turkish police procedural. Although most of them did not last long and were cancelled after 10 episodes, this did not stop producers from creating new police procedurals and some of them became extremely successful in the coming years.

Early Turkish police procedurals appeared at the end of the 1980s by combining global conventions of the genre with national elements and traditional forms of storytelling. Apart from being local responses to a global television genre at textual and stylistic levels, the ambitions of their producers and the difficulties that they faced created a particular discourse around these early works and opened a whole new platform to discuss the formation of the genre in the Turkish context. As a consequence of constant comparison of Turkish police procedurals with their Western counterparts, this discourse strongly focused on the incompetency of domestic productions in comparison to the Western examples of the genre. The reason behind this incompetency was either associated with the financial and organizational deficiencies of the Turkish television industry or the inconsistency between the generic conventions of the police procedural genre and the essentials of the ‘authentic’ Turkish culture. Even though Turkish police procedurals continued to be produced despite these demeaning reactions, this discourse remained an influential factor in the formation of further examples of the genre in the following years. This issue is profoundly discussed in the next chapter while focusing on contemporary Turkish police procedurals.

3.6 CONCLUSION

From the 1980s, under the influence of globalisation, the Turkish television industry felt the need to change and be innovative. The state run television channel TRT responded to this call by diversifying its television programmes, outsourcing the production of particular programmes to private production companies and making new collaborations. Whereas these changes greatly contributed to the proliferation of Turkish TV series, with the establishment of private TV channels the expansion of Turkish TV series industry was accelerated significantly.

When the number of Turkish TV series increased, television scholars started to work on this new phenomenon by trying to understand these new cultural forms. Their initial attempt was to separate these local forms from the influences of the global and to find new definitions and generic categories in an attempt to authenticate Turkish TV series. However, since globalisation ends up proliferating new cultural forms rather than eliminating them, these new kinds of Turkish TV series were actually the domesticated and indigenized variations of global television genres.

In this sense, instead of trying to understand what makes Turkish TV series ‘local’ by differentiating them from the global, the locality of the Turkish TV series could be understood by accepting their glocalised formations and looking at the elements where the ‘national’ is situated in these series. By getting inspiration from the implicit and banal markers of ‘Turkishness’ and the determinants that have been used to define Turkish TV series in an isolated manner, a set of textual and stylistic national elements are suggested in this chapter. These are specified as the reproduction of Turkishness as a supranational identity, the representation of Islamic identities and practices, the account on public morality, and the depiction of class dynamics as well as family and neighbourhood values. In this way, an attempt was made to acknowledge banal nationality in Turkish TV series which enables to define these series as ‘our own’.

By utilizing these national elements as reference points, early Turkish police procedurals are introduced as local responses to the global police procedural genre. Apart from

concentrating on the textual and stylistic features of the limited productions which are accessible on Internet repositories, the discourse that is created around these early works in the 1990s is brought to the forefront. The specific subjects of this discourse which highlight the perpetual ‘dream’ of producing Turkish police procedurals like the American ones and the constant demeaning of domestic productions by the critics against their Western counterparts are particularly emphasized at this point, in order to be further referred in the next chapter.

However, neither the national elements that are introduced in this chapter nor the discourse that is created around Turkish police procedurals in these early years of production is fixed or immune to change. An analysis which covers the period of intense globalisation is crucial to understand under which conditions Turkish police procedurals were developed in the 1990s. But in order to elaborate more on this issue the transformation of Turkish TV industry in the 2000s parallel to the political, economic and social changes in Turkey should be examined in detail.

For that reason, next chapter focuses on the changing symbols, traditions and characteristics of Turkish national identity in the 2000s together with their effects on the Turkish television industry. Apart from considering the ‘renewed’ representations of national elements in Turkish TV series, the next chapter profoundly discusses the status of the Turkish police procedural genre in this transformed television scene and examines the formation of the genre under the influence of the changing interplay between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’.

4 THE POLICE PROCEDURAL GENRE AND THE CHANGING DYNAMICS OF TURKEY IN THE 2000S

Turkey has undergone numerous changes following the post-1980s period. Together with the rising neoliberalism and conservatism in Turkish society, policies of the ruling *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party, JDP) which came to power in 2002 accelerated these changes. The JDP's intention to redesign Turkish national identity in accordance with neo-Ottomanist, Islamic and neoliberal values has not only altered the national scenery ever since but also profoundly transformed the Turkish television industry and culture. Under the influence of this changing political environment, new national symbols and discourses appeared in the everyday life in Turkey. As a consequence of this appearance, the national scene started to be represented differently in Turkish TV series. In this sense, in order to further elaborate on the formation of the police procedural genre in Turkey, this chapter partially focuses on the transformation that Turkey has undergone in the 2000s.

Many different factors play significant roles in determining the nationalist discourse in Turkey in 2000s. However, the most influential element transforming the national narrative in that period is the JDP's politics. For that reason, the chapter mainly focuses on the JDP's nation building process in order to draw a clear picture of Turkish national life in the 2000s, and discuss the changing discourse around the Turkish police procedural genre. By referring to the same topics that listed in the first chapter to explain the foundations of Turkish national identity in the early republican years, the chapter intends to describe the JDP's attempts to redesign Turkish national identity. Since the Turkish national scene has considerably changed after the coup attempt on July 15, 2016 and keeps changing at the time of writing, this chapter only focuses on the nationalist discourse constructed before this event.

After focusing on how the Turkish political scene has changed in the 2000s, the chapter concentrates on the influence of these changes on the Turkish television industry. By questioning the impact of economic growth and the JDP's foreign policy on the

development of the Turkish television industry, the chapter opens the ground to discuss the expansion of the Turkish TV series industry in the 2000s. On the one hand, the chapter discusses how the growth of the Turkish economy and JDP's neo-Ottomanist foreign policies contributed to the expansion of Turkish TV series to foreign markets. On the other hand, it questions how the rising conservatism and authoritarianism caused censorship issues.

Once the necessary background is established, the chapter concentrates on the influences of these transformations on localisation practices. National elements that are embedded in Turkish TV series are reintroduced since the changing national narrative from the 1990s to the 2000s has a great impact on the representation of banal nationalism on television. In this way, the chapter finds a chance to discuss how the JDP's new policies for redesigning the national scene expand the scope of national elements with the inclusion of new symbols, themes, regulations and stereotypes. The chapter concludes by focusing on the transformation of contemporary Turkish police procedurals under these new conditions of television broadcasting and investigates how the appropriate usage of national elements has become a significant criterion for commenting on contemporary Turkish police procedurals.

4.1 RISING NEOLIBERALISM IN TURKEY AND ITS HISTORICAL LEGACY

In the 2000s, Turkey was transformed to a great extent. Together with many other political, social, economic and cultural factors which exceed the scope of this thesis, the politics of the JDP government played a major role in this transformation. The JDP won the general elections in 2002 by getting 34.3 per cent of the votes. The party increased its votes to 46.6 per cent in the general elections in 2007 and gained 49.8 per cent of the votes in 2011. In all these elections the majority of seats in the Parliament belonged to the JDP. (Özbudun 2014, pp. 156-157) This majority did not only give the JDP the upper hand in deciding Turkey's future as a predominant party but also reduced the functionality of the opposing parties in the parliament.

Beginning from JDP's victory in 2002, Turkey started to experience serious changes in every branch of the social, political and economic segments of life. However, apart from being related to the developments in the worldwide arena which are examined later in this chapter, these changes were closely related to the historical legacy that the JDP inherited from previous governments and political movements. According to Jenny White, the transformation of Turkish society proliferated following the military coup in 1980. (White 2014, p. 8) With the establishment of the 'democratic' government by Turgut Özal's *Anavatan Partisi* (Motherland Party) in the early 1980s, transition from a state controlled to a market oriented economy was initiated. As a consequence of the radical financial decisions that were made by Turgut Özal's government, Turkey joined the countries experimenting with neoliberal politics.

Neoliberalism is described by David Harvey as a system of thought which assumes that individual freedoms can only be protected by freedom of the market. The freedom that is emphasized in this thought system "reflects the interests of private property owners, businesses, multinational corporations, and financial capital." (Harvey 2007, p. 7) Inspired by the theories of scholars such as Milton Friedman, working at the University of Chicago in the 1950s, business elites started to design the economy of their countries in line with neoliberal ideas beginning from the 1970s. Chile was among the first countries in which neoliberal policies were practiced after General Pinochet's coup in 1973. The outcome of this experimentation was the privatization of public assets, natural resources and social security as well as the facilitation of foreign investment and trade. (Ibid., p. 8)

David Harvey states that in the 1980s, neoliberal politics were intensified under the administration of Margaret Thatcher in Britain and Ronald Reagan in the U.S. However, despite being highly influential, the 'imperialistic' politics of Thatcher or Reagan only played a partial role in the dissemination of neoliberalism in the rest of the world. For Harvey, the reason behind the worldwide neoliberal turn after the World War II was to redesign the class dynamics in favour of the economic elites. In an attempt to avoid socialist thoughts and tendencies, the new world order which was constructed with the establishment of international organizations such as International Monetary Fund (IMF)

and the World Bank contributed to form “the right blend of state, market, and democratic institutions to guarantee peace, inclusion, well-being, and stability.” (Ibid., p. 10)

As Zuhale Yeşilyurt Gündüz emphasizes, following the oil crisis in the 1970s, Turkey went through some serious financial problems which were intensified by “high inflation, unemployment, and debt rates, turning Turkey to near-bankruptcy.” (Yeşilyurt Gündüz 2012, p. 273) The conditions left the country no choice other than accepting the IMF Standby-Agreements in 1978 and 1979. (Ibid., pp. 273-274) In January 1980, a radical policy package was formed under the governance of Süleyman Demirel’s *Adalet Partisi* (Justice Party). The package was recognized as ‘24th January Decisions’ and predicted the liberalisation of Turkish economy. Turgut Özal, acting as the chief of the State Planning Organization, played an important role in the formation of this package. (Pamuk 2006, p. 286)

Although the military intervention on September 11, 1980 delayed the full implementation of the ‘24th January Decisions’, Turgut Özal managed to go through with this economic plan as the newly elected Prime Minister in 1983. Turgut Özal’s personal and professional background which switches between public and private sectors as well as international organizations like the World Bank made him the right person to lead this process. (Öniş 2004, p. 115) As Şevket Pamuk underlines, along with many reforms to liberalize trade and payments regimes, foreign capital was promoted as part of Özal’s plan. International agencies such as IMF and World Bank supported the changes which were implemented by means of this package and encouraged the neoliberal turn of Turkish economy. (Pamuk 2006, p. 288)

On the short term, the implementation of this policy package showed positive outcomes. As Ziya Öniş states, Özal’s neoliberal economic plan resulted in drawing an optimistic picture of Turkish economy by decreasing the role of the state on financial matters and encouraged entrepreneurship. (Öniş 2004, p. 130) However, as David Harvey underlines, the tensions and contradictions that are embedded in the theory of neoliberalism have various outcomes such as favouring business opportunities and the stability of the financial system over public interest and environmental quality. (Harvey 2007, pp. 70-71)

Besides, by contradicting the theoretical emphasis of neoliberalism on individual freedom, neoliberals perceive democracy as a luxury. For that reason, Harvey states that neoliberal policies frequently end up restricting freedom of the masses in favour of looking after the interests of a few business elites. (Ibid., pp. 66-70) In a similar manner, during the period of transition to neoliberalism, “the failure to pay sufficient attention to democracy, institutions and the rule of law, in spite of the advantages that it offered in the early stages, has been costly for the Turkish economy in the course of the subsequent decades of Turkish neo-liberalism.” (Öniş 2004, p. 130) Financial crises which hunted down Turkish economics in the 1990s and in the beginning of the 2000s were among these costly consequences during that period. (Ibid., p. 128)

Besides, apart from transforming the dynamics of Turkish economy, neoliberalism redesigned the power relations between Islamists and secularists. With the infiltration of neoliberal policies in Turkish economy in the 1980s the strict barrier between secular and Islamist segments of the business world was weakened. One of the main goals of Turgut Özal in implementing neoliberal policies was strengthening the hand of Islamist businessmen against the dominance of secularist capitalists in the business world. By means of carrying out the policy package of the ‘24th January Decisions’, he managed to achieve that goal.

Şevket Pamuk notes that during that period of transition, regional industries which were located in small towns of Anatolia managed to produce high amounts of products by paying low wages for long working hours without being threatened by unionization. These industries were particularly specialized in textiles and became very successful with little financial support from the state and foreign investors. Their owners were mostly pious Muslims, supporting an Islamist political party and organizing under Islamist business associations. Eventually, they turned out to be so effective that the media started to call them ‘Anatolian Tigers’. (Pamuk 2006, p. 291)

Other than transforming the conditions of survival on the Turkish market, the ideological tendencies of the ‘Anatolian Tigers’ proliferated the visibility of Islamic lifestyles. Jenny White states that the wealth of these pious businessmen “created a market for Islam-

friendly bourgeois products and lifestyle (an Islamic economic sector) and initiated a Muslim cultural renaissance in fashion, lifestyle, leisure activities, novels, media, and music.” (White 2014, p. 8) In this way, a new Muslim political and economic elite has developed in Turkey and challenged the Kemalist understanding of national identity as well as the power of the secular bourgeois. The lifestyle of these pious elite businessmen and their families was full of “references to a romanticized imperial Ottoman past, but also self-consciously modern and even trendy.” (Ibid., p. 37)

Together with the power of neoliberal policies to redesign class dynamics, Turgut Özal’s Islamist roots also contributed to lift the boundaries between secular and Islamist segments of the population. Before establishing the Motherland Party, Özal was a member of *Milli Selamet Partisi* (National Salvation Party) which eventually turned into the dominant Islamist party, *Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party), and had close relationships with religious sects. Therefore, his sole aim was forming a convenient environment for stirring up the competition between Muslim capitalists and the secular bourgeoisie which had close ties with Western-oriented capitalism. (Yashin 2003, p. 232) Besides, after the military intervention, the army encouraged Turgut Özal to allow more freedom for Islamic thoughts in order to repress the socialist and communist movements among Turkish youth. In this sense, Özal’s government as well as the army redesigned the political field with an intention to build a ‘Turkish-Islamic Synthesis’. (White 2014, p. 8)

According to Simten Çoşar, the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis was “the basic socio-political ingredient of the post-1980s neoliberal structure in Turkey.” (Çoşar 2012, p. 73) This ingredient was supported by certain reforms such as the redesigning of the education system with the inclusion of compulsory religion courses in the curriculums of primary and secondary schools. The religion that was taught in these courses was Sunni Islam. As a consequence of this new formation, morality started to be defined in Sunni Muslim terms and Turkish nationalism, which was already overemphasized in school textbooks, was redefined by presenting Muslimhood as a predominant ingredient of Turkishness. (Ibid., p. 79)

The JDP takes its power from this neoliberal turn of Turkish economy and politics that was initiated by Turgut Özal and the army from the 1980s. Together with the ideological background of this transformation, the legacy of the Islamist movement *Milli Görüş* (National Vision) was also influential in constructing the political discourse of the JDP. According to Jenny White, National Vision has been the major Islamist movement in Turkey. Getting its inspiration from the party platform that was written by the Islamist politician Necmettin Erbakan in 1975, National Vision established a strong connection between Islam and nationalism. (White 2014, p. 39)

White states that National Vision's perception of Turkishness was chauvinistic and featured racist elements emphasizing Turkish blood and history. The Ottoman Empire was perceived as the origin of the civilization of Islam and helped to imagine a modernization process that did not originate in the West. In this way, "Milli Görüş [National Vision] used Turkey's Ottoman Muslim heritage to construct a modern religio-ethnic Turkish national identity." (Ibid.) In terms of economy, the followers of National Vision demanded the lifting of state control over economic activities and supported individual entrepreneurship and small businesses. (Ibid.)

National Vision was not an underground Islamist movement but existed in the political party system. Several political parties were founded by Necmettin Erbakan such as *Refah Partisi* (the Welfare Party) which gained a great victory in the municipal elections in 1994 by winning multiple mayorships. (Ibid., pp. 39-40) Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who became the mayor of Istanbul in these municipal elections, united with Abdullah Gül and founded the JDP in 2001 after leaving National Vision. They were among the reformists who claimed that they "have abandoned Milli Görüş [National Vision] altogether, including both its ethno-nationalist and Islamist views, and to have become a conservative democratic party." (Ibid., p. 46) However, the legacy of both Turgut Özal's neoliberal policies and the ideology of National Vision played significant roles in constructing the new narrative of the Turkish nation after the JDP won the general elections in 2002.

4.2 THE ‘NEW’ NARRATIVE OF THE NATION AND THE CHANGING SYMBOLS OF TURKISH NATIONAL IDENTITY AFTER 2002

The new narrative of the Turkish nation was built upon under the influence of two significant determinants: neoliberal policies that were implemented by the JDP governments and the rising emphasis on the inherited Islamic features that are embedded in Turkish national identity.

In this period, neoliberal policies were adopted more vigorously than in the 1980s. In an attempt to make Turkey a regional power which has a say in the world politics, a new neoliberal world order was installed by means of the new economy plan of the JDP in the beginning of the 2000s. During this era, which is defined by Ziya Öniş as the JDP’s golden age, Turkish economic growth was extremely high. Significant steps had been taken in democratization including the recognition of the language and culture of the Kurdish citizens (Öniş 2015, p. 23) as well as the reorganization of the civil-military relations and the acknowledgement of conservative, religious communities. (Öniş 2013, pp. 105-106)

Together with the transformation of the Turkish economy, these democratization movements contributed to strengthening a new, conservative business elite which eventually challenged the power of secular business owners. Öniş explains that this situation contributed to the creation of a more pluralistic economic and political order in Turkey. (Ibid., p. 106) In this way, the JDP showed a successful example of how Islam can be integrated in the global market economy and received the votes of the conservative middle classes along with those of the lower classes. (Keyman 2010, p. 324)

During the JDP’s golden age, Turkish foreign policy had been based on having no problems with the neighbouring countries. Turkey had a major and effective role in mediating regional and global problems. All these developments of Turkish politics on different fronts, including economy, democratization and foreign policy, also contributed to the process of Europeanization and encouraged the prospect of becoming a formal member of the European Union (EU). (Öniş 2015, p. 23) Besides, the JDP’s relationships

with international organizations like IMF and the World Bank contributed to the party's more intense internalisation of neoliberal policies.

Filiz Zabcı explains that in comparison to previous governments, the relationship between Turkey and the World Bank continually increased after the JDP came into power. The structural reforms of the World Bank were strengthened. The strong commitment of the JDP to international organizations like IMF and World Bank paved the way for the government to receive positive comments from these powerful institutions. For IMF and the World Bank, the JDP's single party government reduced the risk of economic instability in comparison to coalition governments which had been the general trend in Turkish politics in previous years. The JDP government was perceived by these organizations as the guarantor of economic stability. (Zabcı 2012, p. 255)

According to Simten Çoşar, the JDP's strong relationships with international organizations and its commitment to the EU accession process in its early years made it easy to call it a liberal party. However, whereas the JDP preserved its image as a liberal government abroad, domestic politics were dominated by another discourse which emphasizes Islam, Muslimhood and Turkishness in essentialist terms. Çoşar underlines that these two sides coexisted in the JPD politics. (Çoşar 2012, pp. 80-81) Consistent with this position, the party politics shifted "between a liberal approach to individual rights and liberties on the one hand, and an authoritarian stance in matters concerning the Muslim-Turkish identity politics on the other hand." (Ibid., p. 82)

This shifting position started to reveal itself more intensely after the general elections in 2007. Ziya Öniş explains that in the early years of its rule, parallel to its understanding of globalisation via the European route, the JDP made reforms in democratization. In later years, its enhanced economic relations with the Middle Eastern and North African countries and the decline of the EU's impact on Turkish politics caused a shift in the JDP's understanding of 'globalism' (Öniş 2013, p. 114) and 'democratization'. What the JDP started to acknowledge as 'globalism' became a more Asian style of 'globalism' "where economic success through global integration and diversification of markets still occupies the centre stage, but combined with a less ambitious or minimalist understanding of

democracy.” (Ibid.) Eventually, Turkey started to rely more on religious and conservative values and less on reformism on the democratization front. (Ibid.)

As Jenny White emphasizes, then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan started to use ‘militantly nationalistic language’ from 2008 when the JDP’s reformation process ceased. Instead of emphasizing cultural rights, he said “Turkey is ‘one nation, one flag, one country’ and ‘whoever doesn’t like it can leave’” (White 2014, p. 52), mostly addressing the Kurdish citizens. For White, the reason behind using this nationalist language was to gain the nationalists votes in the upcoming elections of March 2009. After doing well in the elections, the JDP toned down its nationalist discourse and a new project of Democratic Opening was brought into force. By means of this project, some democratic rights were given to Kurdish citizens such as the establishment of the first Kurdish language television channel and the restitution of the original, Kurdish names of some villages. (Ibid.) This shifting approach of the JDP, which has been changing from election to election in order to gain as many votes as it can from different segments of society, is why Ziya Öniş describes the JDP’s performance on the democratization front as mixed. (Öniş 2015, p. 23)

According to Ziya Öniş, beginning from the general elections in 2011, the cycle that began with the party’s golden age started to be reversed. (Öniş 2016, p. 142) On the economy front, the pattern that Turkish economy follows is described as slow and fragile, and surrounded by considerable risks. The ‘zero problems with neighbours’ formula of the earlier period has been completely deserted and Turkey has gradually become an isolated country with serious security risks. On the democratization front, the JDP replaced its earlier motivation for democratisation with an authoritarian drive and started to monopolise power. (Öniş 2015, p. 24) Subsequently, it became extremely difficult for the opposition parties to challenge the JDP’s power and what appeared in Turkey is “a steady decline in freedom of expression and media freedoms, showing a deep intolerance for any kind of active opposition.” (Ibid., p. 25)

Ziya Öniş explains that this situation has been accompanied by the increasing use of physical police force as a reaction to organized protests and the politicisation of the

judicial system which resulted in raising serious concerns about the objectivity of the courts and the security of justice. Therefore, Öniş suggests that “the ‘new post-Kemalist Turkey’ in the most recent phrase of AKP [Justice and Development Party] rule has moved to a new mode of illiberal democracy where formal institutions of democracy exist, but a civilian majority with religious conservatives as its dominant constituent element is increasingly monopolising power and restricting the space for the rest of society in an unequal political contest.” (Ibid.)

As a result of this atmosphere, anti-government protests peaked with the occupation of Gezi Park in Istanbul’s Taksim Square in the summer of 2013 and followed by several others all around Turkey. The country called an election on June 7, 2015 with this background in mind. In these elections, the JDP’s votes dropped to 40,87 per cent. The seats that the JDP gained during this election were not enough for the party to form a government on its own. So, the JDP was forced to make a coalition with other parties, namely *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican People’s Party), *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (Nationalist Movement Party) and *Halkların Demokratik Partisi* (Peoples’ Democratic Party). However, the general elections were repeated on November 1, 2015 as the parties could not establish a coalition in the designated time period.

According to Ziya Öniş, in these second general elections, the politics of fear came to rescue for the JDP. On the one hand, the delay in establishing a coalition government brought back fearful memories of instability in people’s minds. The financial crises that were frequently experienced under the administration of coalition governments in earlier periods raised concerns and the single party government seemed the only choice to avoid economic instability. (Öniş 2016, p. 151) On the other hand, developments in regional geopolitics caused anxiety among the public and contributed to the politics of fear. The chaos at the Syrian border of Turkey enforced the JDP to participate in the coalition against ISIS alongside the U.S. and other Western allies. However, the JDP used this partnership “as an occasion to attack the PKK as part of the all-around campaign against terrorist groups.” (Ibid., p. 150) The ceasefire between the state and the PKK collapsed right after the elections on June 2015 and the Eastern and South-eastern regions of Turkey

started to re-experience the violence of the 1990s as a result of the armed clash between the PKK and Turkish security forces. (Ibid.)

Under this atmosphere of fear and anxiety, the JDP “called for a strong majority government as the surest base for security and stability, and voters responded. Pluralism and freedom of expression had moved down on the list of public concerns.” (Ibid.) The JDP changed its discourse by overemphasizing nationalism and increased its votes to 49.48 per cent in these elections and got the majority to continue governing Turkey as a single party. For the other half of the population that did not vote for the JDP, the dissatisfaction with the existing governance of Turkey, especially on the democracy front, continued. As Öniş states, in the quasi-stability that was maintained after the elections on November 2015, “restrictions on speech and the media are expanding while various segments of the opposition are being repressed, all in the name of order and stability.” (Ibid., pp. 152-153)

Consequently, it can be claimed that the historical legacy of rising neoliberalism in Turkey and the changing dynamics of the new world order played major roles in the formation of the new national narrative of Turkey in 2000s. As Ziya Öniş points out, the intensive economic and identity crisis in the EU played a significant role in the growing disbelief in Western style democracies. Therefore, “the declining appeal of Western-style liberal democracy has left a vacuum that nationalist-populist leaders such as Russia’s Vladimir Putin, Hungary’s Viktor Orban, India’s Narendra Modi, and Turkey’s Erdoğan are filling.” (Ibid., p. 141) Together with the neoliberal policies that the JDP put in practice to closely seize the new world order, the changing tendencies in world politics strengthened its power in Turkish politics despite the rising authoritarianism that this power brought with it.

Besides, Simten Çoşar states that “what distinguished the post-1980 turn in the state-religion interference was the shift in the official ideology from Islam as a passive ingredient of Turkish national identity to a dominant ingredient in the shaping of nationalist discourse.” (Çoşar 2012, p. 76) The JDP effectively utilized this formula after the general elections in 2002. By presenting Islam as a predominant ingredient of

‘Turkishness’, the JDP initiated a series of nation building processes in order to offer an alternative to the Kemalist formations of Turkish national identity. Apart from establishing the necessary ground to obtain the consent for implementing new neoliberal policies, these processes changed living in Turkey on various levels.

The tactics that have been used in putting these nation building processes in practice in the ‘new neoliberal Turkey’ were not very different from the ‘old Turkey’ of the Kemalist regime. Whereas in the ‘old Turkey’ religious and conservative communities had problems with freely expressing their identities, in the ‘new Turkey’ secularists groups and ethnic/religious minorities such as the Kurds and Alevis have the same problems. (Öniş 2013, p. 107) Therefore, considering that the JDP took recourse to similar strategies for social engineering as the Kemalist modernization project, it is meaningful to refer to the same topics that were elaborated on in the first chapter while discussing the formation of Turkish national identity in the early Republican Era. In this way, the transformation of Turkish national identity under the rule of the JDP could be distinguished in an explicit manner.

4.2.1 The ‘New’ Origins, Continuity, Tradition and Timelessness

In Kemalist discourse, Turkic groups, located in ancient Central Asia, were accepted as the origin of the Turks (Yashin 2002, p. 11) and Turkish national identity was built on this idea. By refusing any ties with the Ottoman Empire, the Kemalist discourse accepted the old Turkic groups as the ancestors of the Turks. In the JDP era, this national discourse was partially transformed with the revitalization of Islam as a dominant ingredient of Turkishness. As a consequence, the Ottoman past started to be accepted as the origin of the ‘new’ Turkey.

According to Ceren Özselçuk, in the discourse of the JDP, the nation is described as a transcendent and sacred entity which refers to a mythical, historical origin and a repressed authentic descent from which people were alienated. Surely, the origin that is referred to is the Ottoman one. However, Özselçuk adds that even though the Ottoman Empire is determined as the ‘authentic’ origin of the Turkish nation, this origin could loosely extend

to the Battle of Malazgirt in 1071 in which the Turks conquered their first soil in Anatolia or to the 9th century when the Turks chose Islam as their religion. For Özselçuk, these changing references concerning the origin of the nation signify that it could travel back and forth in time. In this sense, the JDP could be ideologically integrated with different fronts such as the nationalists for whom the origin of the Turks is determined by the ‘Turkish History Thesis’ (*Türk Tarih Tezi*) or the supporters of the Turkish-Islam synthesis and pan-Islamism. (Özselçuk 2015, pp. 88-92)

Apart from finding a new origin or several different origins for the nation, the JDP emphasized the continuity and timelessness of the Turkish nation under its rule. In order to highlight its existence and crucial role in the future of the ‘new’ Turkey, in 2012 the party published a declaration. In this statement, it explained its vision of the future Turkey in the year of 2023 which is the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Turkish Republic. In this declaration, the party’s promises in the political and social arenas as well as foreign affairs were listed (AK Parti 2012) and an attempt was made to create a new perception to secure the JDP’s role in the future of Turkey. Although Erdoğan as well as his fellow party members frequently refer to their goal to carry Turkey to 2023, similar to the changing origin narrative this date sometimes extends to 2053 which corresponds to the 600th anniversary of the conquest of Istanbul (“Erdoğan '2053 vizyonu' ve oy oranlarını açıkladı” 2013) and to 2071 which coincides with the 1000th anniversary of the Battle of Malazgirt. (“Başbakan: ‘Hedef 2071’” 2012)

4.2.2 The Invention of ‘New’ Traditions

Similar to the Kemalist tradition, during the time of its governance the JDP invented new traditions for the nation in order to direct the national identity to a more conservative and Islamic path. In the early Republican era, markers of the War of Independence were determined as the national holidays and new national traditions were ‘invented’ (Hobsbawm and Ranger 2012) to celebrate these significant days. Under the rule of the JDP, along with preserving the old, republican traditions, new traditions have been created in order to strengthen the nation’s ties with its Ottoman past and Islamic origin.

Among these traditions, glorious celebrations of the anniversary of Istanbul's conquest in 1453 played a significant role for "the reintegration of Ottoman history in Turkish national memory." (Maessen 2014, p. 309) This event, which was previously dismissed by the official, Kemalist history for being a part of the Ottoman past, was first embraced by the Welfare Party following Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's election as the mayor of Istanbul in 1994 and continued to be celebrated with more enthusiasm after the JDP came into power in 2002. The anniversary is celebrated ever since, becoming more and more glorious every year and tightening the nation's ties with its Ottoman past.

Alternatively, Defne Karaosmanoğlu states that the ceremonies to celebrate the conquest of Istanbul "reflect an alternative history, which not only glorifies the Ottoman past, but also makes the event a part of Islamic history." (Karaosmanoğlu 2010, p. 287) Following Alev Çınar, Karaosmanoğlu explains that celebrating Istanbul's conquest shows an intention to form an alternative national identity based on being Ottoman and Muslim and centres this identity in Istanbul instead of Ankara which is the centre of the secular republican national identity. (Ibid.) Therefore, the celebrations of Istanbul's conquest do not only intend to revitalize the Ottoman past but also aim to create a new national tradition with an emphasis on Islam as the religion of the nation. With this objective in mind, Islamic festivities started to be officially celebrated under the rule of the JDP.

For instance, even though Ramadan festivities have always been a part of social life in Turkey, with the revitalization of the Ottoman past and the JDP's emphasis on Islamic values these festivities changed shape. Ramadan festivities which were celebrated more indoors among family members in the past were carried to the outside and became commercialized from the 1990s. As Defne Karaosmanoğlu explains, luxurious hotels in Istanbul as well as ordinary restaurants started to present *iftar* menus during the month for breaking the feast. The supermarkets began to sell *iftar* packages. Even globalized fast food chains like Burger King and Mc Donald's started to offer *iftar* menus during Ramadan. The historical centre of Istanbul, Sultanahmet turned into a vital place for celebration. In Sultanahmet, local and global products are consumed side by side by bringing the past back in a different shape and creating a new discourse around Ottomanness. (Ibid., pp. 284-296)

In a similar attempt to include Islamic festivities in the nation's everyday life, the Prophet Muhammed's birthday started to be celebrated as the Holy Birth Week (*Kutlu Doğum Haftası*), between the dates of April 14 and 20. Jenny White suggests that many people perceived the JDP's effort to celebrate the Holy Birth Week as an attempt to create a counter event to the celebrations of the National Sovereignty and Children's Day on April 23 which is one of the cornerstones of Kemalist traditions. (White 2014, p. 9) In a similar attempt, in 2016, The Siege of Kut Al Amara, a long forgotten battle between the British and Ottoman Armies, was revitalized with an official celebration of the Ottoman Army's victory in this siege on April 29, 1916. With this revitalization, the JDP not only aimed at replacing the national holiday on April 23 but also to invent another tradition for the 'new' Turkey which does not only have Islamic and Ottoman connotations but also separates the nation from its republican past. (Atay 2016)

4.2.3 The 'New' Foundational Myth

In the early republican period, the foundational myth of the nation was accepted as it was written in Mustafa Kemal's *Nutuk* which explained the national narrative of Turkey by emphasizing the heroic stories from the War of Independence and creating a national myth around the image of Atatürk as the founding father of the nation. After the victory of the Welfare Party in the municipal elections in 1994, as an Islamic alternative to the secular foundations of the nation, the Ottoman heritage started to be put forward to create a new foundational myth for the Turkish nation.

Similar to the early republican goal to build a national myth around Atatürk's own image, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's image is frequently promoted as a counter 'father figure' for the nation. In his public speeches, Erdoğan quite often attacks the politics of Atatürk and the political, social and cultural developments in Turkey under his rule. However, as Nick Danforth explains, these attacks strongly resemble Atatürk's attacks on the Ottoman Sultans on the edge of the establishment of Turkish Republic. For Danforth, the governmentality of the early Turkish Republic and the contemporary Turkey under the rule of Erdoğan appears similar in many different ways. The control of mass media in favour of Erdoğan, Turkey's drift to illiberal democracy, the dismissal of the rights of

minorities and opposing groups and Erdoğan's constant emphasis on the inner and outer enemies of the nation make Erdoğan's 'new' Turkey meet on a common ground with the early republican Turkey. (Danforth 2015)

In this sense, it can be asserted that similar to the creation of the early republican foundational myth around the image of Atatürk, the new foundational myth of the 'new' Turkey is intended to be formed around the image of Erdoğan as the 'alternative father figure' for the nation. Erdoğan's frequent usage of the pronoun 'I' in his public speeches and the glorification of his image by his fellow party members also contribute to the proliferation of this intention.

4.2.4 'New', Pure and Original Folk

As a part of the Kemalist national discourse, villagers and village life were glorified by being described as the masters of the nation. By the mystification and glorification of Anatolia as the origin of the Turks, villagers as the residents of this space were acknowledged as the pure and the original folk of the Turks. However, this discourse gradually transformed during the governance of the JDP, parallel to the changes in the state politics concerning the economy. As an extension of the neoliberal governmental policies, instead of the villagers and the residents of Anatolia devoted to agriculture, the JDP built the narrative of the 'new' nation on the neoliberal middle class.

As Tahir Abbas and İsmail Hakkı Yiğit explain, during the JDP era, religion and consumerism have gone hand in hand and reshaped the modern Muslim in the shadow of a newly gained confidence. With the empowerment of the Muslim middle classes, Turkey has undergone some serious social changes which also transformed the experiences of neo-liberalism, Islamism and Kemalism. (Abbas and Yiğit 2015, p. 72) In Jenny White's words, under the JDP rule, pious Muslim families who have been actively involved in the globalized economy and politics started to live their lives side by side with secular families. Today, there are no clear boundaries between pious and secular families as there were in the past. Pious families are involved in consumerism and in the other signifiers of being modern as much as secular, urban elites. (White 2014, p. 121) So, this extensive,

modern, consuming mass, consisting of Muslim and secular middle class people, has gradually replaced the glorified villagers as the pure and original folk.

Together with the changing neoliberal world order, the historical legacy of the post-1980s shaped Turkey's future considerably. The rising neoliberalism which peaked after the JDP came to power in 2002 required to be in close contact with international organizations, foreign investors and countries and this close contact intensified globalisation processes in Turkey. Parallel to this development, the shifting class dynamics between Islamist and secular segments of the population as an after effect of the JDP's neoliberal policies transformed the national scene. Kemalist formations of Turkish national identity were challenged as a consequence of the revitalization of Islam as a predominant ingredient of Turkishness. The JDP, which took power from its Islamist background, intended to redesign the narrative of the nation based on neo-Ottomanist, neoliberal and Islamic values.

This redesign also meant the invention of the 'local' in a new manner with the addition of new national symbols. On the one hand, this new design was inspired by the traditional Islamist nationalist discourse which is described by Tanıl Bora as a discourse that positions the Muslim community above the nation state. Bora explains that the traditional Islamist nationalist discourse imagines Turkey as the potential leader of the Islamic world. In this context, the Ottoman Empire is perceived as a nostalgic item and "a modern and nationalistic imperial (or irredentist) fantasy." (Bora 2003, p. 449) Bora says that "The specific point of Islamism is that it assumes religious identity to be the differentiating element, the backbone of the nation and of 'being national' (*millilik*). In view of this, Islam (actually, 'Turko-Islam') is viewed as the core of authenticity of the Turkish national identity." (Ibid.)

On the other hand, the nationalist discourse of the JDP was not completely freed from the values of official, Turkish nationalism. Soli Özel, quoted by Jenny White, explains that Kemalism has an incredible ability to reproduce itself in different times in different shapes

and it reproduces itself in the nationalist discourse of the JDP as well. For him, like Erdoğan's former party, the Welfare Party, the JDP is actually a Kemalist party with an Islamic character because it does not question any dogmas of Turkish nationalism such as "the sanctity of sovereignty, borders, inbredness." (White 2014, p. 194)

In this sense, it can be stated that the JDP builds the new narrative of the Turkish nation on Islamic, neo-Ottomanist and neoliberal values by inventing a new origin, a new foundational myth, a new description of the national folk and new traditions. However, this new national narrative still relies heavily on the acceptance of Turkishness as the supranational identity by denying the ethnic and religious plurality of the nation. The Turkish flag is still used as a significant national symbol in every segment of life and the common belief that the nation is constantly threatened by inner and outer enemies is still reiterated by nationalist discourse. So, even though the Atatürkist ideas and early republican values have been essentially dismissed by the JDP, the foundational structure of official Turkish nationalism continues to constitute the base of its contemporary nationalist discourse.

Enno Maessen explains that similar to Kemalism, the JDP tries to implement its own project of social engineering on the Turkish nation. Especially by referring to the 'transformative' intentions of the JDP such as raising religious generations, Maessen builds a connection between the aim of the Kemalists to create secular and modern people and the JDP's aim to transform the outlook of the future generations. However, Maessen finds the discourse of Erdoğan and the JDP paradoxical because, while it suggests that Islam and the Ottoman past unite the nation of the Turkish Republic, it also preserves the foundations of the nation by reiterating the boundaries that were drawn by Kemalism. (Maessen 2014, p. 319)

Consequently, what can be inferred from Maessen's and Özel's words is that in 2016, not only different forms of Turkish nationalism continue to battle for dominance in Turkey but also different nationalist discourses coexist in the dominant nationalist discourse of the JDP. On the one hand, the narrative of the nation is redesigned with an emphasis on Islamic, neo-Ottomanist, neoliberal values. But on the other hand, the residual

foundations of official, Turkish nationalism continued both in the nationalist discourse of the JDP and the Turkish public. This new blend of Islamic, neo-Ottomanist, neoliberal values with the residues of official, nationalist discourse infuses into the everyday life of the nation and makes itself visible in different ways. The Turkish television industry can be considered among the most significant mediators of this new blend, which not only shapes the industry but also transforms the components of the national elements embedded in Turkish TV series.

4.3 TURKISH TV IN THE 2000S

In the 2000s, the Turkish television industry was affected by the politics of the JDP government in different ways in different periods. For instance, during the golden age of the JDP, the television industry benefitted from the globalisation of the Turkish economy and its growing expansion. However, with the rising authoritarianism from 2011 and onwards Turkish TV channels live in an environment of constant threat of penalization or even termination. Therefore, it is logical to elaborate on the development of the Turkish TV industry in the 2000s by stressing the changing political environment in different periods.

Between 2002 and 2007, the Turkish television industry greatly benefitted from the JDP's progressive politics. Thanks to the developments on the democratisation front, the Turkish television scene gradually became a much more diversified and multi-vocal platform in comparison with the 1990s. Parallel to the economic progress, the Turkish TV industry rapidly grew. A variety of television programs were added to the daily schedules and the number of private television channels raised considerably. As Mustafa Sönmez explains, by 2005, 16 national, 15 regional, 53 cable and on total 260 television channels were broadcasting in Turkey. (Sönmez 2006)

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, the Turkish media scene has been reshaped from top to bottom in the 1990s and started to be dominated by the vertically integrated conglomerates. (Öncü 2000, p. 303) From the early 2000s, these vertically integrated conglomerates increased their power over the Turkish media scene. Ayşe Akkor Gül

observes that by 2004, small media groups slowly disappeared and control over the Turkish media scene was allocated to four major and four minor media groups which not only controlled the television market but were also active in other sectors such as finance, transportation, insurance and trade. Because of their strong links to other sectors, media conglomerates approached broadcasting as a financial and political investment. For them, owning a television channel or a newspaper meant having political power. (Akkor Gül 2011, p. 29)

Gül points out that by 2004, the Turkish media scene was dominated by the Doğan Group, Merkez Group, Çukurova Group and Star Group. These four conglomerates controlled around 80 per cent of the market. 75 per cent of the advertising revenues belonged to the television channels owned by these corporations and were shared among *ATV*, owned by Merkez Group, *Kanal D*, owned by Doğan Group, *Star TV*, owned by Star Group and *Show TV*, owned by Çukurova Group. Smaller media corporations were the İhlas Group, Doğu Group, Samanyolu Group and Aksoy Group which not only owned newspapers and magazines but also automotive companies and banks, similar to the bigger corporations in the market. (Ibid., p. 35)

However, since political and economic changes could directly affect the media scene, the position of the leading media conglomerates in Turkey was highly unstable. For instance, even though Star Group was listed among the dominant corporations that controlled a big portion of the media scene in the 1990s and early 2000s, in 2004 the Uzan family which owned Star Group lost their media companies because of the debts of their banking business. Star Group was put on the market by the state's Saving Deposits Insurance Fund (TMSF) and bought by another media giant in the market, Doğan Group which controlled Star Group until it was purchased by Doğu Group in 2011. The Uzan family's decline in the business world was also interpreted as a political move because its head, Cem Uzan, went into politics by establishing a political party in 2002 and became one of the political rivals of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. (Ibid., p. 36)

These changing dynamics started to affect the media scene more intensely between 2007 and 2011, during which the neutrality of media corporations became even more

questionable. As Ayşe Akkor Gül notes, in 2007, a “Broadcasting Code of Conduct” was prepared by RTÜK in order to introduce a more ethical and secure environment for broadcasting and it was signed by most of the television broadcasters. However, it did not prevent the TV channels to promote the political sides of their owners and serve their political interests. (Ibid., p. 37)

During that period, the business relations of media conglomerates with the JDP government gradually opened a ground for government to intervene in the broadcasts, behind the scenes. Media corporations which were usually willing to have good relations with the government chose maintaining their businesses in other sectors over being independent. In this new era, anti-government media corporations faced financial investigations and penalties. For instance, the Doğan Group which has been known for being an opponent to the JDP was accused of tax evasion in 2009 and penalized for paying a fine of 332 million Euros in February and 1.75 billion Euros in September. As Ayşen Akkor Gül states, this penalty was much higher than the whole financial value of the group and the future of the corporation was put in jeopardy with these fines. (Ibid., p. 38)

Despite these political conflicts in the media scene, which might be perceived as the markers of the JDP’s mixed position in relation to democratization and freedom of expression, the television industry kept growing. In 2009, the global economic crisis brought new anxieties which adversely influenced the advertising revenues of the television industry in Turkey. However, despite these challenges, television preserved its prioritized position as the first choice of the advertisers by holding approximately 50 per cent of the market. (Bilgili 2010, pp. 14-20)

In the meantime, the Turkish television industry did not only grow locally. The JDP’s neo-Ottomanist approach to foreign policy manifested itself in the public television corporation TRT’s opening up to the regional markets by establishing new television channels broadcasting in different languages. TRT-AVAZ, which broadcasts in eight languages including Albanian, Bosnian and the languages of the Turkic Republics in Asia, was established in 2009. The same year, TRT initiated the first state run television channel broadcasting in Kurdish, TRT 6, as a part of its Democratic Opening project in order to

address the Kurdish population living in Turkey as well as the Kurdish people living in the neighbouring countries. (Ertekin 2012, pp. 339-341) In 2015, TRT also established TRT World which broadcasts news and documentaries in English. However, the most distinctive move that TRT took in implementing the government's neo-Ottomanist policies was the establishment of TRT 7 al-Turkiyya in 2010 to address audiences in the Middle Eastern region in their own language.

Lea Nocera explains that the establishment of the Turkish state-owned TV channel TRT 7 al-Turkiyya has been among the markers of the JDP's political interest in the Middle East because the channel was utilized as a tool of Turkish foreign policy in order for Turkey to establish itself as a regional power. (Nocera 2013, p. 8) Apart from broadcasting news and entertainment programmes, the channel was dedicated to draw a fashionable picture of Turkey and to create interest in the country by promoting its social, cultural and political life. (Ibid.) According to Marwan M. Kraidy, by owning this channel Turkey also tried to align itself with the 'great powers' of the world such as the United States, France, Germany, Iran, China and the United Kingdom which all have television channels addressing Arabic speakers. (Kraidy 2013, pp. 22-24)

Apart from directly addressing the countries in the Asian, Middle Eastern and Balkan regions in their own languages, the Turkish TV series industry was also utilized to support Turkey's dream of becoming a regional and global power. By following the JDP's strategy of 'globalisation via the Asian route', (Öniş 2013, p. 114) Turkish TV series were exported to the Middle Eastern countries and became highly popular there. The Turkish television series industry expanded its export capacity by using this popularity to its advantage and spread to the Balkans and some European as well as South American countries. In only a few years, the industry turned into a giant sector.

In order to materialize the JDP's nostalgic dream of revitalizing the golden years of the Ottoman Empire, Turkish TV series have 'conquered' the television scenes of the countries which were previously occupied by the Ottoman Empire. Even though from 2011 onwards the JDP's strategies in foreign policy gradually turned Turkey into an isolated country in its region, this situation did not affect the popularity of Turkish TV

series much. The Turkish TV series industry kept growing so that in 2015, Turkey became the country of honour on the annual trade market for television broadcasters, MIPCOM, where several events were organized to carry Turkish TV series into the spotlight. (Punctum Creative Productions 2015)

In a similar sense, the Turkish TV industry has also kept expanding despite the economic challenges and it continued to be dominated by giant media conglomerates. The contemporary television broadcasting market is dominated by four media groups: the Doğan Media Group which owns private TV channels such as *Kanal D* and *CNN Türk*, the Doğuş Group which is the owner of the private TV channels *STAR TV* and *NTV*, the Ciner Group that controls the private TV channel *Show TV*, and the Kalyon Group that owns the private TV channel *ATV*. (*Media Owners and Their Other Investments* 2016) FOX International Channels' *FOX TV*, Acun Medya Group's *TV 8* and the state-run *TRT* are also among the most watched TV channels in Turkey. (MedyaTava 2016)

These TV channels, which generally occupy the top ranks in the lists of television ratings, (Ibid.) might be considered as the ones that shape the 'mainstream' and address the majority of the society by broadcasting the most popular programmes in the contemporary television scene. However, whereas in the 1990s mainstream TV channels were positioned in the opposite corner of the Islamic television channels and associated with secularism, in the 2000s the blurring of boundaries between being secular and Islamic makes associating the 'mainstream' (Çetin 2014, pp. 2473-2474) with being secular problematic.

At the time of writing, there are a number of television channels which are known by their connections to the JDP, thereby being more pious in comparison to the mainstream channels, such as *Ülke TV*, *Kanal A*, *Kanal 24*, *Kanal 7* and *Beyaz TV*. However, as Ali Murat Yel and Alparslan Nas explain, particular TV channels like *STAR TV*, *ATV* and *NTV* which were previously owned by secular businessmen were also bought by entrepreneurs who have close ties to the JDP and now, they are administered by non-secular executives. (Yel and Nas 2014, p. 578) For that reason, under the JDP rule, the 'mainstream' television scene cannot be defined as an entirely secular field but it can be

described as a slippery platform which allows shifting between secular and Islamic imaginaries and exploring both of them at the same time.

The coexistence of the secular and Islamic imaginaries on mainstream television channels could be perceived as one step forward in democratization in comparison with the ‘univocal’ television scene of the 1990s. However, the rising authoritarianism in Turkey from 2011 complicates this perception. As the Freedom House Special Report indicates, apart from dozens of layoffs, arrests or imprisonments of opponent journalists, “holding companies sympathetic to the government receive billions of dollars in government contracts, often through government bodies housed in the prime minister’s office.” (Corke et. al. 2014, pp. 1-2) For that reason, mainstream television channels which perceive television broadcasting as a financial investment and a political tool usually design their broadcasts by looking after their business interests and frequently turn a blind eye to the viewpoints of the opposing parties and eliminating diversity.

Consequently, it can be said that in the early 2000s, the Turkish TV industry transformed parallel to political, economic and social developments in Turkey under the JDP rule. During the JDP’s golden age, whereas the Turkish television scene became much more multi-vocal benefitting from the reforms on the democratization front, the economic growth paved the way to the establishment of new television channels and the diversification of the daily television schedules.

However, the JDP’s mixed performance in relation to democratization started to disrupt the positive atmosphere of the Turkish television environment from 2007. At that time, the neutrality of television channels began to be questioned widely and freedom of expression was at risk. Further intensifying the arguments about these issues, the television rating measurement system was changed in 2011 and this transformation was commonly perceived as a political move. At that time, the Television Audience Research Committee Joint Stock Company (*Televizyon İzleme Araştırmaları Anonim Şirketi*, TİAK) ceased its agreement with AGB Nielsen Television Audience Measurement which had been in force since 1990. A new agreement was made with TNS Research Agency. However, the measurement methods used by AGB Nielsen and TNS differed

considerably. Whereas AGB Nielsen took the level of education as the base to determine the A/B group⁸ in measurements, TNS defined the same group in terms of income level. In this way, the A/B group started to be determined in financial terms instead of representing the level of culture. This change was interpreted as an ideological attempt to redesign the shares that have been gained from advertising revenues (Bulut 2016, pp. 88-89) by lowering the ratings of the more sophisticated programmes that are generally followed by more educated segments of the public.

Despite these negative developments on the democratization front, the JDP's neo-Ottomanist politics in foreign policy made way for the expansion of the Turkish TV series industry to the Middle Eastern countries and in a short period, Turkish TV series turned into a phenomenon around the world. Contemporary developments such as the growing isolation of Turkey in its geographical region and the rising authoritarianism did not affect the Turkish TV industry to a great extent economically. However, in a highly politicized atmosphere like this, it is not possible to talk about the unbiasedness of Turkish TV channels anymore. Despite these chaotic circumstances, the Turkish television industry continues to grow with the support of the TV series industry. It is expected that at the end of 2016, the total value of the Turkish TV series industry will be 350 million dollars. (Özkan 2016)

In a proliferating sector like this, Turkish TV series remain the backbone of the industry's local and global markets. However, although the recent political developments do not put the industry at risk in economic terms, Turkish TV series are affected by the economic, social and political transformation of Turkish public in the 2000s. Since political conflicts and benefits regularly upset the balances of the Turkish television scene, Turkish TV series very quickly change shape in different time periods, becoming more diversified and multi-vocal in one period while facing cancellation and penalization for political or financial reasons the next.

⁸ The A/B group is one of the four demographic groups that have been taken in consideration in television rating measurements. It generally signifies the most educated segments of the society.

From the early 2000s, the Turkish TV series industry has been directly affected by the political, economic and social changes in Turkey. Economic growth, foreign policy and democracy fronts were the most influential platforms that had a great impact on the industry. Therefore, in the following sections, developments in the Turkish TV series industry in the 2000s are investigated by referring to these themes.

4.3.1 A Rapidly Growing Industry under the Influence of Neoliberalism

Especially in the second half of the 1990s, the growing need of private television channels for television content to fill their broadcasting time greatly helped the development of the Turkish TV series industry. During this period, television crews that gained experience in the advertising agencies started to work in a more organized and professional manner and managed to produce Turkish TV series of high quality. (Yanardağoglu and Karam 2013, p. 565)

From the early 2000s, the Turkish TV series industry continued to expand rapidly parallel to the growth of the Turkish economy. The Turkish soap opera *Asmalı Konak* (Asmalı Mansion, ATV, 2002-2003), which started to be broadcast on private channel ATV in 2002, might be considered as a significant symbol of this expansion. According to Sevilay Çelenk, by the end of the 1990s, Turkish TV series gradually became diversified in terms of content. However, parallel to this diversification, TV schedules became extremely homogenised and attracting the attention of the advertisers got highly difficult for the channel executives. *Asmalı Konak* turned into a solution for this problem by making a difference both in terms of telling a new, unconventional story (Çelenk 2005, pp. 317-319) as well as being an exceptional series in terms of visual and technical quality.

Asmalı Konak explores the romantic relationship between the daughter of an Istanbulite bureaucrat, Bahar, and the son of a wealthy, conservative Anatolian family, Seymen. Although the couple meets in New York while Bahar studies art, they go to Cappadocia, a historical region in central Anatolia, in order to be introduced to Seymen's family and get married. Later on, the series revolves around the culture clash that Bahar experiences with Seymen's family in this much more conservative, rural area.

The echo that *Asmalı Konak* created among Turkish TV audiences was noteworthy. After the broadcast of this series, people not only began to pay more touristic attention to the Cappadocia region but also the merchandise of the series started to be sold out all around Turkey. Çelenk says that by means of *Asmalı Konak*, promotional merchandising which has been highly common in the U.S. and in other Western countries, was adapted by the Turkish television industry for the first time. (Ibid., pp. 314-315)

Following *Asmalı Konak*, lots of TV series reproduced the same conventions which eventually started to be known to the public as ‘agha series’ because of their emphasis on feudal, Anatolian traditions and socio-economic structures. (Ibid., pp. 314-319) However, it was not only the soap operas which became extremely popular among Turkish TV audiences. With the proliferation of the Turkish TV series industry during the first half of the 2000s, TV series in crime and sitcom genres managed to attract the attention of the audiences and made a difference in Turkish television culture. *Kurtlar Vadisi* (Valley of the Wolves, Show TV, 2003-2005), which tells the story of an undercover secret agent working for the Turkish state, turned into a national phenomenon during that period and a sitcom, *Avrupa Yakası* (European Side, ATV, 2004-2009), became extremely popular right after.

The number of Turkish police procedurals rapidly increased during that period by benefitting from the extensive growth of the industry. Along with many short living examples, memorable Turkish police procedurals were shown on Turkish television channels. *Karanlıkta Koşanlar* (TRT 1, 2001) and *Şeytan Ayrıntıda Gizlidir* (Devil in the Details, TRT 1, 2002) which were adapted to television from the novels of the famous Turkish crime writer Ahmet Ümit, were among the pioneers of this new wave. The visibility of Turkish police procedurals accelerated with the appearance of long running series such as *Alacakaranlık* (Twilight, Show TV, 2003-2005) and *Hırsız Polis* (Cops and Robbers, Kanal D, 2005-2007) and continued with the broadcasting of *Arka Sokaklar* (Backstreets, Kanal D, 2006-), *Gece Gündüz* (Night and Day, Kanal D, 2008-2009) and *Adanalı* (From Adana, ATV, 2008-2010).

Inspired by the achievements of Turkish TV series on the local market, the industry started to target foreign markets. The export of Turkish TV series began with the sale of *Deli Yürek* (Crazy Heart, Show TV, 1998-2002), a thriller about a young man's rise in the mafia, to Kazakhstan in 2001. ("Turkish TV series take over the throne from Brazil" 2011) Following *Deli Yürek*, *Yabancı Damat* (Foreign Groom, Kanal D, 2004-2007) which revolves around the romantic relationship between the daughter of a Turkish *baklava* seller from the South Eastern city Gaziantep and the son of a wealthy Greek businessman, was sold to Greece and became extremely popular there. *Yabancı Damat*'s success encouraged TV executives to export *Asmalı Konak* to Greece the same year. (Kaygusuz 2005) As a result of these initiatives, Turkish TV series started to be known in foreign markets and new TV series such as *Haziran Gecesi* (Night of June, Kanal D, 2004-2006), starring *Asmalı Konak*'s popular actor Özcan Deniz, received great attention from Greece as well as Russia and some Middle Eastern countries. (Ibid.)

Even though Turkish TV series appeared in the Arab countries before, everything has changed when satellite channel MBC started to broadcast Turkish soap opera *Gümüş* (Silver, Kanal D, 2005-2007), *Noor* in its Arabic title, in the 2008 summer season. (Yanardağoglu and Karam 2013, p. 564) *Gümüş*, which revolves around the romantic relationship between a small town girl, Gümüş (Songül Öden), and a young, wealthy businessman called Mehmet (Kıvanç Tatlıtuğ), became so popular in the Middle Eastern region that its final episode was watched by 85 million people, mostly women. The total number of the female audiences that watched the show's finale corresponds to half of the total number of adult females in the entire Arab world. (Worth 2008)

Following *Gümüş*, the popularity of Turkish TV series rapidly spread and their success started to be compared to the past victory of Brazilian telenovelas. It is reported that by 2011, a total number of 65 Turkish TV series have been broadcasted in 39 different countries including Russia, Bulgaria, Greece, Iran and the United Arab Emirates. The exported series were mostly soap operas but a sitcom called *Çocuklar Duymasın* (Don't Let the Kids Know, TGRT, 2002; ATV, 2002-2003; Star TV, 2003-2005; Fox TV, 2013-2014) and a crime series *Kurtlar Vadisi* were also listed among the popular shows

(“Turkish TV series take over the throne from Brazil” 2011) although the latter was much more popular than the former.

Zafer Yörük and Pantelis Vatikiotis report that 35.675 hours of Turkish programmes were exported to 76 different countries around the world between the years of 2005 and 2011. 65 of these programmes were Turkish soap operas and the total revenue that these exports brought to the country was 60 million dollars. (Yörük and Vatikiotis 2013, p. 2362) As a result of these developments, TV series production turned into an immense business in contemporary Turkey. The head of the Turkish Exporters Assembly (TIM), Mehmet Büyükekşi, states that Turkey is the second biggest exporter of TV series on the market after the United States. The total business volume of the industry is 350 million dollars. (Achili 2016)

On the other side of the coin, the enormous popularity of Turkish TV series both on the local and global markets also created a huge pressure on the Turkish TV series industry. Since the duration of each episode of Turkish TV series is approximately 90 minutes, the crew members have to write, direct and edit almost a full length film every week. In order to achieve this kind of work, the crew members have to work roughly fifteen hours a day and they mostly work uninsured. Since the competition in the industry is very rough a TV series could be cancelled at any time without making a finale and when it is cancelled, all the crew members instantly become jobless because they are mostly employed ‘independently’ and ‘unofficially’. The heavy working conditions on the sets do not only raise issues about job security but also work safety because work accidents are now perceived as a part of the job. (Eraslan 2013)

However, despite the heavy working conditions, the industry keeps expanding and the popularity of Turkish TV series continues to spread locally and internationally. Currently, approximately 60 to 70 new series are introduced to the Turkish TV audiences in every television season. Due to the cut-throat competition half of the series are cancelled before the season ends (“Türkiye’de her sezon en az 60 dizi yayına giriyor” 2014) but this does not discourage the producers. In this sense, the rapid growth, the production pace and the

cut-throat competition which determine contemporary Turkish TV series industry can be interpreted as the traces of the rising neoliberalism in Turkey.

4.3.2 Neo-Ottomanist Foreign Policy and Turkish TV Series

JDP's neo-Ottomanist aspirations to have no problems with the neighbours and to become a regional as well as a global power directly influenced the discourse that has been created around the export of Turkish TV series. To revitalize the spirit of the Ottoman Empire, Turkish TV series were utilized by the government for achieving its aspirations in foreign policy.

From the early 2000s, the export of Turkish TV series was perceived as a method to build stronger diplomatic relations with the neighbours. For instance, when *Yabancı Damat* became highly popular in Greece between 2005 and 2008, the series was perceived as a mediator to build a connection with Greece by entering the Greek houses through television for the first time and depicting the tension between two countries in a comical manner. (Torelli 2013, p. 46)

The 'coincidental' craze that Turkish TV series created, especially in the Middle East, was approached by the Turkish government in a similar manner. The expansion of Turkish TV series to the neighbouring countries was adopted as a strategic tactic to promote a positive image of Turkey in order to gain their consent to accept Turkey as a regional leader. By borrowing the term from Joseph Nye, many have defined this situation as Turkey's implementation of 'soft power'.⁹ According to Kraidy et. al., the Turkish state was actively involved in promoting Turkish TV series in the Middle East. For instance, government officials recruited famous Turkish actors in order to promote the series and increase international sales. It was announced that financial rewards would be given to the directors and producers who would create projects to disseminate the image of Turkey abroad. (Kraidy and Al-Ghazzi 2013, p. 22)

⁹ Following Nye, Yörük et al. describe 'soft power' as an opposition to the reinforcement of 'hard' powers such as military and economic forces. According to them 'soft power' "is based on setting the agenda and attracting others, through the deployment of cultural and ideological means of provoking acquiescence." (Yörük and Vatikiotis, 2013, p. 2376)

The Turkish embassy in Cairo even paid for the trip of Kıvanç Tatlıtuğ, the main actor of the TV series *Gümüş*, to Egypt in order to promote the Istanbul Shopping Festival in 2011 but the plans changed because of the Arab Spring. (Ibid.) In this sense, as di Stefano Maria Torelli states, the popularity of the Turkish TV series in the Middle East parallel to the JDP's attempts to promote the country's image in the Middle East made it possible to talk about a 'diplomacy of soaps'. (Torelli 2013, p. 44)

As an extension of the JDP's 'soft power' strategy, a 'cultural proximity' discourse has been created in order to explain the international success of Turkish TV series. In reference to Koichi Iwabuchi, Yeşim Kaptan describes cultural proximity as something that "is based on an impression and assumption of similarity rather than ontological cultural similarities." (Kaptan 2013, p. 2) For Kaptan, cultural proximity is something that is produced on a daily basis and relies on the discursive construction of the idea of closeness or similarity by the selection of elements like religion, ethnicity, language or dialect. (Ibid.)

While elaborating on why Turkish TV series became so popular in the neighbouring countries, commonalities between the Turkish and neighbouring cultures have been explicitly emphasized and the hundred years of coexistence under the rule of the Ottoman Empire have been particularly underlined. (Yanardağoglu and Karam 2013, p. 568) However, for Kaptan, cultural proximity which has been enthusiastically used by the Turkish press while elaborating on the international popularity of Turkish TV series, is something that is discursively constructed to celebrate the success of these shows. (Kaptan 2013, p. 2)

Kaptan explains that Turkish agents particularly express that "shared historical experiences, collective regional values, and geographic proximity" (Ibid. p. 4) create cultural commonalities between Turkey and the neighbouring countries. However, what they actually do is to adopt a totalizing and homogenizing approach. Kaptan says that "proximity discourse is the glue that cements different identities, as it assumes a singular identity for diverse audiences inhabiting a vast landscape from Eastern Europe to the Arab peninsula." (Ibid. p. 7) By building this kind of discourse, the geographical and cultural

boundaries between Turkey and the neighbouring countries do not only disappear but moreover, Turkey is put in a superior, dominant position and acknowledged as a cultural authority. (Ibid.)

Different from Joseph D. Straubhaar's conceptualization of cultural proximity as a phenomenon to emphasize the attraction of commonalities for TV audiences, (Straubhaar 1991, p. 51) Yeşim Kaptan intends to use the same concept to underline how the cultural proximity discourse is utilized to glorify Turkey's regional power via the export of Turkish TV series. The JDP's aspirations to become a regional and global power in order to revitalize the golden years of the Ottoman Empire inspire Kaptan's re-conceptualization of cultural proximity. In this usage, cultural proximity is acknowledged as a tool to position Turkey above its neighbouring countries, almost as an 'imperial' power. It also cultivates the perception of a 'new' Turkey as a regional power and celebrates the aspirations of the Turkish government in foreign policy in an imaginary manner. Besides, in addition to Kaptan's statements, the recent popularity of Turkish TV series in Latin American countries also disproved the discourse that government built on cultural proximity.

Consequently, on the one hand, the JDP's foreign policy provided television executives with great opportunities for promoting their products. It encouraged the production of Turkish TV series in order to endorse Turkish culture and society as a tool of the government's soft power strategy. On the other hand, by having the external support of the cultural proximity discourse as it is re-conceptualized by Yeşim Kaptan, the international success of the Turkish TV series has been utilized to put Turkey in a superior position in its geographical region in order to support the government's fantasy of becoming a regional power. In this way, Turkish TV series have not only benefitted from the government's strategies of foreign policy but they were also intended to be utilized as a 'diplomatic' tool in building hegemonic relations with the neighbouring countries.

4.3.3 Democratization and Censorship Issues

Beginning from 2007, the JDP's mixed performances in the field of democratization did not only influence the government's approach to the issues of freedom of expression and freedom of press but they also affected the broadcasting of Turkish TV series to a great extent. In a media environment in which the state uses legal channels to suppress journalists and utilizes tax penalties to control the opponent media corporations, (Çetin 2014, p. 2465) TV series are not only regularly penalized by the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) but also forced to change their political discourse in order to avoid cancellation.

For instance, as Emre Çetin explains, following the Gezi Protests, *Leyla ile Mecnun* (Leyla and Mecnun, TRT, 2011-2013), a highly popular absurd comedy series with a political vein, was cancelled by the state run TV channel TRT on the plea of low ratings and high production costs without making a final episode. While the fans of the show were shocked by the event, the creators of the series produced another TV series for another TV channel entitled *Ben de Özledim* (I Missed You Too, Star TV, 2013-2014). In the first episode of this series, one of the characters started to explain how *Leyla ile Mecnun* ended and "one television serial was thereby finalized orally within another in a form of reinforced intertextuality, due to increased political tension and censorship." (Ibid., p. 2466)

Leyla ile Mecnun was not the only series that made government officials uncomfortable. The Ottoman costume drama *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* (Magnificent Century, Show TV 2011; Star TV 2012-2014), which was not only extremely popular in Turkey but also attracted great attention in the Middle Eastern countries as well as in the Balkans and Greece, was directly targeted by Tayyip Erdoğan himself. This series which revolves around the intriguing life story of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent's wife, Hürrem, and takes place in Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire during the 16th century, was criticized by Erdoğan as a disgrace to 'our Ottoman heritage'. Erdoğan said "we know our responsibilities. We'll go everywhere that our [Ottoman] ancestors went, but I think some may be imagining the ancestors in *Magnificent Century*. People watch that show and

believe it's a documentary. We don't recognize that Suleiman. The real Suleiman spent 30 years of his life on horseback, not in the palace like you see on the TV show. I condemn the directors and the owner of the channel and, since they've been warned, I expect a judicial decision on the matter." (Carney 2013a, p. 30)

As Josh Carney notes, even though Erdoğan did not express his concerns about the show precisely, he gave some clues by stating that he was disturbed by the portrayal of the Sultan's private life and his relations with women in the harem. He was anxious about the reception of the show by Turkish audiences because this portrayal could damage the historical memory of the Sultan Suleiman as a heroic figure. (Ibid., pp. 30-31)

Erdoğan did not act himself to penalize the series but used his influence on his followers by making a speech about the show. Carney explains that a few days later following Erdoğan's speech, a law suit was filed against the show by a regular tour guide from Konya and a JDP member made a legislative proposal in order to discontinue the broadcasting of *Muhteşem Yüzyıl*. Whereas some opponents of the JDP declared that Erdoğan and his followers purposefully set an agenda about *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* in order to divert the public's attention from the rising Kurdish conflict, others perceived Erdoğan's interference in the broadcasting of the show as an attempt of censorship. (Ibid.)

In a similar way, in 2012, the producers of the Turkish sitcom *1 Kadın 1 Erkek* (1 Woman, 1 Man, Türkmax, 2008-2015), which is the Turkish format adaptation of the French TV series *Un gars, une fille* (1999), were forced by RTÜK to change the show's plot. *1 Kadın 1 Erkek* tells the story of a young couple, Zeynep (Demet Evgar) and Ozan (Emre Karayel), who have been living together for nine years. Whereas Zeynep always dreams of getting married and wants to have more romanticism in her relationship, Ozan is portrayed as an unromantic man who does not want to get married.

Although in the original scenario the couple did not get married, RTÜK officials forced Zeynep and Ozan to get married by stating that they are not comfortable with the couple's living together without being married since they could encourage the audiences to have premarital sexual relations. The director of the series, Müge Turalı, stated that there was

no demand coming from the audiences to see the couple getting married. But the couple got married anyway because of the direct interference of RTÜK in the show's narrative. ("RTÜK, '1 Erkek 1 Kadın'ı da evlendirdi!" 2012)

RTÜK's interference in the narrative of *1 Kadın 1 Erkek* could be approached as a consequence of the rising conservatism in Turkey in 2000s and the increasing role of Islam in defining Turkish national identity. Parallel to these changes in Turkish society, the number of RTÜK interferences in the narratives of Turkish TV series increased. On the one hand, as Emre Çetin emphasizes, political pressure directed the producers to find more creative ways and strategies in order to deal with censorship and united them with the audiences against suppression. (Çetin 2014, p. 2466) On the other hand, the pressure silenced alternative voices in the Turkish TV industry and disrupted the multi-vocal television environment which was established in the beginning of the 2000s. In this way, the effects of the rising authoritarianism were marked and new lines have been drawn for the production of Turkish TV series.

From the early 2000s, social, political and economic decisions of the JDP government had a big influence on the production of Turkish TV series. During the JDP's golden age, whereas the growing Turkish economy contributed to the proliferation of Turkish TV series, reforms on the democratization front paved the way for the creation of a multi-vocal television environment. In the later years, the JDP's ambitions in foreign policy to become a regional and global power directly affected the promotion of Turkish TV series on the global, especially Middle Eastern, market and Turkish TV series were utilized to circulate a positive image of Turkey as diplomatic tools. At another level, Turkish government under the rule of the JDP continued to interfere in the production of Turkish TV series through monitoring their contents by means of RTÜK.

In order to examine more deeply how the transformation of Turkey has affected Turkish TV series in the last decade, the national elements listed as the markers of banal nationalism in Turkish TV series in the previous chapter should be readdressed. In this

way, ‘the national’ which persists in the international genres to evoke the feeling that Turkish TV series are ‘our own’ could be carefully re-evaluated in consideration of the changing definitions of Turkish national identity and national values from the early 2000s and onwards.

4.4 NATIONAL ELEMENTS RE-INTRODUCED

Under the influence of rising neoliberalism and the policies to form a ‘Turkish-Islamic Synthesis’, Turkish national identity started to be reshaped in the post-1980s era. This process was accelerated after the JDP’s accession to power in 2002 as a consequence of the party’s goal to build the ‘new’ Turkey. Turkish national identity began to be reinterpreted with the inclusion of neoliberal, neo-Ottomanist and Islamic ingredients. Parallel to this transformation, nationalist discourse in Turkey has been redesigned in accordance with the ‘new’ description of the Turkish nation and the everyday symbols of the national have been diversified. The representation of Turkishness and Islamic figures, the depiction of sexuality and class distinctions as well as the emphasis on neighbourhood and family relations are still the most important issues through which the ‘nationality’ of the series makes itself apparent. However, the changing political approach to these matters and their infusion into the social and cultural aspects of society in new forms transform the narratives and the outlooks of Turkish TV series. Since Turkish police procedurals get affected by this transformation to a great extent the changing discourse of these national elements should be addressed.

4.4.1 Representations of ‘Turkishness’ and the Politicization of Turkish TV Series

By means of the strict Kemalist regime of the state run TRT and the mixed reactions of the private TV channels to the representation of diversified personalities on television, before the 2000s, Turkish national identity was represented as a supranational identity on Turkish television channels. Ethnic, cultural or religious identities different from Turkish and Sunni Muslim were either invisible or frequently stereotyped. For that reason, Turkish TV series were generally lacking of diversity and plurality, and political issues

which could be challenging for the unity of the Turkish national identity were frequently avoided.

As Eylem Yanardağ et al. explain, by the end of the 1990s, Turkish TV series gradually became more diversified in terms of storylines. Issues such as crime, politics, urban matters and migration from rural to urban towns started to be discussed in the plots. (Yanardağ and Karam 2013, p. 565) Together with the new steps that the JDP took in democratization in its golden age, ‘Turkishness’ as a supranational identity started to be questioned and ethnically diversified characters began to be included in the narratives of Turkish TV series.

As noted by Hülya Tanrıöver, Kurdish, Alevi and Assyrian identities were ignored in Turkish TV series on the mainstream TV channels for a long time. However, by means of soap operas such as *Asmalı Konak* which takes place in the rural central Anatolia, the names, accents and folk songs of the characters started to reflect some elements of Kurdish culture. (Tanrıöver 2008, p. 219) Besides, Emre Çetin claims that in the early 2000s, under the influence of new regulations and the growing television market, Turkish TV series started to get more involved with the political agenda of Turkey. They were transformed by elaborating more on political issues and disseminating political messages. In this way, Turkish TV series became a popular ground to express a number of political concerns. (Çetin 2014, p. 2463) By means of the politicization of their narratives, political questions and issues which could be challenging for the uniformed and homogenous representation of Turkish national identity started to be expressed on television.

First of all, beginning from the early 2000s, by means of historical dramas Turkey’s militarist past and its consequences on ordinary people were brought up for discussion. Parallel to the JDP’s attempts to minimize the role of the Turkish military in politics and civil society, these series evoked the traumas of military coups and gave young audiences a glimpse of the violent, militarist past of Turkey from a leftist point of view. Emre Çetin who describes this trend as ‘settling accounts with the past’ states that as a part of this trend, TV series such as *Çemberimde Gül Oya* (The Rose and the Thorn, Kanal D, 2004-2005) and *Hatırla Sevgili* (Remember, Darling, ATV, 2006-2008) appeared on television

channels (Ibid., p. 2470) portraying politically active as well as ordinary characters living in the years leading to the military coup in 1980 and the military memorandum in 1971. One of the last examples of this trend was *Öyle Bir Geçer Zaman Ki* (Time Goes By, Kanal D, 2010-2013) which combined difficulties of the coup years with a woman's individual tragedy.

However, as Çetin emphasizes, this trend was only limited to settling accounts with the military coups. (Ibid., p. 2471) Other 'sensitive' issues such as Armenian genocide or Kurdish and Alevi massacres were not included in this trend. For that reason, these series did not help to elaborate on the challenging issues concerning the minorities but only built a platform to discuss Turkey's militarist past as well as the militarist features embedded in Turkish national identity.

The politicization of Turkish TV series was not only limited to the old wounds of Turkey's coup years. As Emre Çetin explains, Turkish TV series focusing on femicides or migration issues carried some social and political matters to the daily agenda and contributed to the creation of a multi-vocal television culture in Turkey. (Ibid., p. 2478) For instance, the soap opera *Gümüş* tried to raise awareness on significant social matters like organ donation and breast cancer. (Carney 2013b, pp. 34-35) Another one called *Fatmagül'ün Suçu Ne?* (What is Fatmagül's Fault?, Kanal D, 2010-2012), telling the story of a young woman's search for legal remedies after she got raped by four men, had a tremendous impact on women's issues in Turkey. This series was adapted from the Turkish film *Fatmagül'ün Suçu Ne?* (dir. Süreyya Duru, 1986). Last but not least, *Kayıp Şehir* (Lost City, Kanal D, 2012-2013) attracted considerable attention by portraying the 'others' of Turkish society such as gypsies, transsexuals, street children and Africans and depicted the discrimination that these characters faced on an everyday basis. Different from the early examples that were produced in the 1990s, Turkish police procedurals such as *Alacakaranlık* and *Adanalı* introduced commissar figures who were born and served in the Eastern Anatolian towns, speaking Turkish in different accents. Apart from these, TV series such as *Jan* (Ache, 2014-) which were especially produced for TRT 6, broadcasting in Kurdish, contributed to the multi-vocal television culture in Turkey.

In this way, Turkish TV series started to question different aspects of Turkish national identity by elaborating more on issues like gender, sexuality, social awareness, discrimination and injustice. By encouraging diversity in Turkish TV series in terms of both content and characters, Turkish national identity was no longer represented in a homogenous and formal manner. However, this did not mean that turning a blind eye to the cultural and ethnical diversity in Turkey, approaching social and political issues from a sexist, nationalist and militarist point of view and stereotyping disappeared from the television channels once and for all.

The depiction of Turkishness as a supranational identity made itself most visible in *Kurtlar Vadisi* which attracted the interests of the audiences by constantly referring to contemporary political issues and personalities and valorising the Turkish nation in a militaristic and nationalistic way. Other series which might be considered as the successors of *Kurtlar Vadisi* like *Kod Adı* (Code Name, Kanal D, 2006), *Sağır Oda* (Dead Room, Kanal D, 2006-2007), *Sakarya Fırat* (Sakarya Fırat, TRT 1, 2009-2013) and *Şefkat Tepe* (Şefkat Hill, Samanyolu TV, 2010-2014) (Çetin 2014, p. 2469) also helped the dissemination of this portrayal. The nationalist and militarist approaches of these series to contemporary political matters in Turkey, especially to the Kurdish issue, made them highly popular for addressing the nationalist feelings of audiences.

Particularly *Kurtlar Vadisi*, which also became extremely popular in the Middle East together with its film spinoffs, did not only tackle ‘national problems’ but also intended to prove the power of the Turks to other nations such as the U.S. and Israel. Marwan M. Kraidy explains that *Kurtlar Vadisi*’s reversal of Hollywood’s clichés to depict Middle Eastern characters as the villains and its adulation of Turkish power makes the series significant. (Kraidy and Al-Ghazzi 2013, pp. 24-25) Polat Alemdar, the protagonists of *Kurtlar Vadisi* “is the martial, fearless, vocal and pro-active commando.” (Ibid., p. 27) By means of this image which is combined with military aggression he turns into an icon for Turkish masculinity and his popularity transcends the frontiers of its own country to the Middle East. (Ibid.)

Joshua Carney notes that *Kurtlar Vadisi* was penalized by RTÜK several times for depicting too much violence, even causing a diplomatic crisis with Israel. Even though the series changed its tone in 2010 by having a more pro-government position, including Tayyip Erdoğan and then Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu as heroic figures in its narrative, (Carney 2013b, p. 40) its nationalistic vein did not alter. In 2013, the ‘Wise Persons Commission,’ a civil group established by government as a part of the Democratic Opening project for building a bridge for Turkish-Kurdish peace, requested the cancellation of TV series like *Kurtlar Vadisi*, *Sakarya Fırat*, *Tek Türkiye* (One Turkey, Samanyolu TV, 2007-2011) and *Şefkat Tepe* for their negative approach to the Kurdish issue. (“Akil İnsanlar: Kurtlar Vadisi yayından kaldırılın” 2013) But this request was not fulfilled.

Although concerns were raised about the nationalistic language and stereotyping of the ethnically diverse characters in *Kurtlar Vadisi* and the like, they did not find enough public support. The government’s mixed position in democratization, especially regarding the Kurdish issue, could be also considered among the reasons behind this dismissal. However, in some cases people managed to make their voices heard about negative stereotyping. Romani people reacted against a Turkish dramedy called *Roman Havası* (Romani Music, Show TV, 2015) for depicting Romani people as greedy, aggressive and unstable. By using the same conventions as *Cennet Mahallesi* (Cennet Neighbourhood, Show TV, 2004-2007) and *Görgüsüzler* (Boors, ATV, 2008), which were earlier examples revolving around the community of Romani people, *Roman Havası* was criticized for neglecting the real life problems of Romani people such as gentrification of their neighbourhoods and unemployment. (“Romanlar Show TV'nin yeni dizisi 'Roman Havası'ndan şikâyetçi oldu” 2014) *Roman Havası* was cancelled by the television channel Show TV shortly after the Romani Rights Association (*Roman Hakları Derneği*) in Ankara filed a criminal complaint. (“Büyük Tepki Çeken Roman Havası Dizisi Kaldırıldı” 2015)

In this sense, it can be asserted that the Turkish television scene gave mixed signals concerning the representation of Turkish national identity in the 2000s. Challenging political and social issues found themselves a place in the narratives of Turkish TV series

which paved the way for the depiction of ethnically and culturally diverse characters living in different geographies of Turkey other than Istanbul. However, although Turkish TV series drew a more diverse and pluralist picture of the nation, the foundations of Turkish national identity were never seriously challenged and continued to be reproduced in a banal way.

Characters with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds were presented in the series as a part of the ‘mosaic’ of the Turkish nation without touching on ‘sensitive’ matters or settling accounts with past conflicts. In this way, ‘Turkishness’ managed to preserve its dominant position in the narratives, with particular twists. The JDP’s neo-Ottomanist politics to revitalize the legacy of the Ottoman Empire provided these twists, which slightly bended the Kemalist foundations of Turkish national identity.

The Ottoman heritage, which has been proposed as an alternative ‘origin’ to the Kemalist formation of Turkish national identity, has been rejuvenated in Ottoman costume dramas such as *Muhteşem Yüzyıl*. As Emre Çetin notes, the success of this series paved the way to the creation of other TV series following this neo-Ottomanist trend, among them *Bir Zamanlar Osmanlı: Kıyam* (Once Upon a Time in the Ottoman: Mutiny, TRT 1, 2012) and *Fatih* (Fatih, Kanal D, 2013). (Çetin 2014, p. 2472) Today, other series like *Muhteşem Yüzyıl: Kösem Sultan* (Magnificent Century: Kösem, Star TV, 2015-2016; Fox TV, 2016-), a spinoff of *Muhteşem Yüzyıl*, and *Diriliş: Ertuğrul* (The Revival: Ertuğrul, TRT 1, 2014-) as well as Turkish police procedural, *Filinta* (Flintlock, TRT 1, 2014-2016), continue to contribute to the creation of a mythic discourse around the Ottoman Empire as the new, ‘authentic origin’ of the Turkish nation.

Consequently, it can be stated that Turkish TV series reflect different nationalist discourses on the same platform without seriously challenging the foundations of Turkish national identity. Similar to the JDP’s appropriation of different nationalist discourses by creating a new mixture of Islamic, neo-Ottomanist, neoliberal values with residual elements of official Turkish nationalism, Turkish TV series reflect a similar blend with the intention to address different segments of society at the same time. Whereas on the one hand, diversity and plurality are presented without targeting the unity of Turkish

nation, references to an Ottoman origin are included in the narratives as the everyday markers of nationality. In this way, together with the images of ultra-nationalism which were reflected by series like *Kurtlar Vadisi*, Turkish TV series simultaneously refer to different nationalist discourses and their banal, everyday symbols by being able to quickly shift from one discourse to another.

4.4.2 Representation of Islamic Figures and Practices

Until the 2000s, representing Islamic figures and practices on mainstream Turkish television channels was perceived as a highly controversial move. Although characters on Turkish TV series were accepted as Sunni Muslims, as a non-spoken fact Islamic practices were depicted as traditional rather than religious symbols and representing veiled women on non-Islamic TV channels was a taboo. As Emre Çetin explains, since the veil was perceived as a marker of Islam it was not visible on non-Islamic TV channels even though the characters were represented as extremely pious. Veiled and religious characters could only be seen on the Islamic television channels. (Ibid., p. 2474)

This situation gradually changed under the rule of the JDP beginning from 2002 with the reinforcement of the idea that Islam is as a dominant ingredient of Turkish national identity. Emre Çetin asserts that instead of becoming a ‘theme’ on television programs with a specific focus on Islam, Islamic piety and worldview started to be “incorporated into the content of other programs and genres.” (Ibid., p. 2473) Çetin gives examples of how parables are told by the characters in Turkish TV series like *Kurtlar Vadisi* or *Deliyürek* with the intention of teaching morals and cultivating the culture of piety by referring to Islam.

By means of the Turkish soap opera *Huzur Sokağı* (2012-2014), the first veiled characters were introduced to the Turkish audiences in 2012 on a mainstream television channel, ATV, and the taboo of the headscarf was broken. (Ibid., pp. 2473-2474) Originally, *Huzur Sokağı* was the name of the novel, written by Şule Yüksel Şenler in 1970. This novel was previously adapted to film under the title *Birleşen Yollar* (Junctions, dir. Yücel Çakmaklı, 1970). So, it was a highly popular work even before it appeared on television in the TV

series format. The series explains the story of a Muslim man named Bilal (Kutsi) who has an Islamic lifestyle and Feyza (Selin Demiratar), a secular woman who gradually becomes Islamized after she falls in love with Bilal. Ali Murat Yel and Alparslan Nas explain that until *Huzur Sokağı*, the headscarf was presented as a traditional rather than an Islamic symbol. Therefore, *Huzur Sokağı* was a benchmark for the Turkish television scene for making veiled women with Islamic lifestyles visible on mainstream television. (Yel and Nas 2014, p. 580)

However, Yel and Nas assert that since the novel that the series was based on was written almost four decades ago this made the circulation of the series more tolerable for secular audiences. It was perceived as a nostalgic revitalization of Islamic lifestyle and did “not pose any threat to the hegemonic codes of visual culture determined by the project of modernization.” (Ibid.) According to Yel and Nas, even though Turkey has become a more conservative country under the rule of the JDP and the Turkish television scene has been affected by this rising conservatism on a large scale, major television channels continue to reproduce the secular imaginary when the issue comes to veiling and representing Islamic lifestyles. (Ibid., p. 578)

Yel and Nas state that even television channels that are owned by non-secular executives “put forth secular imagery as the desirable signifiers of culture, despite their seemingly political allegiance to the government who is supposed to be running Islamic agenda.” (Ibid.) The secular outlook of the anchor women on the news, even on Islamic TV channels like STV and Kanal 7, is proposed as proof of how television channels reproduce the secular imaginary on a national level and how the representation of veiled women in primetime news is still a taboo. (Ibid.)

In this sense, mainstream TV channels continue to overlook veiled women in their representation of female characters in Turkish TV series. Yel and Nas relate this preference to the management of culture industries in Turkey with Kemalist impulses and the enduring representation of secular lifestyles as desirable. (Ibid., p. 581) Alternatively, television scholar Orhan Tekelioğlu states that representing women in headscarves in Turkish TV series is a politically risky move because a veiled woman is expected to be

untainted and chaste. The veiled characters in a TV series cannot transgress their limits because they are expected to behave in certain ways. In order to avoid the risk of being criticized for representing veiled women in ‘unconventional’ ways, most of the time they are not represented at all. (Cinmen 2011)

However, as Orhan Tekelioğlu says, producers find new ways to symbolize the ‘chastity’ of the characters to allow more free play in the script. Therefore, Tekelioğlu states that even though it seems like there are no veiled women on mainstream television today, other ways have been found to ‘veil’ a woman without using a headscarf. (Ibid.) Emphasizing the virginity of the female characters, turning premarital sex into a tragic situation for women or putting female characters into traditional roles as housewives who only interact with their female friends might be listed as some of these ways.

In this sense, the representation of women in headscarves and the depiction of Islamic lifestyles continues to be a problematic issue for Turkish TV series. However, even under these circumstances, it is more common to find young characters practicing religious fasting during the month of Ramadan or going to Friday prayer and to see Imams as major characters. Besides, channel identity still plays a significant role in representing Islamic practices and characters more openly and recurrently. Although television channels which are owned by non-secular executives are also dominated by the secular imaginary, they are always more eager to refer to Islamic symbols in comparison with other channels.

Therefore, contemporary Turkish TV series continue to reproduce secular national discourse in a banal way. But the coexistence of secular and Islamic imaginaries on mainstream television allows Turkish TV series to easily shift from one discourse to another. In this way, diverse symbols of different nationalist discourses are included in the narratives of Turkish TV series on mainstream television channels by pointing at the national in different forms.

4.4.3 Representation of Sexuality and Public Morality

In the beginning of the 2000s, the Turkish television scene benefitted from the democratization movements in the political arena. RTÜK continued to monitor television broadcasts and penalized several programmes for different reasons. (“RTÜK'ün ceza listesi” 2004) However, the rising ‘democratic’ political atmosphere and economic growth created a slightly liberated platform for the Turkish TV series industry and TV series were encouraged to challenge the earlier codes of public morality.

This liberation movement changed the representation of sexuality and intimacy on Turkish TV series. Turkish couples started to be seen kissing on the lips on television more often and lots of taboo subjects like homosexuality as well as premarital sexuality started to be mentioned in Turkish TV series. Whereas in *Bir İstanbul Masalı* (An Istanbul Fairytale, ATV, 2003-2005), an unlicensed adaptation of the Hollywood film *Sabrina* (dir. Billy Wilder, 1954), one of the major characters of the series, Zekeriya (Emre Karayel), a white-collar businessman, opened up to his best friend for being gay, in the Turkish version of the U.S. TV series *Dawson's Creek* (1998–2003), *Kavak Yelleri* (Poplar Winds, Kanal D, 2007-2011), the characters were depicted as sexually active teenagers.

However, representing the sexuality of the characters has always been problematic for Turkish TV series. For instance, in 2004, Turkish producers decided to make a Turkish adaptation of the popular American series *Sex and the City* (1998–2004) by the name of *Metro Palas* (Metro Palace, Show TV, 2004). Despite the liberated atmosphere of the period, the series was not only exempt from explaining the sexual lives of the characters but also survived on Turkish television only for a few episodes, affirming the difficulty to mention sexual affairs of female characters on television in Turkey.

Together with the rising conservatism in Turkey and the JDP's mixed performance in relation to democratization, the situation got much more challenging. RTÜK gradually became stricter about the representations of sexuality on TV and series started to be censored or penalized for containing sexual content. In 2009, when *Aşk-ı Memnu* (Forbidden Love, Kanal D, 2008-2010) depicted its main characters while making love

on television for almost six minutes, it was perceived as a ‘historical’ moment for Turkish TV series (Çintay 2009) but controversies followed. *Aşk-ı Memnu* was penalized by RTÜK for showing scenes that offend the ‘Turkish family structure’ in timeslots during which children and young adults could be watching television. Teenage soap operas such as *Kavak Yelleri* and *Küçük Sırlar* (Little Secrets, Kanal D, 2010; Star TV 2010-2011), a Turkish version of the U.S. series *Gossip Girl* (2007–2012), were penalized for showing young couples kissing on the lips and having sex ‘exaggeratedly’ on prime time. (“Ahlakı bozmayın!” 2011) In 2010, in the reruns of *Bir İstanbul Masalı*, the scene which depicts Zekeriya opening up to his best friend about his being gay was cut out from the narrative and censored. (“Bir İstanbul Masalı’nın 6 Yıl Sonraki Tekrarında Gey Karakter Sansürlendi” 2010)

Although laws concerning the representation of sexuality in television broadcasting exist in various countries in Europe, (Kejanlıoğlu et. al. 2001, pp. 94-107) what might be considered as problematic in Turkey is the vagueness of the law’s coverage. As Yıldırım Türker notes, the legislation that persecutes *Aşk-ı Memnu* for offending against the ‘Turkish family structure’ is the 4th article of the law that defines the domain of RTÜK. However, whereas this law commands that television broadcastings cannot go against the national and moral values of society and the Turkish family, it does not explain the ingredients of these concepts. Therefore, as Türker points out, this law which addresses a ‘general public decency’ with its ambiguous boundaries continues to be used as an excuse for censorship and is justified on the pretext of ‘protection’. (Türker 2010)

Under the threat of censorship, scriptwriters and directors try to find new methods to explain the sexual relations between the characters. As a very recent example, in the popular Turkish dramedy *Kiralık Aşk* (Rental Love, Star TV, 2015-), the sexual relationship of the main characters Defne (Elçin Sangu) and Ömer (Barış Arduç) was not shown on television during the regular broadcast of the series. The fans of the series who realized that the scene was actually censored gathered on social media and reacted to this situation. Two days later, the production company broadcasted the scene on the website of the channel where the series is shown. (“Öpüşme Star’da Sonrası İnternette” 2016) In

this way, for the first time, a censored scene of sexual relationship is broadcasted in an alternative medium in Turkey.

However, it is not only the representation of sexuality which has been monitored by RTÜK for ‘protecting’ public morals. Representations of smoking and consuming alcohol on television have become a legal issue at the end of 2000s as well. As part of the new legislation that prohibits smoking indoors, depicting any form of smoking on television was banned in Turkey in 2008. After this date, Turkish TV series started to be shot by keeping this law in mind and if any of the characters are seen smoking in the series the image of the cigarette is censored by pixelation or blurring.

Apart from being a direct state intervention in the narratives of Turkish TV series, after the legislation the broadcasting of foreign TV shows and films as well as old Turkish movies became highly problematic for TV channels because all images of smoking had to be censored. As Ece Temelkuran notes, in some situations, pixelation or blurring could cover all the facial expressions of the characters on television and take all enjoyment and pleasure away from watching. (Temelkuran 2008) TV channel cNBC-e which was known for broadcasting foreign films and TV shows like *Mad Men* (2007-2015), in which the characters are seen chain-smoking throughout the first few seasons, used a highly creative technique to protest against this law. The channel used graphic flowers to cover the cigarettes seen on television instead of blurring or pixelating the image. In this way, the image of the graphic flower gradually turned into the symbol of the cigarette in the minds of the audiences. This substitution opened a platform for joking about the prohibition. For instance, in an episode of the Turkish sitcom *Yalan Dünya* (False World, Kanal D, 2012-2014), a man sitting in a bar was depicted as taking a bouquet of daisies to his mouth as if he was smoking. (Ulusum 2012)

Following the smoking ban, in 2013, alcoholic beverages like wine, champagne or *rakı* glasses as well as beer or other alcoholic beverage bottles started to be pixelated or blurred on Turkish televisions on the grounds that these scenes could encourage the public to consume alcohol. (“Yeni alkol düzenlemesi neler getiriyor?” 2013) Before the ban, Bülent Arınç, the Vice Prime Minister at that time, made a declaration himself. He stated

that for him, there are TV series which only revolve around consuming alcohol and he thinks that the protagonists of these series do not make art but should be paid for promoting alcohol. (“Arınç: Sırf Alkollü İçki Üzerine Kurulu Diziler Var” 2013)

Even though prohibitions on the representation of cigarette and alcohol consumption on Turkish television were promoted as a health concern rather than a public morals issue, they are interpreted as a direct state interference in the freedom of choice. By putting a great amount of pressure on the producers and scriptwriters the bans also caused self-censorship. The famous TV actress Beren Saat, the star of *Aşk-ı Memnu*, reacted against the prohibitions and censorship on television by stating that she is really concerned about the censorship and self-censorship in today’s television scene which even prevents the actors and the actresses from holding a wine glass on television. (“Ekranda Sansür, Otosansüre Dönüştü; Elimize Şarap Kadehi Alamıyoruz” 2013) Today, in most Turkish TV series, characters cannot be seen drinking alcohol or smoking. They are seen sitting in restaurants and drinking different coloured, ambiguous drinks which do not resemble any kind of beverage. In other cases, cigarettes and alcoholic beverages are blurred or pixelated.

Therefore, it can be stated that the criteria of public morals continue to be a significant ‘national’ element in the formation the Turkish TV series, probably in a much stricter manner than in the 1990s. The retroactive penalization of the reruns of TV series such as *Şaşıfelek Çıkmazı* (Şaşıfelek Blind, TRT 1, 1996-1998) (“16 yıl sonra gelen ceza!” 2012) explicitly indicates how the situation got stricter and more difficult. Parallel to the rising conservatism and authoritarianism under the JDP rule, a new national image is intended to be designed for Turkish people which are imagined to be non-smokers who do not consume alcohol and keep their sexuality to themselves. In this way, despite the momentary wave of liberation on Turkish television scene, contemporary regulations not only rejuvenate the earlier codes of representing sexuality on Turkish TV series but also expand the scope of these regulations with new prohibitions with the intention of drawing a new national portrait of the ‘new’ Turkey.

4.4.4 The Representation of Class Dynamics

Parallel to the rising neoliberalism in Turkey, wealth became something that is frequently depicted in Turkish TV series in the 2000s. Embodied in the outlook and lifestyle of the upper class characters, certain symbols have been associated with being wealthy. These symbols, which have been mostly borrowed from Yeşilçam films and updated, have been utilized to differentiate upper class characters from lower classes and contribute to the expansion of national stereotypes.

Sevilay Çelenk states that in Turkish TV series, wealthy families are frequently seen living in big mansions employing several servants, drivers and gardeners, eating dinners at the tables flowing with milk and honey, wearing night dresses and expensive accessories in the middle of the day. (Çelenk 2010, p. 24) While elaborating on the popular soap opera *Aşk-ı Memnu*, Zehra Yiğit also points out how Turkish TV series do not only reflect the everyday lives of wealthy people through certain codes such as wearing branded clothes, driving 4x4 cars or taking trips abroad, but also introduce audiences to the conditions of being a member of the upper class. (Yiğit 2012, p. 141)

However, in contemporary Turkish TV series wealth is not only associated with possessing certain consumer goods but also with having a modern and secular outlook. Similar to the representation of the ‘White Turks’ in the 1990s, upper class women are seen in modern outfits without wearing a headscarf and depicted as active members of society, participating in business life. But as in Yeşilçam films which put emphasis on preserving ‘national’ traditions over ‘excessive’ Westernization, this image could be easily utilized in a scenario of degeneration, corruption and tragedy. Upper class characters could be instantly portrayed as degenerate, malicious, unhappy people who intend to destroy the lives of lower class characters. In this way, Turkish TV series reproduce the message that neither money nor ‘excessive’ Westernization bring happiness. By means of this message, while the imaginary wealth and prosperity of the modern, secular upper classes are glorified by a variety of consumption objects, the idea of becoming an upper class character is kept at a safe distance.

Wearing the headscarf in a rural, traditional way continues to be a symbol of being lower class in Turkish TV series of the 2000s. However, the popularity of ‘agha series’ which revolve around the lives of wealthy families living in the rural Anatolia transformed the conditions of this depiction. Wearing a headscarf in a traditional way became accepted as the norm of living in a rural, traditional area by means of these TV series. But the same outlook continued to be a symbol of being a lower class in Turkish TV series set in a big city like Istanbul.

Consequently, under the influence of the contemporary political atmosphere, Turkish TV series create new national stereotypes of upper and lower classes. In this equation, whereas wealth is depicted through certain, exaggerated symbols of consumption and having secular lifestyles, being lower class is associated with having moderate, conventional lives. Particular symbols such as wearing a headscarf in a traditional, rural way also contributes to this portrayal although it depends on where the headscarf is worn. In this way, Turkish TV series point at where the ‘national’ is situated by forming ‘new’ national stereotypes of class or expanding the scope of the ‘old’ ones.

4.4.5 The Conception of the Family

One of the most common ways to banally reflect national values, worldwide, has always been depicting family environment in TV series. Accordingly, the family has always played a significant role in symbolizing the national in Turkish TV series. It has been represented as the initial platform where the national and moral values have been mastered and performed as well as the foundation of community relationships. In the 2000s, the JDP’s social politics towards raising pious generations and strengthening family values made the representation of the family in Turkish TV series more significant. As Ayhan Kaya explains, Tayyip Erdoğan defined his ideal family as with three children in 2008. After this date, on every social occasion such as wedding ceremonies and press conferences, he stressed the importance of having a minimum of three children. He especially addressed women in his speeches in order to remind them of their reproductive capabilities. (Kaya 2015, p. 60)

Under the influence of these contemporary political trends, the ‘family’ was included in almost every Turkish TV series as a popular theme. Scriptwriter Zehra Çelenk explains that in the contemporary television industry, TV channel executives frequently look for family series. If a series has ‘family’ in its title like ‘our family’ or ‘my beloved family’ the project could get enough funding from the executives and be successful. It does not make a difference if the series is a police procedural or a sitcom. Çelenk says that personal relationships of the characters and family should be carried to the forefront more vigorously in Turkey than in the West. Even when the writers do not design the script in such a way as to include the family in the narrative, eventually the producer, the channel executives or the advisors of the show request to redesign the script. (Çelenk Zehra 2010, p. 80)

For that reason, the family as the initial platform where ‘Turkishness’ has been learned and performed has to be emphasized and glorified in almost every Turkish TV series. As Emre Çetin points out, apart from dramedies with a specific focus on family relations, the glorification of family values and relations is also endorsed in other genres such as police procedurals and comedies through the promotion of marriage. (Çetin 2014, p. 2467) In this way, family values continue to be at the centre of Turkish TV series with particular twists, and the family maintains its position as the foundational hub in Turkish TV series where national and moral values are initially established and performed in a banal manner.

4.4.6 The Conception of the Neighbourhood (*Mahalle*)

Neighbourhood has always been a significant element that has been chosen as a setting for TV series worldwide. Following this trend, from the late 1980s, Turkish producers used the neighbourhood as a setting to create low budget, family oriented TV series which significantly refer to the importance of community relations. The ingredients that have been put into this setting have implicitly pointed at the ‘national’. Therefore, by gathering a variety of characters from different social backgrounds in the setting of a neighbourhood, these series reproduced miniature versions of the ‘national’ scenery in which all characters live in peace and harmony, sharing common values.

The neighbourhood continues to be a highly significant national element and still has positive connotations in Turkish TV series. The neighbourhood becomes a national setting to elaborate on the importance of community relationships, solidarity among neighbours and unity of the nation not only in dramedies like *Ekmek Teknesi* (Bread and Butter, ATV 2002-2004; Show TV, 2004-2005), *Canım Ailem* (My Dear Family, ATV, 2008-2010), *Aramızda Kalsın* (Between You and Me, Star TV, 2013-2015), *Akasya Durağı* (Akasya Cabstand, Kanal D 2008-2011; Star TV 2011-2012) and sitcoms such as *En Son Babalar Duyar* (Fathers Know at the very last, TRT 1, 2002-2003; Star TV 2003-2006), *Ayrupa Yakası* and *Yalan Dünya*, but also in soap operas like *Kuzey Güney* (North South, Kanal D, 2011-2013) and in police procedurals such as *Arka Sokaklar* (Back Streets, Kanal D, 2006-).

However, even though the neighbourhood (*mahalle*) has been glorified in Turkish TV series as a place of peace and harmony, its influence on Turkish society became a question parallel to the rising conservatism in the 2000s. *Mahalle baskısı*, which means ‘neighbourhood pressure’ in Turkish, was introduced as a new concept by the devoted Turkish scholar Şerif Mardin. In an interview conducted by the journalist Ruşen Çakır in 2007, Mardin used the term ‘neighbourhood pressure’ in order to explain how the neighbourhood could be a setting where people monitor each other’s behaviours through the act of looking.

According to Mardin, *mahalle* has been a significant part of people’s lives since the Ottoman Empire and it has a really complex structure. For Mardin, during the Ottoman period, *mahalle* constituted of various different agents such as the neighbourhood mosque, the imam in the mosque, Islamic monasteries, social complexes and shopkeepers. After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, this structure was seriously challenged with the appearance of modernized schools in the neighbourhoods. Teachers became one of the fundamental symbols of the republican reforms and contributed to the republican project of nation building by restructuring the communal relationships in a secular manner. (Çakır 2013)

However, for Mardin, this challenge has never been so serious as to wipe out the influence of Islam on *mahalle* because the definition of the ‘good, correct and beautiful’ in the secular, republican discourse has never been as strong as it was in Islamic discourse. The concept of *mahalle* preserved its Islamic connotations and its core structure with some twists. Although Mardin precisely emphasizes that *mahalle* is not a fixed concept but a dynamic and ever changing notion, what is established in its structure is the act of looking. He states that this action works as a control mechanism in *mahalle* especially in structuring male/female relationships. By the act of looking and observing, a monitoring mechanism is established in *mahalle* which frequently exceeds its premises. (Ibid.) By means of this mechanism, *mahalle* turns into a place where acting outside the norms is out of question.

By means of Mardin’s conceptualization of ‘neighbourhood’ as an oppressive influence in the lives of its residents, the idealized representation of neighbourhood in Turkish TV series as a place of peace, harmony and solidarity came under question in the 2000s. As Emre Çetin states, in the 2000s, the changing political and economic atmosphere in Turkey led to the reinvention of the popular as a political platform and ‘family’ was listed among the most popular themes utilized to elaborate on political issues. The neighbourhood was chosen as a setting for representing the everyday crisis of family members. But by being depicted in this setting, family members became “surrounded by the conservative norms and values of neighborhood communities.” (Çetin 2014, p. 2467) Surveillance and control played a major role in defining the norms and values of the neighbourhood which were glorified for their promotion of social integration and solidarity by barely mentioning class differences. (Ibid.)

Therefore, apart from revoking nostalgic feelings about community relations and solidarity, the neighbourhood has been a political space which celebrates conservative values of the ‘new’ Turkey in contemporary Turkish TV series. In order to apply ‘neighbourhood pressure’ through television screens, contemporary Turkish TV series represent the neighbourhood as an ideal space where the norms of the ‘good, correct and beautiful’ are practiced. National values and morals of the ‘new’ Turkey could be expressed in this idealized setting without being recognized immediately by TV

audiences. In this way, the neighbourhood becomes a significant national element which could easily shift between different national discourses in order to reflect an updated image of the nation in a banal manner.

National elements create a 'local' level in Turkish TV series by elaborating on common, everyday matters which are not easily recognizable at first sight. However, they are not fixed, static concepts that are immune to social, economic and political changes in society. National elements transform parallel to the appearance of new definitions, symbols and traditions in the national scene and the series widen their scope by embracing every new element that incorporates in the national imaginary.

In this sense, in the context of rising neoliberalism in Turkey and the 'reinvention' of the 'local' through the JDP's project of nation building as an outcome to this neoliberal turn, the series extended their scope of national elements by including a variety of new national symbols in their repository. In the 2000s, whereas Islamic, neo-Ottomanist and neoliberal symbols were embraced by Turkish TV series as part of the national scene, rising conservatism and changing codes of morality and public decency altered the approach of the series to various issues such as sexuality, community relations and family. Beside all these, secular values continued to shape the national imaginary of Turkish TV series and form the outlook of the characters and their lifestyles.

To reflect the JDP's diverse nationalist discourse which has been described as a mixture of neo-Ottomanist, Islamic and neoliberal values with the residual foundations of official Turkish nationalism, Turkish TV series included various national elements in their narratives in the second half of the 2000s. They glorified the victories of the Ottoman Empire in an Islamic nationalist manner or strengthened the 'us' versus 'them' dynamic by building their narratives on Turkey's struggle against its inner and outer enemies. They designed their narratives in accordance with RTÜK's laws and addressed a common public morality but also the secular foundations of official, Turkish nationalism dominated their national imaginary.

In this context, the series not only extended their scope of national elements by including newly designed markers of the Turkish nation in their repository but also reflected how Turkish society has changed in the 2000s by means of this extension. By being able to easily shift from one national discourse to another, national elements conveniently adapted to the JDP's discursive mixture of neo-Ottomanist, Islamic, neoliberal attributes with the selected elements of the official, Turkish nationalism. In this way, they continued to symbolize the national in Turkish TV series by being harmonized with the contemporary foundations of the national scene.

However, apart from evoking the feeling that Turkish TV series are 'our own', national elements played a crucial role in determining the quality of Turkish TV series. Especially while localizing international genres like police procedurals in the Turkish context, the appropriate usage of national elements in the narratives turned into a significant criterion for deciding if the series genuinely looks like 'our own'. The success and survival of Turkish police procedurals in the highly competitive Turkish television environment have been regularly based on meeting this criterion which opened a whole new discussion about what was understood as being 'original' and 'authentic' in Turkish criticism.

4.5 'OURS OR NOT': DISCUSSING CONTEMPORARY TURKISH POLICE PROCEDURALS

In the 2000s, instead of being completely ignored as a generic category, Turkish police procedural TV series started to be approached as a combination of intertextual flows of elusive inspirations. Even though they were not criticized as harshly as in the 1990s, Turkish police procedurals continued to be compared to their foreign, mostly American counterparts. In these comparisons, they were mostly described as different versions of popular American TV series and either appraised for their successful localisation of the 'Western' police procedural formula or criticized for lacking verisimilitude.

For instance, the celebrated Turkish police procedural TV series *Behzat Ç.: Bir Ankara Polisiyesi* (Behzat Ç: An Ankara Police Procedural, Star TV, 2010-2013), which revolves around the investigations of a chief inspector and his team at the homicide bureau in the

capital city, Ankara, is frequently compared to different American TV shows and films. On the one hand, Behzat (Erdal Beşikçioğlu) who is interpreted as short-tempered, blunt and alcoholic is found resembling Doctor Gregory House of the well-known American medical drama, *House M.D* (2004–2012) by the television critic Deniz Gedizlioğlu. (Gedizoğlu 2010) On the other hand, film critic and scholar Fatih Özgüven associates *Behzat Ç.: Bir Ankara Polisiyesi* with the often imitated Guy Ritchie-Quentin Tarantino mixed formula. For Özgüven, Behzat Ç. meets the needs of white Turkish men who are not interested in Mike Hammer-type racist, rough masculine violence. He describes Behzat Ç. as a character who is indigenous and sarcastic; masculine and adolescent at the same time and desirable for women as well. Özgüven says that Behzat Ç. stands somewhere between Tarantino and Oğuz Atay, the Turkish author of the cherished novel *Erectus Disconnectus* (1970) (Özgüven 2011) thus supporting the idea that Turkish police procedurals are a blend of Western generic conventions and Turkish national elements.

In a similar manner, in a review on the crime/mafia series *Kaçak* (Fugitive, ATV, 2013-2015), television critic and scholar Tayfun Atay says that the series deals with the theme of ‘the return of the hero’ in a mutant manner. *Kaçak* tells the story of an ex-police officer who changes his identity and moves to an uninhabited, rural Anatolian town after he kills the son of an important mafia leader. When his hiding place is exposed, several incidents force him to return to his job as an undercover police officer to get revenge from the mafia. While watching the first episode Atay realized that the series applies to some motives from the western genre; the heroic cowboy figure who is fed up with catching and killing outlaws, starts a family and gets busy with building a ranch but bumps into the outlaws from his past who would kill his wife and children and force him to return to his old ways. (Atay 2013a)

Atay, who comments on another police procedural in one of his reviews, makes similar associations. He talks about *Galip Derviş* (Galip Derviş, Kanal D, 2013-2014) which is a licensed adaptation of the American TV series *Monk* (2002-2009) and states that although it was adapted from *Monk*, for most of the Turkish audiences, especially the older ones, it reminded of a legendary TV persona, *Commissar Columbo*. At least in his experience

of watching the first episode of the show, what was in his mind was not *Monk* but *Columbo*. (Atay 2013b)

Atay adds that the first reaction of his mother in law to *Galip Derviş* was cheering like ‘they tried to make *Columbo* didn’t they?’ He points at the fact that there are international reviews about *Monk*’s being a contemporary version of *Columbo* as well. So, making a connection between *Galip Derviş* and *Columbo* is not odd. However, since no other police procedural/detective TV series was known and celebrated in Turkey like *Columbo*, Turkish audiences embrace *Galip Derviş* by accepting it as a version of *Columbo* instead of *Monk*. Atay also underlines that thanks to the performance of the leading actor Erol Günaydın, the series gets beyond being an adaptation and becomes a localized, indigenous work. (Atay 2013b)

Atay has a point in relating the interest that *Galip Derviş* aroused among Turkish TV audiences with its successful localisation of a ‘foreign’ script because localisation continues to be a substantial issue for a TV series to become successful on the Turkish market. After years of watching Turkish versions of European and American films and TV shows, Turkification became a common, familiar practice for Turkish audiences. By not being much concerned about the legal aspects of this process, what Turkish TV audiences expect is watching a TV series that looks and sounds familiar and addresses shared feelings. If the series do not have a ‘Turkish’ touch, Turkish audiences lose interest and the series could be easily cancelled after a short while due to low ratings. Therefore, it can be said that even in the original works which are not directly adapted from a ‘foreign’ script, harmonizing the global police procedural formula with the contemporary national elements to create cultural verisimilitude plays a significant role in the popularity of Turkish variations of the genre.

4.5.1 Turkish Police Procedurals Caught Up Between the Foreign and the Local

With the appearance of global television genres on Turkish television channels, cultural verisimilitude turned into a major topic for discussing the significant role that the localisation process plays in the success of a TV series on the Turkish market. In reference to Steve Neale's distinction between the concepts of realism and verisimilitude, Christine Gledhill states that verisimilitude "refers not what may or may not *actually* be the case but rather to what the dominant culture *believes* to be the case, to what is generally accepted as credible, suitable, proper." (Gledhill 1997, p. 360) Gledhill continues by explaining Neale's distinction between generic and cultural verisimilitude and clarifies that whereas generic verisimilitude is related to the rules and conventions of the genre that make a fictional world credible for the audiences, "cultural verisimilitude refers us to the norms, mores, and common sense of the social world *outside* the fiction." (Ibid.) National elements that are listed above operate in creating cultural verisimilitude in Turkish police procedurals. By means of the ingredients that they provide, the generic verisimilitude that is constructed by global conventions of the police procedural genre is blended with familiar norms, values and traditions that address Turkish TV audiences. If this indispensable interplay between the global and the local is not achieved compatibly, Turkish police procedurals are frequently criticized for remaining too 'foreign' for their target group.

For instance, while commenting on the short lived Turkish police procedural *Şehrin Melekleri* (Angels of the City, Fox TV, 2015), film critic Murat Tolga Şen emphasizes the dialogues and performances of the series which are incompatible with Turkish culture. He explains that the actors in the show look, talk and act like they belong to the streets of San Francisco rather than Balat, a neighbourhood in Istanbul. He finds the dialogues so odd that for him, by means of these dialogues the series turns into a parody of the police procedural genre rather than being a police procedural itself. (Şen 2015)

Correspondingly, in another review, Şen relates the popularity of the Turkish police procedural *Arka Sokaklar* to its 'folksiness' (*halk işi*), in the meaning of being able to

address the taste of the general public by being easy to understand and identify with. He explains that during the last decade a lot of police procedurals were produced but did not last long because in these shows the police officers were *özenti*, which is translated as “imitation or pretension” (Arslan 2011, p. 18) by Savaş Arslan. They were acting and talking like they were in the streets of San Francisco rather than in Istanbul but *Arka Sokaklar* did not fall into that trap. (Şen 2016)

As Nurdan Gürbilek points out, these kinds of voices are commonly heard in the fields of literature and academia. She states that in academia, theoretical works in Turkish give the impression that they are translated from a Western language or are raw adaptations, even imitations, of an original model. Similarly, in literature, “most Turkish critics blame Turkish novelists for creating secondhand characters lacking spontaneity and originality, characters who are prisoners of imitated desires, copied sensibilities, bookish aspirations, and belated torments.” (Gürbilek 2003, p. 600) For Gürbilek, the reason behind these sensations could be understood by thoroughly examining the tension between foreign theory and local reality because this tension furnishes the local scene with Western concepts that are deviated from their viability.

Critiques that associate the failures of Turkish police procedurals to their ineffectual expression of cultural verisimilitude mirror the blame that Turkish novelists had to face for creating characters that lack originality. In this sense, it could be asserted that the same tension that Gürbilek talks about, between foreign and local, manifests itself in the discourse that surrounds the police procedural genre in Turkey. Within this discourse, the police procedural is not only comprehended as a Western concept but its conventions also turn into decorative figures that blend in with the national elements in Turkish series. In this context, the inclusion of national elements in the narratives gains extra importance not only to establish the codes of cultural verisimilitude but also to revitalize the ‘Western’ conventions of the police procedural genre in the local scene in order to simultaneously maintain generic verisimilitude.

Since this issue is also closely related to the dynamics between the Western model and the non-Western copy, Gürbilek comments more on the tension between foreign and local

by elaborating on the double meaning of ‘the original’ that is ‘*orijinal*’ in Turkish. Nurdan Gürbilek states that the word ‘*orijinal*’ has two different meanings in Turkish. First of all, it means “not derived, borrowed or imitated; initial and pristine” and secondly, it means “brand new, interesting or unique.” (Ibid., p. 604) For Gürbilek, these two different meanings merge into one single meaning in the usage of the word ‘*orijinal*’. Whereas on the one hand, ‘*orijinal*’ refers to something unique and interesting it also means that something is unique and interesting because it is not imitated. Gürbilek notes that these two meanings continue to coexist in one word despite the tension between them. (Ibid.)

Besides, in the nationalistic language, *orijinal* could be associated with the essence and authenticity of the nation. For instance, the historian and Turcologist Mehmet Fuat Köprülü’s early Republican concept, ‘*orijinal Türk ruhu*’ means ‘original Turkish spirit’ in Turkish and refers to “a nationalistic spirit imagined to be the spontaneous product of an autonomous national self.” (Ibid.) However, in the language of the capitalist market, what is meant by ‘*orijinal*’ is something that is imported. As Gürbilek says “an *orijinal* perfume or an *orijinal* blue jean is an import, products of the domestic market mere imitations.” (Ibid.)

This dilemma which is embedded in the usage of the word ‘*orijinal*’ is something that is intrinsic to the very definition of the Turkish police procedural genre. For instance, whereas on the one hand, a popular police procedural like *Arka Sokaklar* could be described as successful for being an interesting and unique show as it is not an imitated but an ‘original’ composition of generic conventions with national elements, an unsuccessful police procedural like *Şehrin Melekleri* could be criticized for being the mere imitation of the ‘original’, that is: the American police procedurals, set in the streets of San Francisco.

In this sense, whereas in *Şehrin Melekleri* the tension between foreign and local becomes apparent, in *Arka Sokaklar* the tension remains in the background by means of the successful blending of Western concepts in the local scene. In this way, by keeping this theoretical background in mind, it can be asserted that Turkish police procedurals are situated somewhere between being an imitation of ‘the Western original’ and becoming

‘original’, interesting and unique themselves by managing to set the delicate balance between cultural and generic verisimilitude.

4.5.2 Coexistence of the West and non-West in Turkish Police Procedurals

Turkish police procedurals are caught up in the perpetual tension between being an original and an imitation but it should be noted that being an imitation and an original is not solely an either/or situation. There is no strict distinction between those two positions. The coexistence of the possibility of being an imitation and an original is inscribed in the very definition of the Turkish police procedural genre which was typified by a continuous movement between foreign and local.

Similar to Yeşilçam films of the 1950s to 1970s, Turkish police procedurals explore “a global field of coexistence, of the West and non-West, of the colonizer and the colonized, of the paranoiac and the neurotic.” (Arslan 2011, p. 136) The coexistence of the desire to be like the West and knowing the impossibility of actually fulfilling this desire motivate Turkish police procedurals as well. In this sense, it can be claimed that like Yeşilçam films, Turkish police procedurals are also caught up in “a perpetual movement between self and other without a return to original self or without a refuge at its other.” (Ibid. p. 137)

In the 1990s, the relations of Turkish police procedurals with other, mostly American TV series were built upon a discourse of lack and inferiority. However, this discourse found itself a new direction with the changing political atmosphere under the JDP rule. The rising self-confidence of the television executives and producers, who were encouraged by the economic growth of the industry, paved the way to the re-conception of the ‘other’ and redesigned the motivation behind the production of Turkish police procedurals.

While elaborating on the success of Turkish soap operas in the international market, Turkish television critic Sina Koloğlu, as referenced by Mathieu Rousselin, says “U.S. cultural imperialism is finished. Years ago we took reruns of ‘*Dallas*’ and ‘*The Young and the Restless*’. Now Turkish screenwriters have learned to adapt these shows to local

themes with Muslim storylines. Turkish production values have improved, and Asians and Eastern Europeans are buying Turkish series, not American or Brazilian or Mexican ones. They get the same cheating and the children out of wedlock and the incestuous affairs but with a Turkish sauce on top.” (Rousselin 2013, pp. 19-20)

In an interview conducted with İrfan Şahin, the CEO of Doğan TV as well as a former police officer and the scriptwriter of the crime TV series *Kayıp* (Missing, Kanal D, 2013-2014), Şahin says that while shooting the series their initial aim was to meet the quality standards of American TV channels instead of getting high ratings. He explains that they imagined that they burn the episodes of the series on a CD, take it to any channel in the United States and ask them to broadcast it. If they say ‘yes’ they would consider themselves as having met the quality standards they wanted to meet. (“‘Kayıp’ ABD’de yayımlanacak kalitede bir dizi” 2013)

Throughout the interview, the Turkish television industry is compared to the American television industry in terms of capacity and technology, as such reflecting the desire to be like the West. However, what distinguishes Şahin’s ambition from the motivation of earlier broadcasters that idealized American TV industry in the 1990s is that Şahin believes that in today’s television environment, Turkish TV broadcasters can achieve what they wish for, be successful on the American market or even compete with American TV series on foreign markets. Şahin emphasizes that today, the Turkish culture, lifestyle and system of thought go beyond the borders of the country and he adds that there is little difference between the Turkish and American TV industry. American TV companies are only much better at sound design which, for him, puts Turkish TV series behind. (Ibid.)

Alternatively, despite the growing self-confidence of the Turkish television executives, the West, especially the American TV industry, is still defined as the highest common denominator of progress and quality and is idealized to a certain extent. Şahin’s emphasis on the number of special effects that were used in the first episode of *Kayıp* and his glory in saying that the American company that worked on popular TV series like *Gossip Girl* (2007–2012) and *Suits* (2011–) was involved in making the sound and special effects of the series contribute to his idealization of the American TV industry.

However, it is not only in the case of *Kayıp* that the involvement of American companies and crew members became a marker for the production value of the series and their potential success. The involvement of the American trainers and consultants in the making of the contemporary Turkish police procedural *Filinta* was especially underlined. *Filinta*, which is set at the end of the 19th century during the reign of the Ottoman Empire and revolves around the adventures of a young police officer, Mustafa (Onur Tuna), and his team, is the first attempt to combine the police procedural genre with historical drama. Before the series started to be broadcasted, lots of voices have been raised concerning the high budget of the show, the big plateau that has been used for the production and especially the American team that has been helping the Turkish team behind the scenes.

The consultant of the show, Bobby Roth, was introduced as the director of famous American TV series such as *Lost* (2004–2010), *Revenge* (2011–2015) and *Prison Break* (2005–2009). The team behind the design of the action scenes was promoted as the support coming from ‘Hollywood’. It was especially highlighted that the actors in the series were trained for the action scenes by Dusan Hyska and his stunt team which worked in the films like *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) and *Spider-Man* (2002) for over four months and David Craig Forrest, known by his work in *Charlie’s Angels* (2000), *Jaws 3* (1983) and *Basic Instinct* (1992) was involved in make-up and styling. Because of all this, *Filinta* is frequently defined as a TV series which goes beyond the standards of Turkish TV industry. (Öztürk 2014) The director of the series, Osman Kaya, even states that what they achieved in *Filinta* was what has been described as unachievable in Turkey. He magnifies the show by stating that they use the same technical equipment and software that have been used in Hollywood and in European cinema. (“Bu ülkede yapılamaz denileni *Filinta*’da hayata geçirdik” 2016)

Apart from pointing at the involvement of international crew members in the making of a Turkish TV series and the transnationalization of the industry in that sense, the emphasis on the American ‘support’ in the production of *Filinta* indicates how the helping hands of American ‘specialists’ still carry great importance in elevating the production value of a Turkish police procedural and count as a promotion material. Alternatively, the collaboration of Turkish production teams with the American ‘specialists’ also signals

Turkish television industry's progress towards reaching the American standards and fulfilling the desire of becoming like the West.

In the contemporary Turkish television environment, the growing transnationalization of the production processes makes the Western influence on Turkish police procedurals apparent. Under these circumstance, much more weight falls on the representation of national elements to set the balance right between cultural and generic verisimilitude. National elements which have undergone several changes in the social, political and economic atmosphere of the 2000s have to appear in more crystallized, diversified and heterogenized forms in order to reflect a 'persuasive' picture of the nation. In this way, Turkish police procedurals could be perceived as 'original' productions in a unique and interesting way by achieving the perfect balance between generic and cultural verisimilitude.

4.6 CONCLUSION

Under the influence of the historical legacy of the post-1980s, the Turkish national scene has changed considerably in the 2000s. When the JDP came to power in 2002 the newly established government vigorously appropriated this historical legacy with certain twists. It intended to redesign Turkish national identity from scratch and restructure the lifestyle of people in accordance with new national and moral values. In order to achieve this, a new national narrative has been created through the invention of new traditions, new origin stories, new foundational myths and a new original folk. In this way, the JDP formed a different nationalist discourse for the 'new' Turkey which was a blend of neo-Ottomanist, Islamic and neoliberal nationalist values with some residual attributes of official Turkish nationalism.

The Turkish television industry has been affected by this new nationalist discourse and the JDP's politics in the fields of economy, democratization and foreign policy in different ways in different periods. Whereas in the JDP's golden age, a more multi-vocal television culture was established parallel to its reforms on the democratization front, the rising conservatism and authoritarianism suppressed this multi-vocal environment in

the following years. However, in economic terms, Turkish television industry benefitted from the rising neoliberalism considerably and despite the challenging developments in the Turkish politics, it kept growing.

The Turkish TV series industry has strongly benefitted from this expansion. During this period, Turkish TV series not only became extremely popular in Turkey but also expanded to the global markets. With the encouragement of the JDP's 'soft power' strategies in foreign policy, Turkish TV series turned into a phenomenon especially in the Middle East but their popularity has also spread to Balkan and Latin American countries. In this way, Turkish TV series were not only perceived as diplomatic tools to strengthen Turkey's image, especially in its own region but also contributed to the proliferation of Turkish popular culture.

The changing national scenery in the 2000s has also influenced the contents and the outlooks of Turkish TV series to a great extent. National elements that are embedded in the series changed shape parallel to the transformation of Turkish society. As a consequence of the JDP's nation building processes, neo-Ottomanism increased its influence on Turkish TV series by bringing Islamic, nationalist and conservative themes to the forefront. Television channels faced censorship and penalization while representing sexuality, smoking and alcohol consumption. New national stereotypes were created in accordance with the glorification of neoliberal ideas and consumer culture. Neighbourhood and family environments reproduced the national and moral values in an updated manner. But the secular foundations of the nation continued to dominate the outlook of the characters and lifestyles in Turkish TV series.

National elements play crucial roles in the localisation of the police procedural genre in the Turkish context. The expansion of their repositories with the inclusion of new national symbols, traditions and regulations affects Turkish police procedurals' portrayal of the national scene to a great extent. However, national elements do not only reveal the local level in Turkish police procedurals but they also become significant in determining the success of Turkish police procedurals on the local market.

Turkish police procedurals are frequently criticized for being mere imitations of their ‘Western models’ or for being inadequate to harmonize the ‘Western’ generic conventions of the genre with local elements. Apart from pointing at the constant need to compare Turkish products with their Western others, these critiques indicate how Turkish police procedurals are caught up in the great tension between the local and the foreign, the non-West and the West or being an imitation and an original. However, this does not mean that Turkish police procedurals are stuck in an either/or situation. The Western and the non-Western elements essentially coexist in Turkish police procedurals and this coexistence does not only make them constantly move between Western and non-Western ingredients but also leads them to regularly re-evaluate their position against their ‘Western counterparts’.

Whereas this constant repositioning appeared in the early Turkish police procedurals as an inferiority complex in the 1990s, under the influence of the self confidence that has been gained from the economic growth and global success, contemporary Turkish police procedurals have formed a different understanding of the ‘Western other’. On the one hand, instead of being an unreachable desire, today the ‘Western other’ turned into something that can be competed with. On the other hand, collaborations with American production companies or ‘specialists’ still carry great importance to enhance the value of a TV series. Therefore, the ‘Western other’ continues to be perceived as the foreign model to a certain extent.

Under the influence of these sensitive dynamics, contemporary Turkish police procedurals create their own responses to the ‘Western’ police procedural genre by struggling to set the balance between the ‘foreign’ generic conventions and ‘local’ cultural norms. With the intention of elaborating more on this issue, the next chapter concentrates on the role that the national elements play in establishing this balance between generic and cultural verisimilitude by focusing on case studies of four contemporary Turkish police procedurals. Apart from discussing the global conventions of the genre which make these series recognizable for Turkish TV audiences as police procedurals, the chapter concentrates on the utilization of national elements in these

selected series and the role that they play in constructing ‘local’ discourses of crime in the Turkish context.



5 CONTEMPORARY TURKISH POLICE PROCEDURALS

In an attempt to set a balance between the ‘foreign’ and the ‘local’, contemporary Turkish police procedurals combine the global conventions of the genre and the national elements that are profoundly elaborated on in previous chapters. As they harmonize these components, every series create its own response to the genre in terms of its utilization of each element. On the one hand, the localisation of the generic conventions plays a significant role in making the series familiar and recognizable in the Turkish context. On the other hand, the ideological positioning of the series against the dominant nationalist discourse regulates the contribution of the embedded national elements to the narratives. As a consequence of this continuous interplay, long lasting contemporary Turkish police procedurals create their own discourses about crime which are meaningful in the Turkish context and manage to become ‘original’, interesting and unique works instead of being mere ‘imitations’ of the ‘Western model’.

In order to clarify how this interplay works in practice, this chapter concentrates on the examination of four contemporary Turkish police procedurals. The case studies that are chosen for this examination are *Arka Sokaklar* (Backstreets, Kanal D, 2006-), an action oriented Turkish police procedural which has been broadcasting for ten years; *Kanıt* (The Evidence, Kanal D, 2010-2013), a forensic TV series which can be considered as the Turkish *CSI*; *Behzat Ç.: Bir Ankara Polisiyesi* (Behzat Ç.: An Ankara Police Procedural, Star TV, 2010-2013) which is considered as a highly provocative TV series because of its critical narration of contemporary political issues ; and *Filinta* (Flintlock, TRT 1, 2014-2016), a historical police procedural which revolves around the adventures of an Ottoman police commissar.

After introducing the global conventions and the dominant discourses of the police procedural genre, the chapter examines these series in terms of their utilization of the global conventions of the genre and their usage of national elements based on their ideological positioning. In this way, it intends to understand what kinds of discourses about crime are produced in these series and to comprehend the formation of the police

procedural genre in the Turkish context with its own dynamics, always in interaction with the global.

5.1 ‘GLOBAL’ CONVENTIONS OF THE POLICE PROCEDURAL GENRE

Generic verisimilitude is constructed in police procedural TV series by a set of rules which manage the expectations and hypotheses of TV audiences. However, apart from mediating audience expectations and enjoyments, generic verisimilitude also points at the foundations of the genre which spread worldwide through various channels. As police procedurals are promoted at international trade shows and exported to different countries, their generic foundations also travel with them. As was elaborately discussed in the second chapter, these foundations are localized by means of dubbing, subtitling, scheduling and publicity and their messages are interpreted differently in different countries. At the same time, they also promote the generic formula in various locations and encourage the production of indigenous versions of police procedural TV series.

The police procedural genre travels well around the world. As Deborah Jermyn explains, “crime series have maintained a regular presence in television schedules the world over, enjoying the status of a ‘banker’ genre among programmers eager to secure a loyal and sizeable audience.” (Jermyn 2013, p. 1) Especially the popularity of American police procedurals frequently exceeds the limits of their own country and they find new audiences across the world. It is possible to see popular American police procedurals such as *NCIS: Naval Criminal Investigative Service* (2003-) or *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* (2000-2015) franchises along with many others among the most popular U.S. TV shows that are broadcasted around the world. (Adalian 2015)

In their study on *Dallas*, Tamar Liebes and Elihu Katz stress how American popular culture easily travels around the world and how from films and fast food to pop music and blue jeans, American advertising gets hold of more or less everything. Liebes and Katz list three reasons for the worldwide success of American television. First of all, they state that some of the themes and formulae of American television are universal or primordial so that it makes the programmes more psychologically accessible. Secondly,

for Liebes and Katz, the polyvalence in the programmes reflects values that function as projective mechanisms for the audiences or they provide significant materials to negotiate over for the families. Finally, Liebes and Katz explain that since many American programmes are available in the marketplace they present an alternative for the national broadcasters who cannot afford to fill the airtime with local products. (Liebes and Katz 1993, p. 5)

American police procedurals have been very popular on Turkish channels especially until the development of Turkish TV series industry at the end of the 1990s. As explained in the second and third chapters, these series introduced the police procedural formula to the Turkish audiences and turned it into a 'model' for Turkish broadcasters. Tim Adler explains that police procedurals continue to be the most popular drama format around the world and American police procedurals keep dominating the television market. In 2011, *CSI* was recognized as the number one franchise at the Monte Carlo Television Awards. (Adler 2011) *NCIS* received the same award at the festival in 2015. (Palmarès des Nymphes d'Or golden Nymphs Award Winners 2015)

Apart from *CSI*, which reached almost 65.3 million audiences worldwide, *Hawaii 5-0* (2010-) and *Blue Bloods* (2010-) were listed by Adler among the most popular police procedurals that grabbed global attention. For him, police procedurals are like comfort food because at the end of the day what they provide the audiences is a sense of security and closure by depicting how justice is served and order is restored. John Peek, director of the qualitative research company TAPE, quoted by Adler, states that "the continuing trend is for procedurals because they use a predictable structure. You know what you're getting, which makes them palatable when they're dubbed. Shows that obey the basic rules are easier for audiences overseas to get to grips with." (Adler 2011) As Adler notes, nowadays, five big national European broadcasters pay an amount between 30,000 and 400,000 U.S. dollars for an hour of a U.S. police procedural.

What can be inferred from the continuing popularity of American police procedurals around the world is that the rules of the genre are set by these well-known TV series. Different versions of the genre are produced in various locations by drawing on national

and cultural norms and expanding the limits of the genre. For instance, the popularity of Nordic police procedurals such as *Forbrydelsen* (2007–2012) and *Bron/Broen* (2011–) reshapes the dynamics of global television flows. (Dodd 2015) But at least in the Turkish context, the basic set of generic rules that influence the production of Turkish police procedurals continue to be American, before anything else. Therefore, while explaining the foundational set of rules that stand out in the genre, American police procedurals are taken into consideration.

One way of determining these rules is closely related to what Stuart M. Kaminsky calls ‘cataloguing its conventions’. In order to achieve this, Kaminsky raises some questions such as what kind of protagonists appear in the stories, what sort of settings have been used, what kind of people the protagonists get in touch with or which objects serve a useful purpose. (Kaminsky 1985, p. 53)

Stuart M. Kaminsky’s method partially corresponds to the suggestions that Arthur Asa Berger gives in his article on how to analyse media and popular culture products from a cross-cultural perspective. Berger, who particularly focuses on television texts, proposes that while examining similar kinds of texts from different countries the analysis implicitly relies on a comparison. Since the similarities between the texts are mostly based on their genres Berger suggests some topics to focus on in order to make this comparative analysis more systematic. (Berger 1992, pp. 16-19)

Inspired by from Berger’s ideas and Kaminsky’s questions, the generic formula of police procedural genre is examined below in accordance with specific topics that Berger suggests in his article. But particular topics are also added to the list by considering Kaminsky’s questions concerning the police procedural genre. The further analyses of contemporary Turkish police procedurals are also based on the same topics in order to clearly understand how this formula is adapted in the Turkish context.

5.1.1 Social Class, Values and Characteristics of the Characters

For Stuart M. Kaminsky, there are two types of police officers in the police procedurals on television. In the first type, police officers are uniformed like in *Police Story* (1973–1979) and *The Rookies* (1972–1976). This type usually revolves around the relations of police officers with governmental institutions. In the second type, police officers have a lot of common characteristics with the classical private detective figures like Sherlock Holmes or Hercule Poirot. (Kaminsky 1985, p. 55) However, there are significant distinctions between these policemen and the classical private detective figures.

As Kaminsky underlines, the proletarian nature of the police detectives make them different from these classical figures. Although they do not have the great intellectual power like Holmes and Poirot, the police detectives understand the human condition and share the feelings of others. It is their very commonness which determines the process of their investigation. (Ibid.) Significant abilities of the police officers are their intuition and their being ‘street-smart’. (Giles 1985, p. 72)

Besides, the protagonists of the police procedurals inevitably belong to a specific social class. Policemen are frequently presented as lower middle class people and determined to protect the values of this social group. As in the example of *Columbo*, the car they drive, the way they talk and the way they dress make their social class visible. (Kaminsky 1985, p. 60) Kaminsky adds that police procedurals are usually a version of a lower-middle class tragedy. As a part of the job, the police officers suffer for society, take the risk to lose their own mental health and even to lose their lives as well as their loved ones. In the end, police procedurals do not come to a closure since tracking down the criminals never ends. (Ibid., p. 66)

Even though protagonists are majorly responsible for catching the criminals, partnership is very important in the police procedurals since no policeman works alone. Different from the private detectives, policemen are usually part of a social group and depend on other people while working on a case. Policemen only become successful when they get

along with the other members of the team. When they stand alone they become vulnerable to outside threats. (Ibid., pp. 55-56)

Besides, the protagonist of the police procedural is both emotionally and organizationally dependent on communicating with other police officers. The sound of the radio is constantly heard on the background during the narrative and keeps the protagonists in touch with their co-workers. (Giles 1985, pp. 73-74) Since the police procedural is a dominantly male genre, partnerships are frequently based on male bonding. But in the 1970s, with the appearance of TV shows such as *Police Woman* (1974–1978) and *Cagney and Lacey* (1981–1988), female protagonists started to be seen in the exclusively male police communities. (Kaminsky 1985, pp. 55-56)

5.1.2 Setting and Tools

Police procedurals are mostly set in urban places. As Kaminsky emphasizes, the city is usually represented as a potential jungle which should be protected from the animals/the criminals. (Ibid., p. 63) Police officers use specific tools during their pursuits of the criminals in the city, such as guns, automobiles, computers, radio or more complicated technological items which mostly constitute the iconography of the genre, together with the urban settings and particular clothing. The automobile has a particular importance in police procedurals and is utilized as a tool to catch the criminals. In a car chase, the police officers also have the opportunity to prove their car driving skills. It is expected that the police officers have great mastery of the car and their driving skills are better than those of the criminals. (Ibid., p. 65)

Kaminsky notes that even the way that police officers handle the gun turns into a conventional element in police procedurals. For instance, before the Vietnam War, the police officer stood with his side to the targets and aimed at them by taking the direction of the barrel as a reference point. His pistol was usually at his arm's length and his attitudes was almost dispassionate. However, nowadays, the pistol is held with two hands and the police officers crouches in order to face the target head-on. This position is

accepted as the professional stance and the representation of a trained posture on television. (Ibid., p. 64)

5.1.3 Plot Construction

In police procedurals, narrative events usually occur in a specific order. The first thing that happens in a police series is the execution of the crime. After that, police officers are assigned to the case which is usually followed by the widening of the disruption with the execution of some other crimes. At one point, the police officers and the criminal meet. However, this encounter might happen by chance and the police officers may not know that the person that they meet is the criminal or they may know but do not have enough evidence to put the criminal behind bars. (Ibid., p. 61)

Following these events, the trail begins. In order to catch the criminal, the police officers should get in touch with people from various social backgrounds. They have to talk to the rich or the poor, bartenders, taxi drivers, company executives or bums. This trail frequently leads to the second encounter of the police officers with the criminal which might end up being physical. Kaminsky notes that this physical encounter usually occurs in an urban arena in which they challenge each other in a combat. (Ibid., p. 62) However, as Giles notes, interrogation can be considered as a verbal combat as well. (Giles 1985, p. 73) Following this confrontation, the final step becomes the capture of the criminal.

After the criminals are caught punishment is frequently left to the court since the job of the police is described as surveillance, trailing and detainment. However, in police procedurals, the court is usually represented as an obstacle that prevents justice by refusing to punish the criminals. So, the police officers are frequently heard complaining about the justice system which releases the criminals after twenty four hours even though they do their jobs correctly. Most of the time, the police officers are forced into the situation where they have to play both the judge and the jury. They are left with no choice but shooting the criminal in self-defence to prove that punishment is a much better option than rehabilitation. (Ibid., p. 71)

5.1.4 Dominant Themes and Ideology

The generic conventions of police procedurals do not only establish the rules of the genre to construct generic verisimilitude but they also carry ideological messages. Besides, as John Fiske points out, verisimilitude is an ideological practice. Fiske says that “we approach the fictional world of realism with the same easy familiarity with which we approach the world of our social experience: the two worlds are equivalent in that they are open to the same ideological reading practices.” (Fiske 2002, p. 129) In this sense, police procedural TV series are not only a collection of generic rules and conventions but also can be approached as cultural forums.

Getting his inspiration from Horace Newcomb and Paul Hirsch’s article *Television as a Cultural Forum*, Jonathan Nichols Pethick brings the ideological conflicts and contradictions that are embedded in police procedurals to the forefront by approaching TV texts as cultural forums. As Pethick emphasizes, for Newcomb and Hirsch television texts do not directly transmit ideology but are complex forms, associated with more sophisticated processes of cultural interpretation and examination. (Pethick 2012, p. 15) The complexity of television texts as cultural forums is what makes the police procedural a battleground through which conflicting or controversial issues have been introduced into society and brought up for discussion.

Therefore, approaching television as a ‘cultural forum’ makes it convenient to think about the police procedural genre not only as a system of conventions “but as a site for dialogue, for engaging a variety of discourses about crime.” (Ibid., p. 17) For that reason, focusing on the issues that have been majorly discussed in the police procedural TV series would contribute to a deeper understanding of how “various systems of plausibility, motivation, justification, and belief” (Neale 2000, p. 158) have been established in the genre and enable to look at police procedural TV series from a much broader perspective.

5.1.4.1 Law and order rhetoric

Referring to Brooks Robards, Jonathan Nichols Pethick states that police procedurals tend to be comprehended as obsessed with showing the everlasting struggle over right and wrong. Their appropriation of the law and order rhetoric and their emphasis on the importance of social order and the necessity of eliminating unlawfulness frequently cause the conception of the genre as a conservative one in scholarly criticism. (Pethick 2012, pp. 7-8)

According to Pethick, the representation of police figures in the police procedural TV series as unquestionably morally right contributes to the criticism underlining the conservative nature of the genre. As in the pioneering TV classic *Dragnet* (1951–1959), this righteousness of the police is “represented as either a distanced and paternal professionalism [...] or as a heroic willingness to risk life and livelihood in pursuit of justice.” (Ibid., p. 8)

As Megan Gala explains, in *Dragnet* the emotionless attitude of the police officers promoted the clear cut line between right and wrong. The world of *Dragnet* was a place in which the police worked to serve and protect. The procedures were black and white and operated through binary oppositions like good and evil, right and wrong, innocent and guilty, crime and punishment, and criminal and cop. There was no place for ifs, ands or maybes. (Gala 2006, p. 6)

The morally unquestionable binary oppositions that shaped the world of *Dragnet* continued to dominate the universe of police procedurals in later years. Charlotte Brunsdon states that the ‘law and order’ rhetoric in police procedurals increased in the period of the 1980s and the 1990s with the emphasis of the conservative British government on being ‘tough on crime and on the causes of crime’ in the United Kingdom. (Brunsdon 1998, p. 223) As Jonathan Nichols-Pethick points out, the situation was not very different in the United States. In order to strengthen his ‘tough on crime’ rhetoric, in 1982 President Ronald Reagan created a special task force to serve to the victims of crime, which influenced the narrative of police procedurals at that time. Pethick highlights the

influence of the films such as Daniel Petrie's *Fort Apache, The Bronx* (1981) and Alan and Susan Raymond's television documentary *The Police Tapes* (1977) in which the precinct was depicted as the last surviving frontline against the police's war against crime. (Pethick 2012, p. 51)

Eventually, in the 1980s, what *Hill Street Blues* (1981–1987) illustrated on television was “a modern metaphoric nightmare, replete with gang warfare, burned-out storefronts, deteriorating public utilities, and a civic service overseen by increasingly absent and self-centered bureaucrats.” (Ibid., p. 53) Other popular police procedurals also based their narratives on the consequences of menacing crimes and the necessity of law and order by adopting different approaches. For instance, whereas *Hunter* (1984–1991) built its narrative on retribution by shooting all the criminals down, in *Cagney and Lacey* (1981–1988) police detectives tried to protect the rights of the victims in a more nonviolent manner. (Ibid., p. 58)

Although different series show different approaches to the law and order rhetoric, it continues to be the backbone of the genre. However, what is different in the contemporary police procedurals in comparison with the black and white world of *Dragnet* is that their universes allow more grey areas and express various, conflicting points of views while questioning the dichotomies such as right and wrong, truth and lie, criminal and police as well as justice and injustice.

5.1.4.2 Distrust in the legal system and private enterprises

In the 1980s, economic and social changes brought new conflicts and controversies to be worked through on television screens in general and in police procedurals in particular. The realities of the era were replaced by the fantasies of limitless wealth and unrestrained visual pleasure. (Feuer 1995, p. 1) As a consequence of this replacement, the discourses that were embedded in the police procedural genre were extended and the law and order discourse that the genre mostly relied on was transformed.

During this period, the concept of the liberal welfare state was placed at the centre of every problem including the dysfunctionality of public institutions. The system of law which was criticised for protecting criminals and obstructing justice was blamed for the same reason. (Ibid., p. 28) According to Jane Feuer, television forms expressed their frustration with the legal system in various forms. Especially, police procedurals like *Hill Street Blues* commented on the problems with the legal system by creating a world in which criminals get away with anything because of legal technicalities. (Ibid., p. 20)

Alternatively, Charlotte Brunsdon states that the social and economic developments that privatization brought in the 1980s were morally challenging for the universe that was built upon the principles of law and order. The new discourses that came with privatization recast the actions which were previously considered to be immoral as simply enterprising. The privileges that were exercised by private enterprises and the propagation of the idea of ‘each man for himself’ collided with the ideologies of police work. Whereas the law and order discourse worked in a universe in which the attributes of guilt, innocence and blame could be clearly detected, in the new world of privatization there were no obvious lines between good and evil. (Brunsdon 1998, p. 226)

As a part of this new understanding, the connections between policing and private entrepreneurship started to be questioned as well. Freemasonry appeared as a new context in the police procedurals. The possible mutual benefits of the police detectives and the private entrepreneurs gave the genre a new direction to discuss the power of the police as well as the legitimate and corrupt usages of police privileges such as accessing the police computers and databases. Altering records, selling or blackmailing with information that can only be known by the police became the new topics that police procedurals dwelled on in order to comment on the social and economic challenges of the new era. (Ibid.)

5.1.4.3 Class, ethnicity and gender

Class, ethnicity and gender can be considered among the dominant topics that police procedurals concentrate on. In terms of class, Richard Sparks states that no systematic connection was built between crime and poverty in police procedurals. Criminals who are

represented as poor are usually depicted as the minions of a criminal organization or the victims of an extremely wealthy criminal mastermind. Sparks notes that corrupt business people, politicians, mob bosses and drug lords appear as the 'actual' dangerous classes of the police procedural. For Sparks, one of the most interesting features of the police procedural is that "it continually stresses social disturbance, sited in the city, in the bars and car-parks and tenement buildings, yet the lumpenproletarian threat exists only in so far as it is co-ordinated by some sort of shadowy criminal ruling elite." (Sparks 1992, p. 143)

However, although police procedurals do not build a direct link between criminality and poverty, when it comes to race and ethnicity they tend to produce negative stereotypes of ethnic minorities, representing them as living in 'poor, dangerous' neighbourhoods of the city. As Roger Sabin states, in early police procedurals ethnic minorities were marginalized. Parallel to real world discourses about race and criminality, African Americans occasionally appeared in these shows as threatening figures. (Sabin et. al. 2015, p. 4) In a similar manner, the appearance of the Italian, Russian or Irish immigrants as the leaders and members of the organized crime can be considered as an extension of the negative stereotyping of ethnic minorities.

However, from the 1980s, police procedurals such as *Hill Street Blues*, *Miami Vice* (1984–1990) and *Cagney and Lacey* pushed the limits of the genre regarding race, class, and gender. (Pethick 2012, p. 20) Women and minorities recurrently started to be seen in the casts, bringing a variety of different sensibilities and social experiences with them to make crime more understandable. (Ibid., p. 73) Alternatively, the issues of race and gender continued to dominate the agenda of the police procedural genre when the issue came to questioning 'who can police' and 'who cannot police'. The British TV classic of the 1990s, *Prime Suspect* (1991-2006), addressed the question of 'who can police' by representing straight white women, straight black men and gay white men, depicting each of them as more trustworthy than their white male colleagues (Brunsdon 1998, p. 235) and shifting the representation of white, straight, male police detectives as powerful, heroic figures.

The issues of gender started to occupy the agenda of police procedurals once again in the 1990s when the discourse of 'equal opportunities' came to light with Alison Halford filing a report of sexual discrimination in 1990 after her application for promotion was refused nine times even though she was the highest ranking British policewoman. Brunsdon states that Halford's case became an important issue in Great Britain and influenced the police procedural genre profoundly. *Prime Suspect*, casting Helen Mirren as DCI Jane Tennison, was directly influenced by the issue of equal opportunities. (Ibid., p. 227)

However, as Feasey emphasizes, the female detective in police procedurals almost always appeared as a direct challenge to hegemonic masculinity and *Prime Suspect*, which stressed the sexism and discrimination in the police force, was no exception. The male police detectives were either coerced to put up with their female colleagues as in *Police Woman* or the female detectives were entrusted to investigate misogynist and domestic crimes as in *Cagney and Lacey*. (Feasey 2008, pp. 83-84) Therefore, even though contemporary police procedurals changed their approach to the issues of class, race and gender, the dominant masculine attribute of the genre was not modified. As Feasey emphasizes, the focus of police and crime dramas on the public sphere, professional roles and a line of work dominantly occupied by men, make the genre one of the most masculine ones on television and the heart of the most vigorous representations of hegemonic masculinity. (Ibid., p. 80)

Nevertheless, representations of masculinity in police procedurals have not been absolute and stable, instead changing in parallel with historical and social developments in the conception of the police institution and manhood. Feasey discusses that whereas in the 1950s police procedurals reflected a more reasonable and respectful police force that was constituted of drinking, gambling but also caring men, in the 1970s police officers started to be represented as harsh, combative, aggressive heroes. By using violence as a method to fight crime, police officers started to be seen resorting to extreme ways and even breaking the law to catch the criminals. Accordingly, police brutality, corruption and institutional racism became major issues that were discussed in the series. (Ibid., pp. 82-83)

For Feasey, in contrast with the female-driven police procedurals, in the cop shows with male leads masculinity is not put under the scope to be discussed as an issue, although in these shows masculinity is performed in a very distinctive way. Feasey explains that male police officers or detectives are represented as devoted men who put the needs of the public sphere above their private lives. By ignoring the demands and problems in their family lives they sacrifice their personal relationships for the good of society. (Ibid., p. 84) However, the representation of masculinity in crisis is usually accepted as an established characteristic of the genre in most of the police procedurals and does not appear as a particular social and cultural issue to be commented on.

5.1.5 Visual Style

Particular visual styles dominate police procedural TV series which have appeared, changed, disappeared and recurred in different forms in the course of time. These visual styles which constitute of different camera work, lighting and shooting techniques not only equip police procedural TV series with ‘a familiar look’ but also carry the ideological messages that the series intend to reflect. Although different police procedural TV series apply different visual techniques, three dominant trends can be listed as markers of the police procedural genre.

5.1.5.1 Documentary realism

Documentary realism can be considered as one of the major visual styles frequently used in the police procedural TV series. *Dragnet* was the pioneering TV classic that contributed to the establishment of documentary realism as a visual style. Megan Gala states that the ideology behind *Dragnet* took its strength from its assertion of ‘playing truth not fiction’. In order to enhance the realism of the show, rather than focusing on dramatic action and violence creator John Webb chose to concentrate on the procedure of the police work, adding some elements like police jargon, paperwork, pursuing the leads, interviewing the witnesses and chitchat between the partners. (Gala 2006, p. 3)

Gala underlines that *Dragnet*'s camera work was slow and its pace was methodical, only focusing on police procedures and their daily tasks. *Dragnet*'s use of voice-overs that inform the audience about the weather, the chief's name, his partner's name, the leads they follow and the locations they visit during the investigation enhanced the sense of realism and created the feeling as if the audiences followed the police officers working on the case. (Ibid., pp. 5-6) Different from other shows on TV at that time, *Dragnet* was shot on film. The real locations of Los Angeles such as the front of the courthouse and the police station were used. It was difficult and expensive but contributed to creating a sense of realism and authenticity in the way that Webb wanted. (Ibid., p. 9)

The appearance of *Hill Street Blues* on television in the 1980s was a breaking point for the police procedural genre since it reworked the conventions of documentary realism that had been previously set by *Dragnet* and its successors. Sue Turnbull finds the impact that *Hill Street Blues* made on the television scene especially important since it signified both a break and a connection with past forms and styles. *Hill Street Blues*, which was a combination of crime and melodrama, followed *Dragnet*'s path in terms of its 'episodic police procedural formula', structuring each of its episodes around the daily lives of the police officers at the precinct. However, its use of multiple characters, hand-held camera work and overlapping dialogues and narratives created a very distinctive visual aesthetics which was nothing like earlier TV. (Turnbull 2007, pp. 21-22) The unconventional stylistic strategies such as jump-cuts, overlapping and repeated action and handheld cameras, and canted angles also enhanced 'truth claim' of *Hill Street Blues* (Pethick 2012, p. 9) as an innovative police procedural.

Turnbull points out that in the first half of the 1990s Steven Bochco's *NYPD Blue* (1993–2005) was one of the shows which pursued the path of *Hill Street Blues*. The same type of hand-held and disorienting camera which became prominent in *Hill Street Blues* was used in the first season of *NYPD Blue* (Turnbull 2007, p. 26) in order to enhance the documentary realism that was adopted by the show. In the later years, the visual realism created by John Webb in *Dragnet* as a convention of the police procedural genre returned in Dick Wolf's *Law and Order* (1990–2010).

Gala refers to the words of the show's co-producer Joe Stern who states that in order to create a documentary, *cinéma vérité* feel, original episodes of *Law and Order* were shot on 16 millimetre film and deliberately scratched in order to have an edgy, low-quality look and give the audiences the feeling that they were watching news footage. However, Gala also emphasizes that the extremely crafted techniques that were used in *Law and Order* were quite the opposite of what *Dragnet* had done since John Webb and his team were just grabbing the cameras, going out on the streets and shooting. Developing *Dragnet*'s utilization of the police jargon and voice over, *Law and Order* also used title cards which are shown on black screen, indicating the location, time and date of the scene (Gala 2006, pp. 10-13) which contributed to the visual style of documentary realism and was adopted by other shows that came after.

5.1.5.2 Excessive stylishness

Excessive stylishness is listed as another visual style which is dominantly used in police procedurals. According to Sue Turnbull, in the 1980s the stylistic innovation of Steven Bochco's *Hill Street Blues* was followed by Michael Mann's *Miami Vice* which was frequently accused of 'excessive stylishness'. In reference to Marc and Thompson, Turnbull says "in the use of 'complex camera angles, state of the art editing, synaesthetic use of music with image and elaborate colour design', *Miami Vice* actively sought, and indeed achieved, a 'completely new video [and sonic] aesthetic for that old network standby, the cop show.'" (Turnbull 2007, p. 25)

The excessive stylishness that was introduced by *Miami Vice* in the 1980s still continues to be used as a visual style in contemporary police procedurals. For instance, as Turnbull points out, Mann's different use of colour coding in different plots of the same episode foreshadows the distinctive colour coding of the *CSI* series. *CSI Las Vegas*' (2000–2015) use of neon reds and electric blue, *CSI Miami*'s (2002–2012) use of coral, yellow and white as well as *CSI New York*'s (2004–2013) use of graphite, black and gold in order to distinguish different locations in the same episode become an inherent feature of the visual landscape and turn into a significant stylistic strategy in the *CSI* franchise. Therefore, Turnbull suggests that *Miami Vice* was the forerunner of the *CSI* franchise and

prepared the ground for the creation of the series. (Ibid., p. 25-26) Some contemporary police procedurals such as *True Detective* (2014-) and *Dark Blue* (2009-2010) also adopt this visual style noticeably.

5.1.5.3 Forensic realism

Forensic realism might be considered among the visual styles that have been activated with the growing interest in forensic evidence both inside and outside television. Deborah Jermyn emphasizes that beginning from the 1990s, with the broadcasting of the groundbreaking British crime dramas such as *Silent Witness* (1996–) and *Prime Suspect*, the crime genre has tried to achieve forensic realism and string along with the cultural turn towards the fascination with forensic evidence. Proliferated with CBS television's *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* franchise in the 2000s, this fascination has kept the attention on the forensic detail and the graphic images of the wounds, bodies and corpses. (Jermyn 2013, pp. 1-2)

The signature visual motif of the *CSI* is what Jermyn defines as the 'wound-cam' technology and the 'hi-tech sequences' that reveal the interior of the body itself. (Ibid., p. 3) However, as Jermyn points out, although the majority of the audiences who watch crime dramas have never seen a real body brutalized as it is in the contemporary TV shows, they feel equipped to comment on whether the bodies are 'realistically' represented or not. In reference to Brunsdon's comments on *Dragnet*'s claim to tell 'true stories' and the 'reality effect' that crime series have been built on, she certifies that crime series operate an 'internal realism' which is built through its intertextuality and its continuous use of particular codes and conventions. In this way, the genre's sense of realism is disengaged from what's happening 'out there' and is more engaged with what's happening in other crime shows (Ibid., p. 2), which reveals how both documentary and forensic realism are conventionally constructed and spread as visual styles.

By means of these generic conventions, dominant themes, ideological standpoints and visual styles which dominantly represent the American way of storytelling, police procedurals can be recognized by TV audiences worldwide. These foundational features determine what to expect from a police procedural and shape the viewing processes of TV audiences to a great extent. However, Steve Neale points out that certain genres more directly address cultural verisimilitude, among which he also lists police procedurals. For him, these genres often draw on and quote “‘authentic’ (and authenticating) discourses, artifacts, and texts: maps, newspaper headlines, memoirs, archival documents, and so on.” (Neale 2000, p. 159) So, the police procedural genre is based on cultural and national resources as much as it relies on generic conventions. In order to elaborate more on this issue, the next section concentrates on the features that banally point at the ‘national’ in contemporary Turkish police procedurals.

5.2 BETWEEN THE GLOBAL AND THE LOCAL: CONTEMPORARY TURKISH POLICE PROCEDURALS

Contemporary Turkish police procedurals are formed under the influence of the global popularity of the genre. John Sinclair et al. explain that extreme importation of American TV programmes and films directed local broadcasters from the rest of the world to indigenize the American generic models in order to become the best in the international practice. But this was also an open invitation to domestic imitation. Although this process has raised concerns about the possibility of passive homogenization of television programmes worldwide, as has been elaborately discussed in the second chapter television programmes have become heterogenized rather than homogenized. (Sinclair et. al. 1996, p. 13) In Australia, Canada and the UK, the U.S. genre conventions were assimilated and the programmes had their own look and feel. U.S. genres such as MGM musicals or soap operas were adapted in the rest of the world “beyond recognition in a dynamic process of cultural syncretism.” (Ibid.) Turkish police procedurals are also formed as a consequence of this dynamic movement between the ‘foreign’ generic conventions and ‘local’ norms, values and practices.

Together with the localisation of the global generic conventions of the police procedural genre, as discussed in the third and fourth chapters, national elements play a significant role in vitalizing this process. For instance, the representation of Turkishness shapes the characteristics and values of the police characters to a great extent in Turkish police procedurals. Settings are formed under the influence of nationalist symbols and designed in accordance with the national stereotypes of upper and lower class characters. RTÜK laws that limit the depiction of sexuality and prohibit cigarette and alcohol use on television did not only affect the representation of forensic realism in the series but also influenced the stereotypical portrayal of police officers as heavy drinkers and smokers. (Creeber 2001, p. 150)

In order to comment more on this formation, four contemporary Turkish police procedurals are analysed in the next sections of this chapter. *Arka Sokaklar* is an action-oriented police procedural which shows the adventures of a special unit in Istanbul. Since it regularly portrays the family lives of the characters it is described as a family-friendly police procedural. *Kanıt* depicts the investigations of two police officers, working in the homicide bureau. It is recurrently considered as an appropriation of the *CSI* franchise due to its explicit concentration on analysing forensic evidence. *Behzat Ç.: Bir Ankara Polisiyesi* tells the story of the police officers working in the homicide bureau in the capital, Ankara. The series is known for reflecting a leftist worldview and being highly critical of the foundational elements of Turkish national identity and political decisions of the JDP government. Finally, *Filinta* concentrates on the investigations of the law enforcers in the *Galata* precinct in Istanbul under the Ottoman reign. The series is frequently considered as a reflection of the nationalist discourse of the ‘new’ Turkey with its representation of Islamic and neo-Ottomanist values.

The primary reason for choosing these police procedurals for analysis is their endurance in the extremely competitive television environment in Turkey, as each was broadcasted for more than 50 episodes. Whereas most of the Turkish TV series are cancelled after a few episodes, these series managed to address the interest of the audiences and survived longer than most of their equivalents in contemporary Turkish television. This endurance is interpreted as a competence of achieving to keep the balance between the ‘foreign’ and

the ‘local’ in localizing the police procedural genre, which is perceived as an opportunity for the analysis.

The ‘originality’ of their scripts also plays a significant role in picking these series for analysis. Other Turkish police procedurals that are shown in the same period such as *Cinayet* (Murder, Kanal D, 2014) and *Galip Derviş* (Galip Derviş, Kanal D, 2013-2014) are licenced adaptations of foreign TV series. Whereas *Cinayet* is adapted from the popular Danish TV series *Forbrydelsen* (2007-2012), *Galip Derviş* is the Turkish version of the American TV series *Monk* (2002–2009). Instead of choosing these scene-to-scene adaptations from ‘foreign’ scripts, ‘original’ works are analysed in order to understand the formation of the police procedural genre in the Turkish context ‘from scratch’.

Additionally, the decision making process behind the analysis is influenced by the ideological and narrational differences between the series. Each series that is analysed in the following sections reflects a different worldview by combining various social, cultural and political values that construct its nationalist discourses. This diversity does not only inspire the localisation of global conventions of the genre in their narratives but also has an impact on the representation of national elements. For that reason, by preferring to examine these four Turkish police procedurals which get their inspirations from common and different sources, the analysis intends to draw an extensive picture of forming police procedural genre on Turkish television.

In an attempt to refer to equal broadcasting materials in every series, 30 episodes are examined in each analysis. Before being chosen, the plot summaries of every episode of the series are read and the episodes are selected for analysis by considering their ability to give a general idea about the series and their representation of national elements in an explicit manner. The episodes are carefully watched on Internet by taking notes. These notes are later used in the analysis to explain how the global generic conventions and national elements that are listed in Table 1 are utilized in the narratives of the series. With the help of these practices, the intention is to closely examine the formation of Turkish police procedurals that are caught up in the interplay of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’.

Table 5.1 : List of Generic Conventions

Generic Conventions
Characters' social classes, values, characteristics -Uniformed/Plain Clothed -Street-smart -Lower middle class -Devoted to the job -Partnership -Dominantly male
Setting and Tools -Urban Setting -Guns -Automobiles -Computers -Radio -Other technological items
Plot Construction -Commitment of the crime -Assignment to the case -Trail -Detainment
Dominant Themes and Ideologies -Law and Order -Distrust in the Legal System and Private Enterprises -Class, Race, Ethnicity
Visual Styles -Documentary Realism -Excessive Stylishness -Forensic Realism

Table 5.2 : List of National Elements

National Elements
Turkishness as a supranational identity - Islamic -Ottoman -Neoliberal -Official nationalism
Islamic figures and practices -Secular outlook -More common to see religious figures and practices
Sexuality and Public Morality -Censorship on sexuality -No alcoholic drinks -No cigarettes
Class Dynamics -National stereotypes of being wealthy and secular -Headscarf to mark lower class characters in the city
Neighbourhood and Family -Conservative values -Monitoring -Glorification of family values -Promotion of marriage

5.3 A POLICE PROCEDURAL FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY: *ARKA SOKAKLAR*

Arka Sokaklar started to be shown on the mainstream private TV channel *Kanal D* in the Summer of 2006 and it continues to broadcast ever since. The series can be considered as the longest running police procedural in Turkey. Since 2006, more than 400 episodes

have been shown on different days of the week, in prime time, and the tenth season started at the end of 2015. *Arka Sokaklar* received great attention from the audiences, from the early years of its broadcast (“*Arka Sokaklar*’dan reyting rekoru” 2008), and the series kept being listed among the most popular TV series in later years. (Dizisi 2016) In 2011, the series was awarded as the best police procedural of the year in the 2nd Antalya Television Awards. (“2. Antalya Televizyon Ödülleri verildi” 2011)

Arka Sokaklar is produced by Türker İnanoğlu, a famous Turkish film producer and the owner of *Erlar Film* which was established in 1960. İnanoğlu produced several Yeşilçam films and is among the devoted film producers of the Yeşilçam era of Turkish cinema. The series is directed by another important figure of Turkish cinema, Orhan Oğuz who is known as the cinematographer of award winning films like *Anayurt Oteli* (Motherland Hotel, 1987), *Aaahhh Belinda* (Aaahhh Belinda, 1986) and *Aşk Filmlerinin Unutulmaz Yönetmeni* (The Unforgettable Director of Love Movies, 1990). He also worked in the popular Kemal Sunal films like *Katma Değer Şaban* (Value-Added Şaban, 1985) and *Ortadirek Şaban* (Middle Class Şaban, 1984) as a cinematographer.

The experiences of these two important figures are transferred to television in the 1990s with the revitalization of the Turkish TV series industry. Orhan Oğuz directed successful dramedies such as *Süper Baba* (Super Dad, ATV, 1993-1997), *Baba Evi* (Family Home, ATV, 1997-2001) and *İkinci Bahar* (Second Spring, ATV, 1998-2001). Türker İnanoğlu produced popular family series like *Çiçek Taksi* (Flower Cabstand, ATV, 1995-2001; TRT 1, 2001-2003), *Yabancı Damat* (The Foreign Groom, Kanal D, 2004-2007) and *Cennet Mahallesi* (Cennet Neighbourhood, Show TV, 2004-2007). As a product of these two very experienced figures of Turkish cinema and television, *Arka Sokaklar* gets inspiration from multiple resources, both local and global. Therefore, it can be considered as a milestone in adapting the police procedural genre in the Turkish context, harmonizing national dynamics, interests and elements with global generic conventions.

5.3.1 Generic Conventions

5.3.1.1 Social classes, values and characteristics of the characters

Police officers in *Arka Sokaklar* work at the public security branch office in Istanbul. They are members of a special team which is occupied with restoring public order and investigating all kinds of crimes. They work on numerous cases, varying from murder, robbery, fraud, kidnapping and narcotics to arms smuggling, terrorism and public riots. This variety does not only contribute to the action-oriented narrative of the series but it also supports *Arka Sokaklar*'s ideological approach to crime as a national threat similar to the popular American police procedurals of the 1980s such as *Hill Street Blues* or *Hunter*.

There are several characters working as team members. Since the series goes on for almost ten years, the cast members regularly change between seasons. But the core members like Rıza (Zafer Ergin), Mesut (Şevket Çoruh), Hüsnü (Özgür Ozan), Ali (Alp Korkmaz), and Aylin (Özlem Çınar) and their families remain the same from the beginning of the series. Murat (Uğur Pektaş), Engin (İlker İnanoğlu) and Zeynep (Gamze Özçelik) can also be considered as core members of the team even though they disappear and reappear in different seasons.

Rıza is the chief of the police and the leader of the team. He is an experienced police officer, called as '*Rıza Baba* (father Rıza)', by all the members of the team. Rıza functions as a father figure for everyone working under him but he is also a family man in his private life. Rıza is a disciplined leader who has a black and white worldview. He does not give in to anybody for anything, especially not to the criminals. For instance, in episode 314, Rıza's ethical position is seriously challenged when a criminal, Soydan (Gazanfer Ündüz), causes the arrest of his son in law, Ali, who could only be released if Soydan's requests are met but Rıza does not accept to be blackmailed by Soydan. He tries to find a legal way to save Ali and promises that he will not yield to Soydan even if that means to sacrifice Ali. So, he functions like the moral compass of the team and keeps the law and order rhetoric of the series intact.

Another major character, Hüsnü Çoban, is a middle aged commissar working in Rıza's team. At work, Hüsnü appears as an experienced, clumsy commissar who is called 'ağabey' (brother) by the younger members of the team. He is frequently involved in situations as a consequence of which he turns into an accidental hero. Hüsnü has a large, middle class family, a wife and five children: three sons and two daughters whose adventures are regularly depicted in the series by interrupting the investigation processes. Whereas Rıza supports the more serious and 'procedural' side of the narrative, Hüsnü makes *Arka Sokaklar* funny, entertaining and family friendly.

Mesut, another commissar in Rıza's team, is a highly impulsive character who has his own methods of investigation. He fought against Kurdish forces in the south-eastern part of Turkey in the beginning of the 2000s as a member of the special forces. As a consequence of his war experience, Mesut appears as a spiritually wounded character with an alcohol problem in the beginning of the series. With the support of his colleagues and his devotion to Tunç, his son from a previous marriage, Mesut stops drinking and becomes a decent man in later episodes.

Mesut can be described as an old-school cop who does not believe in modern methods of policing. He is a strong and determined action hero. His catch phrase is 'ver odunu' (give me the stick) because he is famous for making the criminals talk during interrogation by violently beating them. Mesut even holds a gun to a suspect's head during interrogation in episode 69. In this sense, he can be associated with police figures from the 1970s such as David Michael Starsky from *Starsky and Hutch* (1975–1979) or Jack Regan from *The Sweeney* (1975–1978). Mesut's characteristic attributes and backstory make *Arka Sokaklar* more action-oriented and nationalistic since it allows the series to comment on the armed clash in the South-eastern part of Turkey from the point of view of a former member of the Turkish special force.

Aylin, a uniformed police officer who functions as the tech-genius of the team and young commissars like Ali, Murat, Engin and Zeynep as well as several others appear in the series contributing to the investigations in the field. While contributing to the procedural,

action-oriented features of the series, these young commissars also lead the motivational love stories in *Arka Sokaklar*, making the narratives intriguing and exciting.

5.3.1.2 Setting and tools

Istanbul is chosen as the main setting of *Arka Sokaklar*. The entrance of the police department in Vatan Street in Istanbul is shown as the base of Rıza's team. Symbolic places in Istanbul such as the Maiden Tower, Galata Tower, Blue Mosque or Beyoğlu Street are also regularly seen in the episodes. Along with the historical monuments, illuminated skyscrapers and the finance centres of Istanbul also appear as symbols of the city in the later seasons. This addition signifies how the image of Istanbul has changed from a historical city to a financial centre since 2006 as a consequence of the rising neoliberalism.

Apart from conventional tools like pistols, automobiles, computers and radio, no special equipment is used in the series for investigation. Team members are frequently seen in a white van, patrolling together in the streets of Istanbul and responding to Aylin's calls from the radio. In the earlier seasons of the series, even the crime scene investigation teams are not regularly seen. In the later seasons, although they become more visible and more involved in the investigations, tools for analysing forensic evidence are not represented in *Arka Sokaklar*. This feature makes the setting of the series different from the police procedurals with an orientation on forensic evidence and supports its reliance on the action-oriented, old school formulae of the global police procedural genre.

However, this does not mean that *Arka Sokaklar* falls behind in seizing the technological developments of the period. Aylin is the only character who uses computer technologies and digital databases. The software and the equipment that she uses are adapted to the developing technologies in time. Whereas in earlier episodes Aylin usually sits on her desk at the office and tracks the signals from her computer, in episode 386 Aylin is represented in the field, following the signal of the cell phones of her missing colleagues by holding a tablet pc in her hands.

5.3.1.3 Plot construction

Several incidents happen at the same time in every episode of *Arka Sokaklar*. The camera generally moves from one action to another, depicting criminals committing crimes and the police officers investigating different cases while simultaneously dealing with their personal problems. The daily struggles of the family members of the police officers also appear in the narrative by regularly interrupting police investigations.

Despite some exceptions, *Arka Sokaklar* generally does not follow a ‘whodunit’ formula as a part of which the police officers as well as the audiences do not know who committed the crime. While the team is busy with another case or with their personal problems, the criminals are shown planning or committing their crimes. The team is usually informed about the crimes while they are patrolling the streets of Istanbul in their van. They hear Aylin’s voice from the radio, informing them about a call and they immediately take action. When the team arrives on the crime scene the audience already knows who committed the crime. Therefore, *Arka Sokaklar* frequently follows a ‘whydunit’ formula by focusing on the motivations behind the crimes. By representing motivations like destroying national unity, dishonouring Turkish women or getting financial gain, the series makes a clear distinction between right and wrong and disseminates its nationalistic ideologies.

Instead of investigating what has happened in a slower pace, the team is frequently involved in busting the criminals in action. Although crime scene investigation teams are scarcely seen scanning the crime scenes for forensic evidence, they do remain in the background. Later in the sixth and seventh seasons, from 2011, the Institution of Forensic Medicine starts to be depicted as a location and a new character, Tuğba, is added to the cast. Tuğba who works in the Institution of Forensic Medicine is responsible for interpreting forensic evidence such as the wounds on the corpse. Another character, Eren, also appears from time to time in order to inform the team about the ballistics of a bullet. Apart from running procedural tests, these characters do not come up with anything spectacular to illuminate the case. However, their appearances in the series might be interpreted as an intertextual influence of the Turkish forensic TV series *Kanıt* which

started to be broadcasted in 2010 and raised interest in forensic evidence in Turkey. In order to adapt to the new Turkish television scene, *Arka Sokaklar* began to slightly emphasize forensic processes but did not change the core methods of policing used by the team members.

Team members frequently find a clue while talking to the witnesses around the crime scene and are informed about a key figure who could lead them to the criminal. By using forceful methods in the interrogation they make the suspects talk about the location of the mastermind behind the crime, a secret plan or transaction. So, they either directly bust the criminals in action, or plot against the criminals by going undercover. In both situations combats, car chases and gunfights become inevitable. Consequently, the criminals are either apprehended by getting shot in action or confronted face-to-face and convinced to surrender without causing further harm.

By means of the interrogations in the precinct and confrontations on the crime scene, *Arka Sokaklar* finds the opportunity to increase the idealistic and nationalistic tone in its discourse. In these sequences, police officers are given a chance to express their judgements aloud and force their ethical worldview on the suspects. Rather than exhibiting scientific methods of deduction, *Arka Sokaklar* prefers to focus on the distinction between right and wrong from an ideological perspective and constructs its plot in such a way as to highlight this intention. In this way, the series keeps the balance between the ‘foreign’ generic conventions and the ‘local’ dynamics by simultaneously reproducing the police procedural formulae and referring to national discourses in its plot construction.

5.3.1.4 Dominant themes and ideologies

Arka Sokaklar disseminates the law and order rhetoric in an explicit manner. Right and wrong are carefully described in the series in favour of Rıza’s team members who are described in episode 324 as the opposite of dirty cops. In this black and white universe, Turkey appears as a country which is threatened by internal and external enemies from every corner. On the one hand, ‘ordinary’ crimes like murder, robbery, kidnapping and

fraud are all around Istanbul, disrupting the social order and destroying the lives of regular citizens. On the other hand, the big picture indicates that terrorism threatens the unity of the country on numerous occasions, uniting the internal and external enemies of Turkey against its prosperity.

Rıza and his team are devoted to their jobs and do whatever it takes to protect the public. They get seriously wounded several times on the job and sometimes they lose their colleagues while fighting against the enemies of the state. Although the job is unbearable, as Rıza says in episode 23, when he sees an ex-convict whom he helped to stand on his own feet he feels satisfied because he managed to draw him to the lawful side.

In order to maintain the order and save lives, Rıza's team member frequently resort to violence. For instance, in episode 289, the men who beat a student to death without any particular reason are violently assaulted by Hüsni and Murat during their interrogation. In episode 153, when a body language specialist is introduced to the team to help them during interrogations, Mesut cynically shows the specialist their methods by inviting her to watch how he breaks a serial rapist who has not talked for four days. Before Mesut enters the room, the officers are ordered to shut down the cameras that record the interrogation. While Mesut violently beats and threatens the suspect, his colleagues watch the scene with smiling faces whereas the specialist finds these methods unacceptable. These violent methods are confirmed by Rıza who believes that they should do whatever it takes to catch the criminals and protect the innocent. For instance in episode 343, Mesut is seen getting permission from Rıza before he violently beats a suspect.

Similar to TV classics like *Hunter* (1984–1991) and *Hill Street Blues* (1981–1987), *Arka Sokaklar* justifies the acts of the police officers by depicting every case as a life threatening situation. Since the extreme situations require extreme measures the methods that Rıza's team use become justified because they work for the safety of the public and the unity of the nation. Even the more extreme methods that the team uses are depicted as acceptable when the national benefits of Turkey are at stake.

For instance, in episode 320, Mesut, Ali and Murat resort to illegal measures by forming ‘an underground precinct’ to prevent the transactions between the arms smuggler Soydan and his Middle Eastern partner Abdülmalik Asfa (Kayra Şenocak), without informing the rest of the team. Although they question their choice to turn to illegal ways, they also declare that they had no other choice. When the chief of police, Arif, finds out about the underground precinct he orders them to stop what they are doing there immediately without imposing any penalty, because he also knows that they did not have any other choice to ensure law and order.

Distrust in private enterprises is another dominant theme that is addressed in *Arka Sokaklar* on several occasions. Practices of unlawful businessmen and their illicit affairs with underground organizations appear as a common subject matter in the series. These affairs could either be simple like collusive tendering as in episode 87 or seriously threatening national security like financially supporting terrorist organizations as in episode 386.

Distrust in the legal system is also expressed on many occasions, especially when the team members encounter a femicide. In episode 362, when the team is devastated by the murder of a female university student, Aylin expresses her distrust in the legal system by creating a possible scenario of what would happen after they catch the killer. For Aylin, when the killer appears in court wearing a tie and acting all gentlemanly, the court would give him a reduced sentence and the killer would be set free in no time. In a similar way, the father of the girl expresses his resentment during the funeral by saying that the law would not be on their side on this.

In episode 277, distrust in the legal system is taken one step further by telling a vigilante story. The team finds the body of a man who was previously arrested for raping a young girl with three friends but released by the court on lack of evidence. Rıza reacts furiously to the verdict of the court when he finds out the situation. At the end of the episode, the killer who hunts down the rapists turns out to be the police commissar who was previously working on the case. The commissar whose daughter was raped and committed suicide

when her rapist was released by the court long lost his trust in the legal system. When the same thing happens again he decides to take the law on his own hands.

Besides, by revolving its narrative on distrust in the legal system around women's issues, *Arka Sokaklar* does not only refer to a dominant theme of the police procedural genre but also emphasizes a significant social problem in Turkey. Femicide is a frequently discussed matter in the Turkish context. There are several feminist organizations that work for stopping crimes against women and raising public awareness about the high number of femicides in Turkey. One of these organizations, the We Will Stop Femicide Platform, published a report in January 2016 and declared that 303 women who were previously exposed to violence by their husbands, fiancées or boyfriends were killed by them in 2015. According to the same report, the Turkish state fell behind in protecting these women against the violence of men. (Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu 2015) For that reason, *Arka Sokaklar*'s combination of women's issues with expressing distrust in the legal system could be considered as a significant example of harmonizing the global conventions of the genre with local dynamics.

However, apart from these particular episodes, *Arka Sokaklar*'s emphasis on women's issues remain circumstantial since the series has an extremely masculine discourse. Taking an oath on manhood (*erkek sözü*) or being an exemplary man, standing against all difficulties are regularly mentioned in the narrative. Brotherhood between the male officers and male bonding is strongly emphasized in almost every episode. Apart from being managed by a masculine leader like Rıza, all significant and more stable members of the team like Mesut, Hüsnü, Ali, Engin and Murat are male officers. Female officers like Zeynep and Aylin also appear in the series for several seasons but the stable male police officers outnumber the female ones. Other female police commissars like Melek (Zeynep Beşerler), Leyla (Gülcan Arslan), Muzo (Gizem Soysaldı), Ece (Müge Boz) and Deniz (Beril Kayar) come and go without leaving a serious impression on the team.

Besides, although female officers always appear in the field, taking part in gunfights and combats, their vulnerability is emphasized on many occasions. Female officers are the only ones who do not survive deadly wounds in the series. Throughout the ten seasons,

male officers like Hüsnü, Murat and Mesut are seriously shot on action more than once and manage to recover. But female officers like Zeynep and Elif (Çağla Kubat) who get wounded in the field do not survive.

Apart from representing women in vulnerable positions, *Arka Sokaklar* also depicts Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) characters in stereotypical and offensive ways. Transgender characters usually appear provocatively dressed, working as sex workers on the streets or gossiping at the hairdresser's, talking about shallow issues like fortune telling. But episode 289 indicates how offensive the discourse of the series can be by especially focusing on the bust of a pornographic movie theatre, addressing gay men.

In this episode, a young gay man, Canay (Engin Kocagöz) is consulted about a robbery by the team members who have been using the man as an informant. The man is stereotypically represented as a feminine, cheerful and high-spirited person who is at peace with everything. While the team members talk to the man funky music is heard in the background, informing the audiences that the presence of the man makes the scene a comical piece. With the direction of the man, Hüsnü enters a movie theatre in which pornographic films are shown for gay men. Since Hüsnü goes into the theatre in order to find the robbed items, the place is criminalized from the beginning of the scene.

Hüsnü is seen to be highly uncomfortable in the theatre and acts in an extremely masculine manner while talking to the owner of the theatre. Suddenly, the theatre is busted by the Vice Unit due to a notice of prostitution. While arresting the audiences in the theatre the officers in the unit are heard to say things like 'look at this filth' or 'do you see this disgrace?' When Hüsnü is caught in the theatre and judged in an offensive way he gets furious due to these comments and shouts things like 'do you know who I am?', 'I have five children' and 'do you think I am like this...?'

In front of the theatre, while the team members make fun of him, Canay informs Hüsnü that the lost items are found. Hüsnü hugs the man out of happiness but he is warned by his colleagues that his reputation is damaged already and he should be careful about

whom he hugs. When they all return to the precinct Hüsni says that the items are found in the filthiest place in the world and all he wants is to go home and take a shower. By means of this episode, *Arka Sokaklar* does not only criminalize LGBT characters but also makes offensive statements against them.

Finally, referring to the tension between the foreign and the local appears as another theme in *Arka Sokaklar*. In many different episodes, foreign police officers and political figures are seen visiting Turkey and give the series the opportunity to compare the Turkish and foreign ways of policing. However, the discourse that *Arka Sokaklar* adopts while representing foreign officials usually exceeds the limits of banal comparisons of foreign and local methods and becomes stereotypical, offensive and even racist from time to time.

For instance, in episode 19, an officer from the Foreign Affairs of the United States, Patrick Nelson, is kidnapped in Istanbul. Nelson is represented as a dull, foolish American bureaucrat whose only business is drinking *rakı* and eating fish. When he arrives in Istanbul he is seen in a hotel lobby surrounded by his muscular, black bodyguards. Nelson tells the Turkish officials that he does not want to get attention during his visit to Istanbul and the officials responds by saying that this would not be possible if he insists on travelling with his black bodyguards. Later, Nelson escapes from his hotel by only taking his most devoted bodyguard, George, with him. While driving to a restaurant along the Bosphorus in a taxi, Nelson asks George if he would call him racists if he suggests to paint his face white in order to avoid attention. George responds by saying ‘absolutely, sir’ and they all laugh at this bizarre conversation, criticizing racism.

After getting drunk from *rakı*, Nelson is kidnapped by a terrorist organization. While he is kept on a boat along the Bosphorus, he is accidentally saved by Hüsni who has been spending his weekend fishing. Nelson asks Hüsni who he is while being untied by him and Hüsni responds by saying ‘I am *Türkiye* (Turkey) police’. Nelson’s bodyguard, George, reacts by shouting ‘I cannot believe it’ to emphasize the unexpected success of the Turkish police. By means of this accidental rescue operation, *Arka Sokaklar* strengthens its nationalist discourse by putting the Turkish police in a more powerful and

superior position than the American police which is depicted as useless, vulnerable and helpless.

However, although Patrick Nelson is represented in a belittling way throughout the episode, after he is saved by Hüsnü the discourse of the series changes. When Hüsnü is awarded by Nelson with 10.000 dollars in a special ceremony he accepts the reward in a grateful manner. Despite the witty comments of his colleagues who insist on calling him 'Mr. Çoban' and making jokes about how Nelson is going to nominate Hüsnü as a senator from Texas in the next election, Hüsnü's family and friends seem honoured. So, getting rewarded by the United States makes Hüsnü feel recognized and appreciated by the West.

The hesitant discourse of the series in this episode provides a great example of how the tension between the foreign and the local is managed in situations like these in Turkey. On the one hand, an excessive self-confidence and self-righteousness are expressed in the first encounter with the West, as if the ideas of the Western characters about Turkey were not really important because Turkey is already in a superior position. On the other hand, when received, Western attention and appreciation are joyfully glorified by revealing the phoniness of the excessive self-esteem that is performed beforehand. Therefore, Hüsnü's earlier self-confidence and his later gratefulness accurately reflect the hesitant dynamics between the 'Western' model and the 'Turkish' copy as it is discussed in Chapter 4 and the ambivalent Turkish responses to Western encounters.

Arka Sokaklar expresses more self-confidence and superiority in other episodes by depicting the victories of the Turkish police over its Western colleagues in a demeaning manner. For instance, in episode 154, two police officers from the Netherlands visit the precinct to investigate an honour killing which occurred in Amsterdam. The team members, who get very annoyed by their call for help, send the Dutch police officers on a touristic tour of Sultanahmet. In their absence, they solve the case in a few hours by using their local knowledge and outrageously make fun of the Dutch police officers who have been planning to work on the case in Turkey for three months. When the Dutch officers come from Sultanahmet they cannot believe that the case is solved and Rıza explains the situation in a proud manner by saying 'we know our people better than you'.

By comparing the methods of the Turkish police, the tension between the foreign and the local is constantly kept active in these particular episodes. In this way, apart from the dominant themes of the police procedural genre like the law and order rhetoric, distrust in the legal system and private enterprises as well as gender conflicts, *Arka Sokaklar* refers to a national theme, arisen in the Turkish context. By commenting more on this theme, the series does not only give a Turkish response to the police procedural genre in general terms but also strengthens its nationalist discourse by glorifying the superiority of the Turkish police.

5.3.1.5 Visual styles

Arka Sokaklar frequently refers to contemporary events which occupy the agenda of the public as well as the daily newscasts. In episode 362, the series directly refers to the murder of the young university student Özgecan Aslan on February 11, 2015 in Tarsus which mobilised the public on social media as well as feminist organizations to protest the violence against women in Turkey. (Aykaç 2016, p. 92) In a similar manner, in episode 389, a shocking rape incident that happened in an upper class neighbourhood of Istanbul in January 24, 2016 (“Bağdat Caddesi'nde genç kadına tecavüz eden saldırgan ‘Şeytana uydum, çok pişmanım’ dedi!” 2016) is mentioned in the series. Even a highly popular telephone scam is re-enacted in episode 386 in order to enhance the association of the series with real life. Apart from these instances, *Arka Sokaklar* regularly refers to popular political issues like the armed clash between Kurdish and Turkish forces in the South-eastern part of Turkey as well as the effects of the Syrian War on the country.

Figure 5.1 : Conversation shots from *Arka Sokaklar*¹⁰



All these references that give the series a sense of realism are explicitly supported by the visual style of *Arka Sokaklar*. The series gets its inspiration from the conventions of documentary realism which were reworked by well-known police procedurals like *Hill Street Blues* and *NYPD Blue*. Hand-held camera work, jump-cuts and canted angles that are used in these series to enhance the ‘truth claim’ are adopted by *Arka Sokaklar* for the same purpose. In *Arka Sokaklar*, the camera constantly moves even in depicting a simple dialogue between the characters. As the screenshots that depict an ordinary conversation between the characters indicate, the dialogues are frequently interrupted by the constantly moving camera. Even when the camera is focused on one character, it continues to move by zooming in and out.

Canted camera angles, jumps cuts, zoom ins, hand held camera work and shooting on location in natural light are dominantly used tactics that are adopted in order to mediate the reality that the series intends to reflect. In this way, *Arka Sokaklar* manages to comment on the contemporary issues that are discussed in Turkey in a realistic manner and achieves a coherent look for itself.

¹⁰ The still images are taken from the Youtube video, *Arka Sokaklar 362. Bölüm - Engin Komiser vuruluyor!* (KanalD 2015)

5.3.2 National Elements

5.3.2.1 Turkishness as a supranational identity

Different nationalist discourses infuse into the narrative of *Arka Sokaklar* which reflects a mixture of official, Kemalist nationalism with ultra-nationalist, militarist ideas and references to the conservative, Islamic foundations of the nation. The series bases its nationalist discourse on the superiority of the Turkish nation which is constantly threatened by internal and external enemies. By adopting an almost xenophobic attitude, *Arka Sokaklar* reflects the message that Turks do not have any friends other than Turks and they do not need to make any. When the unity of the nation is threatened everything loses its importance, including lawful, righteous and democratic ways of handling the cases. Torturing and sometimes shooting the enemies of Turkey in the name of saving the nation is represented as the only choice of the characters who do not hesitate to do so.

Various symbols are used in *Arka Sokaklar* in order to associate the discourse of the series with official, Kemalist nationalism. The office place of the characters is surrounded by the images of Turkish flags, maps of Istanbul, portraits of Atatürk and public relation campaign posters or videos of the Turkish police. As in episode 41, little details such as the emblem of Turkey in the collar of Hüsnü's son's school uniform turn into banal signifiers of the nation. Sometimes, as in episode 343, the team members are clearly seen sitting under a huge sign on which a saying of Atatürk is written in huge letters: 'Everybody's police is his own conscience. The police is against the ones who do not have a conscience'.

In harmony with the foundations of official, Kemalist nationalism, *Arka Sokaklar* builds its narrative on a secular imaginary. The physical appearances of the female characters are designed to reflect a modern, secular, Westernized image of Turkish women who are active in business life, earning their own money. However, traditional roles that are attributed to women and the superior position of men who are granted with the power of monitoring the honour of women collide with the modern image of female characters. In

this respect, the series relies more on the conservative and Islamic foundations of the nation while preserving the secular imaginary on a visual level.

The nationalist tone of the series peaks when the episodes revolve around issues of terrorism. Mesut appears as a central character in these episodes. He is represented as an experienced national hero who saw too much in the war but gained local knowledge and adapted to the South-eastern culture without losing his devotion to the Turkish state. In many episodes, Mesut does not only appear as highly knowledgeable about the region but is also seen fluently speaking Kurdish with a street seller in episode 304. However, Mesut's connection to the region is always represented as purely professional rather than emotional so that the nationalistic tone of the series is maintained. This tone is carried to a militaristic level through flashbacks in which Mesut is seen fighting in the South-eastern mountains of Turkey, fully geared, as in episode 184.

The series reveals its ultra-nationalist position in episode 95 in which Mesut and Hüsnü watch the news, showing a report on captured terrorists. Anxiously, Hüsnü says that '*elleri kolları gene uzadı bu ara*' (they got out of control nowadays) in order to emphasize that the terrorists took action and special operation forces might be placed in the necessary areas all over again. The most interesting part of this sequence is that neither the name of the terrorist organization nor the areas where the special operation forces would be placed are named throughout the conversation.

Along with the physical appearances of the actors that are cast as terrorists, the audiences get what Hüsnü and Mesut talk about by associating the conversation with the national context. The armed conflict between the Turkish state and the Kurdish PKK in the south-eastern region in Turkey is referred to in this episode in an implicit manner with a nationalist tone. However, by not naming the terrorist organization the series not only takes caution of facing controversies but also gives the message that everybody who is represented as working against the benefits of the nation could be described as a terrorist in its diegesis.

Kurdish characters are frequently represented in *Arka Sokaklar* as the internal enemies of the nation. Several Kurdish characters appear throughout the seasons as the members of terrorist organizations, planning to place bombs all around Istanbul, attacking Turkish police officers and soldiers or manipulating people to start a riot in the city. They are stereotypically represented as having a darker skin tone, mustached and bearded, speaking Turkish in a South-eastern accent, wearing accessories like a black and white *poşu*, a traditionally Kurdish scarf and addressing their leaders as ‘*serok*’ (meaning leader in Kurdish). They do not only appear as militants who fight the Turkish state in the mountains but also as wealthy financial supporters as in episode 184 and as legal assistants as in episode 304. The Kurdishness of the characters is never explicitly mentioned in the series but only hinted at by certain symbols and dialogues.

For instance, in episode 184, the series depicts an agreement between a terrorist and the Turkish state which takes place in Aleppo, Syria. A member from the Turkish Security Agency who is not pleased with this meeting, the Turkish ambassador in Syria, some officials from the Syrian government and two terrorists gather in a secret place. The terrorists are willing to surrender by benefitting from the Law of Repentance (*Pişmanlık Yasası*) which was legislated in 2006 in order to encourage the member of the PKK to surrender. The terrorists are not openly introduced as members of the Kurdish PKK but during the conversation the ambassador asks the terrorists if their leader who has been residing in the island would be pleased by this collaboration. Even though the ambassador does not openly say his name it is obvious that he refers to Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK, who is imprisoned on Imralı Island, Turkey.

Kurdish characters are regularly seen in the series, provoking the public to start a riot for the sake of their own cause. For instance, in episode 100, a member of the terrorist organization, Maho, is seen giving money to two boys addicted to thinner in order to gather all children in the neighbourhood to start a riot in the city. When the thinner addicts gather a handful of children Maho is seen throwing money at them, laughing viciously in an almost monstrous manner and ordering them to start a mayhem. After a short while, young boys are seen setting fire to the cars in the Tarlabası neighbourhood of Istanbul

and throwing rocks at the shop windows. But the team members who act very calmly and professionally manage to deal with the situation and overpower Maho.

In order to strengthen its nationalist discourse and support its definition of Turkishness as supranational identity, *Arka Sokaklar* regularly makes a distinction between the ‘good’ Kurds and the ‘bad’ Kurds. Whereas the ‘bad’ Kurds are represented as working against the benefits of Turkey and harming ordinary citizens, the ‘good’ Kurds are depicted as avoiding controversies and always assisting the Turkish forces without making any demands since they are devoted to the Turkish state. They are frequently put in danger by their relatives who are connected to an organization and saved by Rıza’s team.

For instance, in episode 254 a Kurdish family living in Istanbul is accidentally involved in a terrorist attack because of a relative and they are rescued by the Turkish police. In episode 350, a university student who prefers peaceful political protest over the violent methods of the organization that his big brother is involved with finds himself in a similar situation. The student is detained by Rıza’s team in order to be interrogated about his brother but released when they are convinced that he knows nothing. But the student is carefully lectured by Mesut to stay away from these things and to avoid controversies.

Although these ‘good’ Kurdish characters are occasionally included in the narrative, the series does not refer to Kurdish culture while depicting these characters. In opposition with the detailed, stereotypical portrayal of ‘bad’ Kurds, their lifestyles are mostly represented without any symbols that could be associated with their ethnic identities. Therefore, they are banally depicted as indistinguishable from the Turkish characters in the series, becoming invisible in the national mass.

In *Arka Sokaklar*, enemies of the state frequently unite against the Turkish state. The only reason given for these collaborations is that they do not respect the laws of Turkey and are willing to harm the country. For instance, in episode 311, Cevher, a former member of the special forces, collaborates with the Free Syrian Army in order to get revenge for the love of his life, a Kurdish guerrilla who is killed in the war. In episode 386, an evil collaboration is made between a Kurdish terrorist and a drug baron, Timur, in order to

destroy Rıza and his team. In episode 350, Kurdish protestors are seen accompanied by the members of leftist groups who are made visible through certain symbols like talking without an accent, wearing green parkas and having a moustache and a beard.

Consequently, *Arka Sokaklar* strengthens its ultra-nationalist discourse by adopting a one-sided approach in representing contemporary political issues which challenge the foundation of Turkishness as a supranational identity. By resorting to stereotypical images of Kurdishness, which is only mentioned in the context of terrorism, *Arka Sokaklar* criminalizes an ethnic and cultural identity. The series enhances its ultra-nationalist discourse by never criticizing the politics of the Turkish government about the Kurdish issue and drawing an isolated, alerted portrait of Turkey, surrounded by internal and external enemies who work hand in hand to destroy the unity of the nation. Under these circumstances, the markers of the official, Kemalist nationalism that surround the office space of the characters turn into hot nationalist symbols by being divested of their banality. They are perceived as the markers of fervently glorifying Turkishness as a supranational identity by combining Kemalist ideals with ultra-nationalist and conservative ideas.

5.3.2.2 Representation of Islamic figures and practices

Arka Sokaklar generally builds its narrative on secular imaginary. Since it is not common for female police officers to wear a headscarf at work, the characters in the series appear as modern Turkish women, wearing stylish cloths. In their private lives, they also do not wear a headscarf and have secular lifestyles. Male police officers who are seen to regularly drink alcohol also do not express Islamic lifestyles. The headscarf is only worn by the lower class characters that are involved in the investigations but even in these cases, it is worn in a traditional, rural manner rather than in an Islamic way.

However, despite constructing a secular imaginary, *Arka Sokaklar* does not completely overlook Islamic symbols and practices. It occasionally depicts its characters who are customarily accepted as Muslims, praying in an Islamic manner at a funeral as in episode 362. Sometimes the sound of the call to prayer is heard in the background or some extras

are seen performing prayer or going to the mosque for Friday prayer. Sacrificing, a religious and customary act performed by Muslims on the Sacrifice Holiday, can become a topic of conversation between the characters as well, as in episode 19.

Arka Sokaklar particularly builds its narrative on the Islamic imaginary in episode 133, in which an imam is killed in the mosque while preparing to recite the call to prayer. In this sequence, the sound of the call to prayer is depicted in parallel editing with the images of people doing their jobs in the neighbourhood. The wife of the imam is seen preparing to perform a prayer. A worker is seen cleaning the streets. A baker cooks bread and a barber cuts hair. These are represented as the symbols of living honest lives against the act of the murder. While the imam is getting killed his wife is seen completely veiled in an Islamic manner, performing prayer and the imam makes an Islamic confession of faith (*Kelime-i Şehadet*) after he is shot. Although this episode significantly depicts Islamic imaginary, the series returns to maintain a secular imaginary in the next episode while the team works on the case. So, this episode remains an exception but it does indicate the approach of the series against depicting Islamic symbols.

Therefore, *Arka Sokaklar* does not completely overlook Islamic symbols and practices in its narrative but it follows the mainstream tendency of Turkish TV series and builds its episodes on secular imaginary. However, by partially containing Islamic symbols and practices in its narrative, *Arka Sokaklar* manages to refer to different lifestyles and easily shifts from one discourse to another. Whereas on the one hand, the series constructs a Kemalist discourse by representing its characters living secular lives, on the other hand it does occasionally refer to the Islamic foundations of Turkish national identity and challenge the secular discourse. In this way, *Arka Sokaklar* manages to simultaneously address multiple audiences from different ideological backgrounds.

5.3.2.3 Representation of sexuality and public morality

Similar to all other Turkish TV series that are monitored by RTÜK, *Arka Sokaklar* constructs its narrative in such a way that it does not offend any broadcasting laws. First of all, in order to respect the laws that prohibit the broadcasting of large amounts of blood

and gory wounds, the crime scenes are either depicted without any sign of blood, or the gory wounds and large amounts of blood are blurred as in episode 133 and 277. Even during the interrogations in which Mesut is seen violently beating the suspects no apparent wounds or traces of blood can be detected.

The series is extremely careful in avoiding or censoring gory images but it is still penalized by RTÜK to pay 300.000 Turkish Liras for containing scenes of violence in depicting Mesut's surgery in episode 167 in June 2016. The subjected episode was originally broadcasted in August 2010 but was not penalized at that time. During the reruns in 2016, although the images of blood were blurred, RTÜK found the surgery scene extremely violent because of the melodramatic acting of Şevket Çoruh who shouts, shakes and passes out as he plays Mesut. ("RTÜK'ten Arka Sokaklar'a 300 bin lira ceza!" 2016)

When considered together with the other fines that are imposed on Doğan Holding's *Kanal D*, this penalization might be interpreted as political. Doğan Holding, which has been perceived as an opponent media agency by the JDP government, was penalized several times by RTÜK for political reasons, as discussed in Chapter 4. The penalization that comes years after episode 167 was originally broadcasted might be interpreted as a political decision in this context. It also indicates how arbitrarily RTÜK makes its decision and how the political atmosphere of the time influences its decision making process.

Arka Sokaklar has never been penalized by RTÜK for any other reason. When it comes to sexuality, the series never challenges the codes of public morality. The young couples are occasionally seen kissing on the lips in an unpassionate manner in romantic segments. Maintaining their relationships without engaging in pre-marital sexual relations is represented as the preferred way of having a decent romance in *Arka Sokaklar*. Although sexual tension between the characters is occasionally hinted at in dialogues, only Engin is seen having sexual relations with a 'foreign' woman when he is working undercover in episode 56. Even after the couples get wed, their marriages are represented without any

reference to their sexual lives and they do not show any physical contact with each other, except hugging.

Additionally, relationships between men and women tend to be represented in a conservative manner in the series. In order to strengthen the masculine discourse of the series, women are generally seen in traditional and stereotypical roles as always giving in to the demands of their partners or having attacks of jealousy and falsely accusing them of cheating. Besides, their dressing styles and behaviours are always monitored by men. For instance, in episode 3, Rıza complains to his wife about the dressing style of his daughter Pınar, finding her style provocative and indecent.

Even the younger sons of Hüsnü are granted the authority to warn their mother and sisters about their actions. They usually say very offensive words when they see a woman in a bikini or in revealing clothes but when it comes to their big sister, Zeliha (Yüstra Geyik), they become very protective. They interfere in the love affairs of their sister by warning their mother about not sending their sister outside alone with her boyfriend, as in episode 85. They also control how their sister dresses and behaves in public. In episode 87, when the family goes to the beach without Hüsnü, Zeliha asks her mother to strip down the shoulder straps of her bikini to tan better. Although she gets the permission of her mother, her younger brothers react against the situation in a highly masculine tone of voice with hand gestures by saying '*Abartmayın. Edebimizle geldik, edebimizle gideceğiz buradan*' (Calm down! We came here as decent people and we will leave this place as decent people.)

By means of these comments, *Arka Sokaklar* not only limits and controls the behaviour of the female characters in its narrative but also reproduces the conservative codes of public morality. In this way, male characters in the series function like RTÜK themselves, always monitoring and avoiding situations which could offend 'the structure of the Turkish family' and general public morality. However, in an interesting way, when the issue comes to alcohol use, *Arka Sokaklar* does not comply with RTÜK laws by representing the characters drinking alcohol without blurring or pixelating their glasses throughout the seasons and is not penalized either.

Smoking has never been a problem for the series because the characters are not represented as smokers from the beginning of the series. However, the characters are depicted drinking alcohol, particularly *rakı*, without any censorship at special events like anniversaries, dinner parties, male bonding gatherings or traditional barbecue parties in Rıza's backyard, as in episode 343 and 362. Since female characters are not usually seen drinking *rakı* it is presented as a drinking habit of Turkish men and used as a symbol to increase the dominant, masculine tone of voice in the narrative.

The series does not normally blur or pixelate the images of alcoholic drinks but during the month of Ramadan, even the dialogues of the characters are censored when a reference is made to alcohol. In episode 87 which was broadcasted in September 2008 during the month of Ramadan, when Rıza invites a friend to dinner for having *rakı* and fish in his backyard the word *rakı* is censored with a bleep for the first time. During that time, it was not very common to censor these kinds of dialogues or the images of alcoholic drinks because RTÜK had not started to seriously monitor their representations. Therefore, a public reaction was given to this censorship in the Turkish press and popular websites like *ekşisözlük* (Eksisözlük 2008) and *instela* (Instela 2009) which define themselves as 'dictionaries' on which subscribers could write about anything they want. Similarly, many years later in 2015, in episode 376, the beer glasses of the suspects are blurred during the month of Ramadan. Besides, in the same episode, when the team gathers in the backyard of Rıza to throw a farewell party for Engin, instead of drinking *rakı* as usual everyone seems to drink lemonade, out of respect for the month of Ramadan.

Even though apart from the Ramadan periods, alcoholic drinks are not censored in *Arka Sokaklar*, the series has never been penalized. Since RTÜK law is only valid for the programmes which 'encourage' the audiences to consume alcohol it seems that *Arka Sokaklar* was never found 'improper' by RTÜK regarding this issue. The series, which expresses its sensitivity concerning alcohol use even before the debate about the representation of alcoholic drinks became heated, is regarded as a proper programme, respecting legal boundaries. By reproducing the codes of public morality and drawing a proper portrait of the nation through the appearances and worldviews of its characters,

Arka Sokaklar did not get any reactions until 2016 when it was penalized for the first time.

5.3.2.4 Representation of class dynamics

As in any other Turkish TV series, class dynamics are presented through certain symbols in *Arka Sokaklar*. Upper class characters are conventionally associated with living luxurious, secular lives and residing in villas with big gardens and swimming pools in the outskirts of Istanbul. Lower class characters are represented living in shanty towns, residing in dreary slums and wearing traditional, rural clothes. Female characters from lower classes frequently cover their hair, by wearing their headscarves in traditional rather than Islamic ways. By means of these images, *Arka Sokaklar* continues to reproduce the national stereotypes of upper and lower classes on Turkish television.

However, in an interesting manner, *Arka Sokaklar* makes a distinction while representing ‘good’ upper class characters and ‘bad’ upper class characters. If the wealthy people are the victims of a criminal offense their lifestyles are not represented in extravagance. They are seen living in big mansions, surrounded by servants but their devotion to traditional, Turkish family values are particularly underlined. For instance in episode 56, when the daughter of a wealthy businessman is kidnapped at the airport, the mother emphasizes how she cooked her daughter’s favourite *börek* for her visit. With this emphasis, the series underlines that despite being wealthy, these people did not lose touch with their own national values and traditions. But in many other cases, apart from being symbolized by luxurious, secular lifestyles, wealth is associated with getting disconnected from Turkish traditions, living indecent lives by using drugs, spending time with sex workers and running illegal operations. Although this association could be simultaneously considered as an ‘international’ tendency which could also be easily found in American TV show, in the Turkish context it carries an inherent meaning to symbolize degeneration through Westernization, turning back on national, moral as well as religious values.

Additionally, similar to Turkish TV series with a particular focus on family relations, the middle class is glorified in *Arka Sokaklar* through the depiction of the ordinary lifestyles

of police figures. The series especially associates being a public officer with being middle class. Middle class characters are associated with earning honest money and living decent lives despite financial difficulties. For instance in episode 277, an uniformed police officer is seen shopping at the neighbourhood grocery store on credit because he struggles to make the end of the month. In a similar way, Hüsnü is regularly depicted as complaining about his financial situation, as in episode 19, and struggling to support his family, but he still manages to live a decent life. However, although older generations seem content with their middle class positions, younger generations are not very satisfied.

In episode 177, after Pınar (İpek Yaylıoğlu Usta) and Ali have their first baby, the family discusses where they should bury her umbilical cord. In Turkey, it is believed that the baby will have a bright future career at the place where his or her umbilical cord is buried. For instance, if the umbilical cord is buried at a school yard the baby could become a successful teacher or be a very bright student. Rıza and his wife suggest that the umbilical cord could be buried near a hospital or a courthouse so that the baby could become a public officer like a doctor or a lawyer. However, Pınar insists that the umbilical cord should be buried near a plaza in Maslak, Istanbul, which is the finance centre of Turkey so that the baby would not become a public official but a successful banker.

Pınar's wishes for her baby to become a specialist in finance can be associated with the influence of neoliberalism on Turkish society. Whereas for older generations becoming a public officer means having a decent life and prestige, for younger generations what is more important is earning a lot of money in the private sector. In a similar manner, Hüsnü's young boys are frequently seen attempting to run business operations to earn more money or even to hit the goldmine. Their operations change from selling drinks near a soccer field as in episode 85 to selling female underwear in a neighbourhood bazaar as in episode 177. Their special interest in getting rich very quickly by means of a bright idea indicates the influence of consumption culture and neoliberal economics on younger generations in Turkey. In this way, apart from reproducing national stereotypes of upper and lower classes, *Arka Sokaklar* comments on the different views of older and younger generations on being middle class in the age of neoliberalism.

5.3.2.5 The conception of the family

Representing the family lives of the characters is one of the major features of *Arka Sokaklar*. When their shift is over, characters are frequently seen spending time with their families at home until duty calls. Hüsni Çoban's family is placed at the centre of promoting Turkish family values. Throughout the seasons, Çoban family struggles with many problems but manages to overcome everything by means of solidarity. Hüsni's wife, Suat (Figen Evren), appears in a highly traditional role in the series, as the mother of five children and a housewife. She does all the housework, takes care of the children and only socializes with her female friends in the neighbourhood. She supports every decision of her husband and is always content with what she has. The Çoban family is depicted as an ideal Turkish family.

Apart from having individual families, Rıza's team is represented as an extended family in the series. In episode 19, Rıza particularly emphasizes that the precinct is a family environment in which every personal problem can be mentioned and negotiated. Not only the team members but also their families are regularly depicted together, acting with solidarity at moments of despair and happiness. The members of this extended family 'legally' become family by getting united in marriage. Couples like Zeynep and Murat, Pınar and Ali as well as Murat and Leyla get married in different seasons and Aylin and Hakan are represented on the edge of getting married in the tenth season. As the frequency of marriages indicates, starting a family is strongly promoted in *Arka Sokaklar*. During the ten seasons of the series, not only do couples unite in marriage but they also have children which contribute to the growth of their extended family.

Therefore, in a way that would please the channel executives who demand to include the 'family' as a theme in every Turkish TV series regardless of its genre, *Arka Sokaklar* particularly focuses on the family lives of the characters. With the help of these family segments, the series also gets the opportunity to travel between the conventions of police procedural and dramedy genres. By getting inspiration from the conventions of Turkish dramedies with a particular focus on families, *Arka Sokaklar* manages to become more

family friendly and entertaining by reflecting traditional Turkish family values in an appropriate manner.

5.3.2.6 The conception of the neighbourhood (*mahalle*)

The neighbourhood appears as a significant element in *Arka Sokaklar* to represent the contemporary national scene. On the one hand, the neighbourhood appears as an ideal place to raise a family. Especially by depicting the family life of Hüsni, the series reveals how Turkish families continue to live traditional lives in small neighbourhoods, interacting with their neighbours as well as shopkeepers. In episode 23, a traditional neighbourhood scene is depicted when the camera moves from the sons of Hüsni playing soccer among the other children in the street to the grocery store of a Laz haji who regularly closes his shop when he goes to Friday prayer. In episode 69, a traditional neighbourhood is depicted in a similar sense, representing children throwing snow balls on the streets near shops like grocery stores and fruit sellers which are aligned side by side.

On the other hand, inspired by contemporary discussions on ‘neighbourhood pressure’, in episode 95 Zeynep and Murat mention how conservative a neighbourhood can be while investigating the murder of a young woman. As they talk to the neighbours of the victim in a lower class neighbourhood they realize that the young woman had a boyfriend. When the neighbours saw the woman with a man in the neighbourhood they informed her father and brother who beat the woman to give her a lesson. When they talk about the incident Zeynep says that every time it is the same story, in order to emphasize the commonness of the event and how conservative these kinds of neighbourhoods can be.

Besides, neighbourhood coffee houses (*kıraathane*)¹¹ are visited by Rıza’s team on several occasions. In episode 277, team members go to one of these coffee houses in order to talk to men who seem to know everyone and are informed about everything that has been going on in the neighbourhood. Sometimes, these coffee houses become a part of

¹¹ Almost every neighbourhood in Turkey has coffee houses like these which are occupied only by men who drink coffee or tea while chatting and playing cards.

the investigation, like in episode 343 in which a Syrian man is lynched by the residents in the neighbourhood who are organized in the local coffee house. Similarly, in episode 154, the father of a murderer provokes the people in the local coffee house by saying that the police is in the neighbourhood to make arrests in relation to an earlier political protest, in order to prevent the police from coming into the neighbourhood and arresting his son.

Therefore, the neighbourhood does not always appear as a peaceful place in which all residents are depicted in solidarity. On the contrary, as in episode 289, *Arka Sokaklar* emphasizes how the neighbourhoods have changed in time, becoming more alienating places. In this episode, an architecture student is beaten to death in a shady neighbourhood. When Melek, a young member of the team, speaks to the neighbourhood mukhtar she complains on how everybody in the neighbourhood remains silent about the incident. The mukhtar says that in the old times, everybody lent a hand to the ones who were in need. If a strange man crossed the street twice the young lads (*delikanlı*) in the neighbourhood stopped him immediately. But the times have changed. Even the mukhtar himself was wounded and hospitalized earlier while trying to break up a fight. So, for him, nobody gives a hand to no one these days.

Consequently, neighbourhood appears as a significant element for depicting the everyday lives of Turkish people and drawing an accurate portrait of the nation. On the one hand, the series approaches the neighbourhood as a nostalgic place in which children can still play on the streets and the residents live in harmony with the shopkeepers. But it also depicts the neighbourhood as a conservative and backward space in which residents are provoked to commit crime, cause the murder of a young girl with their gossip, or overlook the murder of a university student out of fear. In this way, by including different portraits of the neighbourhood, *Arka Sokaklar* achieves to represent the neighbourhood in its multiple forms and conceptualize this element as something intrinsically ‘Turkish’.

5.3.2.7 Melodramatic modality

Melodramatic modality infuses the narrative of *Arka Sokaklar* on many occasions. By depicting the tragedies of the victims in longer sequences, together with sad music and melodramatic acting, the series increases the tone of melodrama whenever possible. For instance, in episodes 87, 95 and 154 in which the investigations deal with the murder of young women or the accidental shooting of a small child, the series adopts a particular melodramatic way of storytelling.

However, the tone of melodrama is increased not only by the tragic representation of victim stories, but also by the personal stories of the main characters. Firstly, crises that occur in the love stories give the series the opportunity to change its orientation from action to melodrama. Secondly, the tone of melodrama also peaks when a police officer is seriously wounded on duty or a family member is attacked by a vengeful criminal. Numerous occasions like these can be found throughout the ten seasons of the series and each of them is depicted in a melodramatic manner.

By means of the infusion of melodramatic modality, *Arka Sokaklar* strengthens the law and order rhetoric embedded in its narrative. Increasing the tone of melodrama frequently foreshadows the moments in which the pure and innocent are harmed or about to be harmed by the bad and unlawful. At these melodramatic moments in which the distinction between the good and lawful and the bad and unlawful are particularly deepened, criminals are generally confronted by the police. When the tone of melodrama peaks, every act to save the innocent, maintain the order and save the nation is justified and stays without consequences. In this way, *Arka Sokaklar* reinforces its nationalist discourse through melodramatic modality by clearly differentiating the main characters from the enemies of the state.

Arka Sokaklar concentrates on the lives of middle class police figures who fight against crime in an urban space like Istanbul by firing guns, chasing criminals in their vehicles

and tracing leads through computer technologies. By using a popular visual style like documentary realism as well as referring to dominant generic themes such as law and order, distrust in the legal system and private enterprises and gender issues, *Arka Sokaklar* is qualified as a police procedural in every sense.

However, while adopting the international generic conventions of the police procedural, *Arka Sokaklar* simultaneously creates its own response to the ‘Western’ origins of the genre. By emphasising the success and effectiveness of the Turkish ways of policing over Western methods, the series refers to a ‘national’ theme which is highly popular among Turkish police procedurals. By means of this theme, it persistently evokes the tension between the foreign and the local in its narrative by creating recurring moments to compare the Turkish police officers to their foreign colleagues.

However, *Arka Sokaklar* does not only stimulate this tension at a diegetic level but also keeps the movement between the foreign and the local constant by celebrating the Turkish ways of formulating the police procedural genre. By combining the foundations of official, Kemalist nationalism with ultra-nationalist and conservative ideas, *Arka Sokaklar* constructs its own nationalist discourse to define ‘Turkishness’. It builds its law and order rhetoric on differentiating police figures from the ‘selected’ internal and external enemies of the state by commenting on contemporary political issues with a nationalist and militarist approach.

While strengthening its nationalist discourse through the investigations of police figures, *Arka Sokaklar* depicts them in several settings, drawing an accurate portrait of the national scene via Turkish neighbourhoods and family houses. It utilizes stereotypical images of upper, lower and middle class figures, casts female characters in conservative, traditional roles and constructs its narrative in accordance with Turkish family values and codes of public morality. Despite building its narrative on a secular imaginary, the series does not overlook the Islamic foundations of Turkish national identity. It does not only occasionally include Islamic elements in its episodes but it also respects the Islamic practices by censoring the images of alcoholic drinks during the month of Ramadan.

By means of these particular elements and its melodramatic modality, *Arka Sokaklar* points at the ‘national’ in its narrative in implicit and explicit ways. Besides, by attributing importance to different national elements to different degrees, *Arka Sokaklar* regularly travels to the domains of other popular genres in Turkey such as Turkish dramedies with a particular focus on family relations and crime series which carry ultra-nationalist messages. In this way, *Arka Sokaklar* gets inspiration from these local resources and creates an indigenous, national response to the police procedural genre by redesigning this international formula in accordance with the dynamics of the Turkish TV series industry. Consequently, it achieves to become an original work which could survive in a highly competitive television environment for ten years and maybe more.

5.4 CSI FOR THE NATIONAL AUDIENCE: THE TURKISH FORENSIC TV SERIES *KANIT*

Turkish forensic police procedural *Kanıt* appeared on the mainstream TV channel Kanal D in the summer of 2010 and made its finale in 2013. The series was shown for three seasons, usually after 10.00 p.m. and composed of 100 episodes. *Kanıt* got a great deal of attention from the audiences during the time it was broadcasted. The series even had a spinoff, *Kanıt: Ateş Üstünde* (The Evidence: On Fire, Kanal D, 2016), which started to be shown three years after *Kanıt*’s finale. But it was cancelled after eight episodes due to low ratings.

When *Kanıt* started to be shown its popularity was expectedly associated with the worldwide fame of the *CSI* franchise. As in many countries around the world, *CSI* was well-known in Turkey at that time. The dubbed version of *CSI: Las Vegas* (2000–2015) was already broadcasted on the state run TV channel, TRT 1. The subtitled version of *CSI: NY* (2004–2013) was shown on CNBC-e and *CSI: Miami* (2002–2012) was aired on the premium service channel *Dizimax Vice* with subtitles. Besides, the consultant and the narrator of *Kanıt*, Sevil Atasoy, verified that the show followed the footsteps of the *CSI* franchise. (“Bütün cinayetleri çözmeden ‘Bizde seri katil yoktur’ denemez” 2010) Therefore, making an association between *Kanıt* and the *CSI* franchise was not odd and after a short while, *Kanıt* started to be described in Turkish newspapers as ‘Turkish CSI’.

Even though the *CSI* franchise has been the main inspiration behind its production, *Kanıt* managed to become an innovative TV series rather than a mere imitation, combining multiple influences from various sources. Constantly moving between foreign generic conventions and local dynamics and inspirations, *Kanıt* operated in the domains of both terms and thrived from the relationship among them. In order to discuss how *Kanıt* manages to be a forensic police procedural with a ‘Turkish touch’ and a ‘recognizable *CSI* look’, the series is analysed below by referring to its application of generic conventions and its performance of national elements.

5.4.1 Generic Conventions

5.4.1.1 Social classes, values and characteristics of the characters

Kanıt mainly revolves around the investigations of Orhan (Engin Benli), the chief inspector at the homicide bureau in the Istanbul Police Department and his sidekick, commissar Selim (Deniz Celiloğlu). The homicide bureau is assisted by the chief analyst and her assistants in the crime laboratory, the coroner, Ece (Ece Güzel), who works in the institute of forensic sciences, and the specialists who manage the crime scene investigation team.

In *Kanıt*, all officers are plain clothed. Except wearing lab coats or overalls during their analysis in the crime lab or at the crime scene they do not have specific clothing to emphasize their work. However, this does not mean that their everyday clothing reflects their lower middle class positions. The clothing, accents, hobbies and social lives of the characters in *Kanıt* make it easier to associate them with the upper middle class. Since none of the characters speak of having economic difficulties or complain about their low salaries as in *Arka Sokaklar*, their financial situation seems solid. This class positioning influenced the nationalist discourse of *Kanıt* to a great extent and brings it closer to the early Turkish police procedurals that were shown on the public television, TRT 1.

Chief inspector Orhan is a lonely man who keeps his private life to himself. In such a way to support his upper middle class role, he likes reading poems, collecting comic books,

playing chess and basketball with Selim. Orhan's interest in comic books is usually emphasized in the narrative by means of animated scenes which mimic drawings in comic books and give information about the possible scenarios that Orhan imagines concerning the case. Orhan's upper middle class position is also supported by his intellectual knowledge. By means of these qualifications, Orhan can be associated with classical detective figures like Sherlock Holmes rather than 'street-smart' police characters like Commissar Columbo.

His side-kick, Selim, is a young, talkative, witty commissar. Contrary to Orhan, Selim uses more slang and usually sounds more casual. Whereas Orhan rarely loses control or insults a suspect, Selim is never patient. He frequently threatens the suspects to resort to brute force but usually he is cooled down by Orhan. He has a tendency to make judgements at first sight without waiting for enough evidence to back up his conclusions. For that reason, he is usually enlightened by Orhan who has epiphanies about the cases. In this way, he turns into the 'Dr. Watson' of the 'Sherlock Holmesian' Orhan.

Ayça (Seben Koçibey) is added to the team in episode 36 when she has been working on a case in Izmir and a similar kind of crime is committed in Istanbul. She studied criminology in the United States and worked at the homicide bureau in Los Angeles for three years. Her background in the U.S. frequently causes methodological conflicts with her colleagues. Therefore, Ayça can be considered as a key figure to reflect the tension between the 'foreign' and the 'local' at the diegetic level of the series. Another commissar, Yaman (Tolga Karel), is added to the team in episode 97. However, since the series ended shortly after, Yaman only appears in four episodes and the mysteries about his 'awkward' personality remain open-ended.

Side characters are chief analysts in the crime lab like Zeynep (Sera Tokdemir), Bahar and Gamze (İnci Demirkaya), the coroner, Ece, crime scene investigators Murat (Murat Çelik) and Ejder (Ejder Murat Namlı), as well as the IT specialist, Emre (Emre Özmen). These characters do not have distinctive characteristics but only have a function to help the homicide bureau to solve the murders and mostly to chitchat with Selim in order keep the balance between the procedure oriented and character oriented drama. These

characters pay regular visits to the office of Selim and Orhan. Except these visits, they are rarely seen outside their workplaces. Only the private lives of Zeynep and Gamze are carried to the forefront in the series because they become love interests of Selim in different seasons.

Apart from these ‘fictional’ characters, the narrator and consultant, Sevil Atasoy, is a significant character in the series. Atasoy is a professor at Istanbul University and has worked as the head of the Institute of Forensic Medicine, an affiliation of the Turkish Ministry of Justice for many years. Although Atasoy’s presence in *Kanıt* can be compared to the employment of the former forensic examiner Elizabeth Devine in the *CSI* franchise, her visibility both behind and in front of the camera is something that cannot be seen in *CSI*.

In her semi-diegetic interferences in the narrative, Sevil Atasoy is represented as an authority figure. She regularly disrupts the diegetic events with semi-diegetic inserts in which she comments on the narrative events, explaining the complicated stages of forensic data analysis, referring to famous true crime stories around the world or just giving advice or warning the audiences concerning issues such as crime, health, safety or hygiene. The controlling role that is attributed to Sevil Atasoy in the narrative gives *Kanıt* with a particular local touch in its appropriation of the generic conventions of the forensic police procedural.

5.4.1.2 Setting and tools

Istanbul is chosen for the setting of *Kanıt*. Similar to *Arka Sokaklar*, the narrative of the series is frequently interrupted by recognizable symbols of Istanbul such as the Maiden’s Tower, Istiklal Street or the Bosphorus Bridge. In order to highlight the locations of the characters, the entrance of Istanbul Police Headquarters in Vatan Street and the Institution of Forensic Medicine are used as specific markers. However, Istanbul is not represented as a jungle-like city where the criminals prowl around. Different places are chosen for depicting a murder in *Kanıt*. The variety of these places changes from a concert hall and a fashion shoot to a strip club and a sports centre. Bodies are usually found in deserted

places such as parks and forests, luxurious villas at the outskirts of the city or poor neighbourhoods. Therefore, Istanbul is usually stripped from its crowd and mayhem in *Kanit* and only presented as an idea.

In terms of tools, in order to appropriate the global iconography of the police procedural genre pistols, automobiles, sirens, computers and radio are regularly used in *Kanit*. In addition to these, for being a successor of the *CSI* franchise, various high-tech devices and computer systems are expected to be seen in the series. But in comparison to *CSI*, the technology that the analysts use in the crime lab or in the autopsy room is not visualized in the series. The analysts or the coroner are usually seen in a room, full of test tubes and colourful screens but when it comes to analyse a piece of evidence the most frequent tool that they use is a brush to identify fingerprints on an item.

The lack of extravagant technological tools leads the series to create its own 'local' response to the generic conventions of the forensic police procedural genre and choose a more verbal narration in explaining the processing of forensic evidence. This preference is supported by the semi-diegetic segments of Sevil Atasoy in which she informs the audiences about the trades of the job.

5.4.1.3 Plot construction

Different from other Turkish police procedurals, *Kanit* follows a very stable structure which gives the impression that the global conventions of the police procedural genre are strictly followed. Every episode of *Kanit* revolves around a homicide which could involve investigating the murders of several people related to the same case. In the beginning of each episode, chief inspector Orhan and commissar Selim are assigned to a case. The call coming in through the radio is followed by the arrival of the police officers on the crime scene in which they join the crime scene investigation team.

However, interestingly, although in Turkey a prosecutor has to be at the crime scene in order to assign the proper department for the case such as the homicide bureau, anti-terror or organized crime branch, it is not common to see a prosecutor present at the crime scene

in *Kanıt* but Orhan and Selim are assigned to the case anyway. In this sense, the series affirms the idea that instead of creating an indigenous convention by placing a prosecutor at the crime scene, *Kanıt* prefers to follow the ‘American’ generic conventions.

The procedural work starts with the autopsy that is conducted by Ece and the arrival of forensic evidence to the crime lab which the chief analysts work on, together with the technicians. The processing of the evidence runs parallel with Orhan and Selim’s investigation, including the interrogation of witnesses and suspects from various social classes. The interrogations are regularly combined with flashbacks in which the movements of the victims are traced with re-enactment scenes. During the investigations, Selim and Orhan recurrently evaluate their leads in front of a board on which they gradually build their case.

The investigation is regularly interrupted by sequences that represent the flirtation of Selim with the chief analysts in the crime lab as well as his constant chitchat and quarrels with his colleagues. After all forensic evidence is collected, Orhan discovers a final clue by having an epiphany. The case is usually closed in *Kanıt* during interrogation when one of the suspects finally confesses the crime. But it is always ‘the forensic evidence’ that guarantees the confession which is regularly accompanied by flashbacks depicting the crime. At the end of every episode, the criminals are either shown behind bars or walking through the corridor of the homicide bureau while their hands are cuffed and the verdict about their cases is read by the voice over.

This recurring plot structure of *Kanıt* is regularly interrupted by Sevil Atasoy’s comments. These interruptions keep the balance between the devoted appropriation of the global conventions of the genre and the local ways of storytelling in the narrative. On the one hand, the repeated plot structure makes the series easily recognizable as a police procedural in a global sense. On the other hand, the appearance of Sevil Atasoy in the semi-diegetic segments reminds of the popular Turkish reality shows of the 1990s such as *Gerçek Kesit* (Slice of Life, 1992-2008), *Söz Fato’da* (Fato has a Say, Kanal D, 1996) and *Sıcağı Sıcağına* (There and Then, 1993-1998) which concentrate on true crime stories or social scandals in Turkey. The dominance of the presenter who usually comments on

or even interferes in the events was among the characteristic features of these shows. By using Sevil Atasoy as a presenter/specialist in the narrative, *Kanit* combines this popular way of storytelling in the 1990s with the global plot structure of the genre and creates its own 'local' structure.

5.4.1.4 Dominant themes and ideologies

The narrative of *Kanit* essentially reiterates the law and order rhetoric of the police procedural genre. A strict line is drawn between right and wrong as well as the police and the criminals in the plot and forensic science is glorified in the narrative to separate the innocent from the immoral. This firm separation is achieved through a particular focus on police procedures rather than the private lives of the characters. Although the personal lives of the characters are partially mentioned in the episodes, *Kanit's* main concentration is always on the procedures.

Orhan as the chief inspector and main character of the show adopts a distant, serious and highly professional tone during his investigations. Neither Orhan's moral position nor his devotion to the job is challenged in the series and Orhan's worldview is accepted without a question. In this sense Orhan, who functions as the moral compass of the show, revitalizes the black and white universe of *Dragnet*. In this way, *Kanit* accepts the authority of the police as well as its rightful procedures and disseminates the message that the police works for the public safety and knows what is best for it.

Law and order rhetoric makes itself most apparent in episode 45 which focuses on the murder of a child. All characters get affected by this case differently. Whereas Zeynep secretly cries, Selim very quickly loses his temper on almost every suspect and swears a lot although his swear words are bleeped. When the investigation ends Orhan loses control by barging into the interrogation room, swearing and punching the killer. Orhan's position in the series as a moral compass justifies his act and strengthens the law and order rhetoric of the show. Whereas this significant emphasis on the law and order rhetoric allows *Kanit* to reproduce a dominant discourse of the police procedural genre,

the melodramatic tone of the episode gives the series a ‘Turkish’ touch by keeping the balance between the ‘foreign’ and the ‘local’.

Ideologically, *Kanıt* does not only construct a black and white universe where the authority of the police is not questioned but also emphasizes the idea that this universe is dominantly male. There are a lot of female characters in important positions in *Kanıt* but their limits are carefully determined. Most of the analysts working in the crime lab are female but they are rarely seen outside the lab. Ece, the coroner, only has a function in the autopsy room. The crime scene is managed and monitored by male officers such as Murat, Ejder, Orhan and Selim who are also highly active in the field.

Apart from placing male officers in active roles in comparison with the passive positions of female officers, the only active female character in the field, commissar Ayça, is frequently harassed by Selim who makes uncomfortable jokes about her being a woman doing a man’s job. The constant quarrels between Selim and Ayça which are presented as innocent, entertaining conversations between two colleagues reflect the implicit male dominance in the series. Ayça, who is constantly forced to stand up for herself against Selim’s passive-aggressive comments, even struggles to make a room for herself in the office.

For instance, in episode 37, when Selim does not allow her to use the board to create a schema for the investigation, Ayça uses the windows as a board to put the evidence together. Orhan criticizes Ayça’s behaviour when he sees the chaos in the office and Ayça accuses him of being like every other men, always trying to be in the driver’s seat. Orhan’s control issues are taken a step further in episode 40, when he punishes Ayça for acting recklessly and independently. Orhan leaves Ayça in the office when he and Selim go out for investigation and in order to make sure that Ayça stays in the office he literally handcuffs her to an office chair. Therefore, Ayça’s disappearance from this male dominated universe after getting murdered at the end of the first season might not be surprising because in the black and white universe of *Kanıt*, survival is not granted to female commissars who are active in the field.

As in *Arka Sokaklar*, referring to the tension between the foreign and the local appears as a dominant theme in *Kanıt*. This theme, which also strengthens the nationalist discourse inherent in the series, frequently arises as a reaction to the American ways of policing as it is seen on television and as a comparison with the *CSI* franchise. Selim is placed at the centre of these dilemmas and he is frequently represented as a character who prefers the Turkish ways of policing over American methods. Selim's intuitive reactions reach a peak when he encounters a character like Ayça who studied and worked in the United States.

The quarrels between Selim and Ayça start from the moment that Ayça is introduced to the team. When Selim finds Ayça at the crime scene, looking for evidence without getting permission from the homicide bureau in Istanbul, a tension occurs between the colleagues. Selim is not convinced that the murder in Istanbul is related to Ayça's case in Izmir and he questions Ayça's ability to investigate. Ayça states that she is specialized in criminology which was also her major at university in the United States and her profession while working in the Los Angeles police department. Selim gets annoyed and intimidated by Ayça's 'American' background and condemns her for being a snob. He criticizes Ayça's behaviours by referring to her American connection and says that 'here is not the U.S., you cannot barge into a crime scene without informing the homicide bureau in charge. They start a prosecution against you and you will be transferred to the traffic bureau with a blink of an eye.'

In later episodes, Selim regularly 'teases' Ayça by bringing up the subject of her past and compares his 'Turkish' policing skills with Ayça's 'American' methods. For instance, in episode 39, he criticizes Ayça's ideas about a case by asking 'did you learn these in the U.S.?' or complains about Ayça's trailing skills by ironically inquiring 'how are you trained in the FBI again?' In the episode 47, Selim states that he knows the type of a man just by looking at his eyes and he does not need to have studied in the U.S. to do that. Selim also uses 'FBI' as a nickname for Ayça and frequently asks her to leave her 'American' ways. But Ayça continues to agitate Selim to a great extent not only due to her 'American' ways of policing but also because of her regular use of English words like 'steak house', 'T-bone steak' or 'impulsive' as in episode 36.

However, it is not only Ayça who triggers Selim's reactions to the 'American' ways which are mostly known to Selim through films and TV shows. In episode 46, when Murat from the crime scene investigation team is captured by a murderer Selim points his gun to the killer who requests Selim to drop his gun. Selim responds to this request by saying 'Do you want me to arrange a flight for you from Sabiha Gökçen Airport as well? What do you think this is, an American movie?'

The regularity of the references to American films and TV shows makes comparing Turkish ways of policing to the American ones a dominant theme in the narrative of *Kanıt*. In this way, apart from emphasizing the importance of ensuring law and order by narrating this theme in a melodramatic manner, keeping the tension between the foreign and the local turns into a common subject in the series.

5.4.1.5 Visual styles

The excessive stylishness of the *CSI* franchise can be considered as the main inspiration behind the construction of the visual style of *Kanıt*. The colours and lighting of *Kanıt* which partially determine its signature 'look' might be described as a mixture of *CSI: Las Vegas*, *CSI: Miami* and *CSI: NY*. Its appropriation of the colour coding that *CSI* series use to distinguish different plots and locations create a direct link between *Kanıt* and *CSI*. The signature shots of *Kanıt* which I categorize as 'the crime scene', 'the autopsy', 'the office', 'the city', 'processing the evidence', 'the lab' and 'the interrogation' reflect multiple influences from all three franchises.

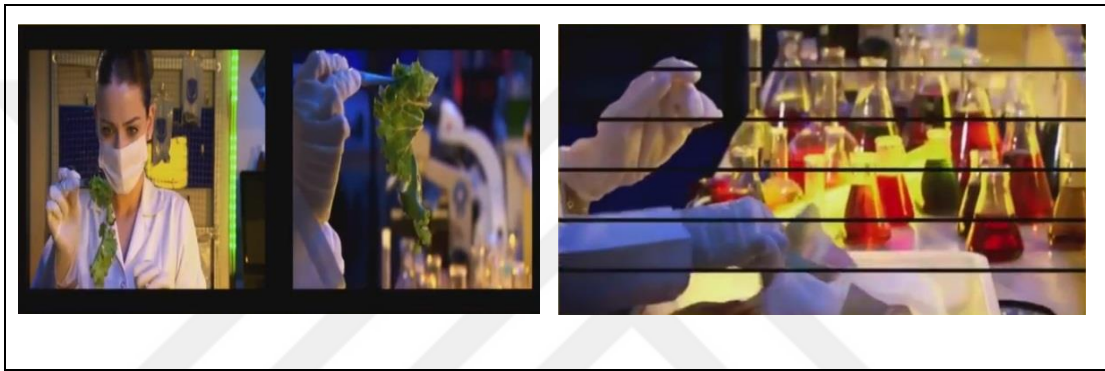
Figure 5.2 : Autopsy scene from *Kanıt*¹²



¹² The still image is taken from the Youtube video, *Kanıt 55.Bölüm* (Final Yapan 2016)

For instance, whereas the electric blues, reds and the concentrated white lights that are dominant in the ‘the lab’ and ‘the autopsy’ scenes resemble the multi-coloured labs of *CSI: Miami*, the setting and the organization of the ‘the autopsy’ scenes remind more of the autopsy room of *CSI: NY* which is surrounded by various screens. In a similar manner, while *Kanıt*’s interrogation rooms, which are dominated by yellow and white lights, are not similar to the transparent glass rooms of *CSI: Miami* and *CSI: NY*, they do mimic the dark atmosphere of the non-transparent interrogation rooms of *CSI: Las Vegas*.

Figure 5.3 : Split screens from *Kanıt*¹³



Accordingly, whereas one of *Kanıt*’s signature sequences that depicts the ‘processing of the evidence’ especially mimics the split screens of *CSI: Miami*, the fast-forward inserts that display the monumental parts of Istanbul resemble both *CSI: Miami* and *CSI: NY*. In this sense, it can be claimed that generally it is really difficult to detect which series influences *Kanıt*’s ‘look’ in what ways since there is no absolute ‘mimicry’ of the visual and stylistic elements of *CSI* throughout the whole series. The look which has designed for *Kanıt* is strongly familiar and recognizable but it is also really difficult to attach it to a particular source.

Besides, the excessive stylishness of the *CSI* franchise is not the only influence that gives *Kanıt* its signature look. As Sevil Atasoy notes, similar to its foreign counterparts such as the American *CSI*, the German *Tatort* (1970-) and the Russian *Sled* (2007-), each episode of *Kanıt* is inspired by ‘true events’. (“*Kanıt*’ta Üçüncü Perde” 2012) Therefore, every episode of *Kanıt* begins by announcing that it was inspired by real events and this verbal

¹³ The still images are taken from the Youtube video, *Kanıt 55.Bölüm* (Final Yapan 2016)

‘truth claim’ is visually supported by the documentary realism that is reflected by its narrative.

As stated earlier, *Kanit* highlights the importance of the procedure over personal relations with different techniques. The voice over is a significant part of *Kanit*’s narration. It introduces the suspects in freeze frame, occasionally summarizes what happened after a specific procedure and reads the convictions at the end of every episode, reminding the voice-over in *Law and Order* (1990-2010). Apart from the voice over, usage of black and white in freeze frames as well as in some re-enactment sequences and Sevil Atasoy’s placement in the ‘diegetic’ forensic lab as a real-life specialist enhance the claim of ‘playing truth not fiction’.

Figure 5.4 : ‘Sevil Atasoy shot’ from *Kanit*¹⁴



Kanit proliferates this claim with its references to the *CSI* franchise by building a comparison between the methods that are used in the series. Sometimes these comparisons are made in order to glorify the ‘realistic’ quality of *Kanit* over *CSI*. For instance, in episode 27, one of the analysts at the IT branch cannot find a clear image of a face from the surveillance footage because despite the multiple kinds of software that he uses none of it works. Another analyst who is not convinced by his methods questions his abilities by stating that people can even identify a face from the reflection of eyeglasses and the analyst in charge replies that this kind of nonsense can only work in the TV show *CSI*.

¹⁴ The still image is taken from the Youtube video, *Kanit 55.Bölüm* (Final Yapan 2016)

Controversially, *CSI* can also be represented as a general denominator to enhance the reality effect of the series and glorify the meticulous work of the Turkish crime investigation team. In episode 47, a student who turns into a witness in a murder case becomes fascinated by the work that has been done on the crime scene. The student who follows Selim while he searches the crime scene says that ‘I did not know that how real this is. It is exactly like I saw in *CSI*, but in Turkish without subtitles. Even the bag of the crime scene investigation team is the same.’

Later, while the student comments on the case Selim asks him if he learned all these from *CSI* as well. The student responds to him by stating that he also watches *Criminal Minds* (2005-) which specifically focuses on criminal profiling and asks Selim if he is watching it too. Selim gets highly agitated by the officious comments of the student and sends him to the homicide bureau with a uniformed officer. However, by means of these comments, the reality effect of *Kanıt* is enhanced and the professionalism of the Turkish crime scene investigation team is glorified for being highly similar to its ‘Western model’.

This ambivalent relationship highly resembles the hesitant meanings that are attributed to the ‘Western other’ in episode 19 of *Arka Sokaklar* in which Hüsni Çoban receives an award from an American diplomat, Patrick Nelson. Similar to *Arka Sokaklar*, on the one hand, the *CSI* is used as a reference point to glorify the forensic realism of Turkish police procedurals over the American ones in *Kanıt*. On the other hand, building a connection upon resemblance between the ‘American’ *CSI* and the ‘Turkish’ *Kanıt* is appreciated with fervour. In this way, the hesitant, unstable meanings that are attributed to the West in the Turkish context is repeated in the series.

Besides, *Kanıt* does not only create a ‘local’ level by bringing these tensions into the forefront concerning documentary and forensic realism. As explained earlier, the series builds a connection with the popular Turkish reality shows of the 1990s through the dominance of Sevil Atasoy in the narrative as a presenter/narrator. This connection is strengthened via the visual style of *Kanıt* which brings back the aesthetics of these popular shows. By mimicking the sensational, gory narrations of true crime stories that have been traditionally put on the third page of Turkish newspapers, these reality shows had a

particular cheap ‘look’. *Kanıt* can be linked with these shows because of the dowdy mise-en-scene of its re-enactment sequences which directly reminds these popular reality shows of the 1990s with their poor lighting, amateur acting and banal decorations.

The consequent mixture of these multiple influences contributes to the creation of the specific, indigenous visual style of *Kanıt*. The unpolished, nostalgic look that contributes to the construction of documentary realism in *Kanıt* is combined with the excessive stylishness of the colour coded *CSI* and its clumsy variations. In this way, the signature look of the series is formed as an amalgam of local and global inspirations.

5.4.2 National Elements

5.4.2.1 Turkishness as a supranational identity

The nationalist discourse of *Kanıt* is based on official, Kemalist nationalism which influences the representation of ‘Turkishness’ in its narrative to a great extent. Significant symbols of official nationalism can be recognized mostly in the background of the series. The Turkish flag can be seen flying over the blue sky in front of the police headquarters in Istanbul. The portraits of Atatürk surround the offices of the main characters and the corridors of the homicide bureau all the time. However, apart from these banal symbols what makes the dominance of official, Kemalist nationalism apparent in the discourse of *Kanıt* is its adoption of TRT’s motto of the 1970s which intends to educate while entertaining.

The ‘educational’ quality of *Kanıt* is highlighted on various occasions. In an interview conducted with Sevil Atasoy, she states that among many other things, the show aims to educate people about how to behave on a crime scene and teach them the proper methods of collecting evidence. She also adds that the team behind the production of *Kanıt* intends to deter criminals from committing crime by showing the meticulous work that the crime scene investigation officers do. (“Kanıtlanamayacak hiçbir suç yoktur” 2010)

The appearance of Sevil Atasoy in semi-diegetic inserts is also described as another way to educate people. Atasoy states that her appearance in the plot, which cannot be seen in any series in the West, was the idea of Abdullah Oğuz, the producer of the show. In the beginning, she was concerned about this because these inserts might slow down the pace of the show but then she was convinced. She frequently receives great comments about her appearance in the series and is honoured by the feedback of her colleagues who praise the great things that she ‘teaches’ to the folk. (“Bütün cinayetleri çözmeden ‘Bizde seri katil yoktur’ denemez” 2010)

In episode 22, Sevil Atasoy carries her role as the ‘educator’ one step further. While summarizing how the case is solved and how the forensic evidence played a significant role in this resolution she addresses the viewers and states that if they are not convinced by the resolution there are only two options: they either fell asleep or went to the kitchen to have tea or coffee and missed some parts of the show. In an attempt to criticize the audiences for not watching the show carefully, Atasoy intensifies the importance of her duty to educate people while entertaining them.

The influence of the TRT tradition on the show is not only apparent in the ‘educational’ tone of *Kanıt* but also in the accents of the characters and in the use of Turkish language in the narrative. Except rare occasions, all characters including witnesses and suspects speak in a uniform accent in the series. Side characters are even dubbed in order to speak in a ‘proper’ way. Sometimes, even the characters who travel to Istanbul from different regions of Turkey speak in a uniform accent although they are conventionally expected to sound differently.

Besides, as a way to revitalize the uniform language that is frequently used in dubbing on TRT, peculiar words and slang are used in *Kanıt* evoking a feeling as if the dialogues were translated from another language. For instance, in episode 49, while talking to a university scholar about a case, Orhan addresses the man by only using his title, ‘professor’. Since in Turkish, university scholars are not called by their titles but by simply addressed as ‘*hocam*’, Orhan’s dialogue sounds as if it was translated from another language.

Variations of this peculiarity continue in the dialogues. In episode 17, Selim threatens a suspect in the interrogation room by saying '*yalan atma, çizerim*' (don't lie to me, I'll cut you). In the same episode, Selim says to Orhan about interrogating a suspect '*birakın ben yalnız konuşayım, belki öter*' (leave me alone with him, maybe I'll make him talk). In episode 19, Selim says, again addressing a suspect: '*martaval okuma, delirtme adamı, konuş!*' (don't spin a yarn, don't drive me mad, talk!). In later episodes, other characters are seen speaking in peculiar ways as well. For instance, a character is heard saying '*süpersin, moruk!*' (you are superb, old chap!) in episode 41. In episode 49, Orhan is also heard saying '*bak şimdi aşağılık herif, eğer patronunun ismini söylemezsen, sana burada hayatı dar ederim.*' (look at me you lowlife, if you do not give me your boss's name I will make your life miserable) while threatening a man.

By revitalizing outdated slang words like '*moruk*' or '*öter*', frequently used in the 1980s, all these dialogues make the series sound like a dubbed, foreign police procedural, shown on TRT in the 1980s. As profoundly discussed in the second chapter, dubbed versions of American police procedurals had created a specific vocabulary for themselves because the American expressions and slang words were translated in a specific manner for the dubbed versions and this vocabulary is repetitively used in various TV shows and films. Since *Kanıt* mostly depends on the TRT tradition in the usage of language and accents, it revitalizes this vocabulary to a certain extent in an attempt to avoid vulgar expressions and 'tone down' the aggressive behaviour of the characters. Besides, this peculiar language not only points at the influence of the localisation of imported police on Turkish police procedurals but also contributes to the representation of 'Turkishness' in a 'nostalgic' manner as on TRT.

Turkish national identity is depicted as supranational identity in *Kanıt*. Characters with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds are rarely seen in the episodes and when they appear they are either highly stereotyped or the conflicts of different cultural identities are never mentioned. For instance, in episode 40, Selim wakes up from a nightmare in which Zeynep is captured by a man in the corridor of the homicide bureau with a gun to her head. The man who captures Zeynep is dark coloured and speaks with an Eastern accent which is a very rare moment for the series. This representation contributes to the

stereotypical depiction of characters from Eastern Turkey as criminals or mafia leaders in Turkish TV series.

Apart from this exceptional depiction which particularly repeats a frequently used pattern on Turkish television, *Kanıt* generally avoids ‘controversy’ when it comes to representing characters with different ethnic backgrounds or mentioning ‘sensitive’ subjects about the near past of Turkey. For instance, in episode 45, the team focuses on the murder case of a child from Diyarbakır. Even though Diyarbakır is a majorly Kurdish town there is nothing in the episode that could be associated with Kurdish culture.

In the same episode, an Armenian woman, Madame Anna, turns into a witness in the case but her body is also discovered very shortly after the child’s. Madame Anna is described in the series as ‘*tam bir İstanbul hanımefendisi*’ (an Istanbulite lady to the core) who plays the violin and listens to classical music. She teaches the child how to play “Sarı Gelin,” the Turkish version of an Armenian song, on the violin. Even though her name is regularly mentioned in the episode, Madame Anna appears only very briefly in the flashbacks and is depicted as a ‘rare antique’ in the folkloric mosaic of Turkey without any specific qualification.

Another Armenian character, Marco, appears as a murder victim in episode 99. Marco, who is killed by his wife out of jealousy, has been secretly in love with a Turkish woman whom he did not see for 25 years. As a bequest, he wishes to be buried in a Muslim cemetery next to the woman he loves which causes the disappearance of his body for a short while. The wealthy lifestyle of Marco’s family members and Christian symbols like crucifixes and crosses are seen throughout the episode. However, similar to Madame Anna, Marco who is described as a sensitive, intelligent and ambitious man is also represented as a ‘rare antique’ in the narrative. Apart from his portrayal as an old fashioned gentlemen, he is seen driving in an antiquated, classical automobile as if he was a time traveller from the 1950s. In this way, Marco is also depicted as a character from Istanbul’s folkloric past who prefers to be buried in a Muslim cemetery out of his love for a Turkish woman.

In this sense, even though characters from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds are rarely included in the narrative *Kanit* prefers not to get to the bottom of certain issues, even in these rare occasions. In episode 21, a brief reference is given to the recent history of Turkey by mentioning how a building has remained empty after the 6-7 September Events. On 6 and 7 September 1955, the stores and properties of non-Muslim communities in Istanbul, particularly the ones that belonged to Istanbul Greeks, were looted and ruined by the general public after a rumour was spread about a hypothetical bombing of the house in Thessaloniki, Greece where Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was born. After these events which could be described as a milestone in the increasing hostility, the pressure on the non-Muslim communities in Turkey was intensified. Eventually, non-Muslim communities gradually left the country by leaving all their belongings and properties behind because they were not allowed to claim rights on anything. Even today, there are several empty, ‘unattended’ buildings in Istanbul and *Kanit* refers to one of these buildings in one sentence without carrying the subject any further.

Therefore, although certain issues which could be challenging for the unity of Turkish national identity are slightly touched upon in the narrative, the general tendency in *Kanit* is to avoid controversy and focus on the success of the Turkish police in an almost exhibitionist way. Apart from the nationalist symbols that surround the settings, forensic science is glorified in the narrative in an attempt to prove the rest of the world that crime scenes are properly investigated in Turkey as much as in the West.

In almost every episode of *Kanit*, the evidence that is collected from the crime scenes is put in plastic bags branded with the badge of the Turkish police. This act is almost deliberately depicted in a much slower pace in an exhibitionist manner in an attempt to glorify the importance of forensic science and the meticulous work that the Turkish police does in the series. In this way, *Kanit* affirms the power of the ‘Turkish police’ who does not only catch the criminals by means of their determination and bravery but also by means of their mastery in Western forensic medicine.

Therefore, *Kanit* never seriously challenges the foundations of Turkish national identity in its narrative. On the contrary, by glorifying the ‘Turkish’ methods of crime scene

investigation on every occasion, it frequently builds a separation between ‘foreign’ and ‘local’ by placing ‘Turkishness’ in a dominant position.

5.4.2.2 Representation of Islamic figures and practices

The whole narrative of *Kanıt* is built upon a secular imaginary by overlooking everyday religious symbols and practices. The characters are assumed to be Muslims due to their being ‘Turks’ and they regularly use words with Islamic references such as ‘*inşallah*’ (if God lets) but other than that no apparent signs can be detected in the series to be associated with religious practices. The headscarf, which is never worn in an Islamic way, can only be seen on lower class characters living in shanty towns or coming from rural areas. Therefore, in *Kanıt* Islamic practices and lifestyles are frequently associated with lower classes living in the slums of Istanbul whereas the upper classes are depicted as living secular lives.

In an interesting way, Islamic practices and characters appear in episodes 31 and 78 when the cases deal with unconventional religious practices such as exorcism and enchantment. In these episodes, local religious leaders like hodjas are depicted while arranging ceremonies for exorcism, taking money from people in exchange for their services and getting arrested for fraud.

Especially in episode 78, a hodja is seen telling beads and praying in a dark atmosphere, lightened by candles, in order to save a young woman from her illness. When Selim and Orhan pay a visit to this hodja for a murder investigation Selim confronts the man by saying that what he does is illegal. The hodja frequently refers to religious sayings like ‘*Allah bilir*’ (Gods knows), ‘*Allah’ın verdiği canı Allah alır*’ (Only God can take life out of a person since God is the one who gives life). Later in the episode, the hodja who has been sexually harassing women during exorcism gets murdered. Several nude photographs are found in his house and the hodja is defined as a charlatan by Selim.

Apart from these wicked representations of Islam, religion is not carried to the forefront in the narrative of *Kanıt*. In this sense, *Kanıt* does not focus on the other side of the story

by depicting Islam in its conventional and everyday forms but prefers to associate religion with extremism, deception and ignorance. In this way, *Kanıt* not only keeps reproducing the secular nationalist imaginary in a banal manner but also aligns with official, Kemalist nationalism in an explicit way.

5.4.2.3 Representation of sexuality and public morality

RTÜK laws which are inclined to protect the structure of the Turkish family and general public morality tie the hands of *Kanıt* in different ways. These prohibitions which restrict representations of intimate relations between characters as well as cigarette and alcohol use on television also apply to images of nudity, high amounts of blood and gory wounds. For that reason, despite being a successor of *CSI* franchise, RTÜK laws prevent *Kanıt* from representing gory crime scenes, corpses and forensic evidence and becoming all about spectacle.

In *Kanıt*, crime scenes are frequently stripped from their gory details. Even in the autopsy scenes, the bodies of the corpses are seen covered by a white sheet from the shoulders downwards. The coroner explains the details of the autopsy verbally. Instead of depicting the wounds and body parts in detail the sentences of the coroner are interrupted by flashbacks which show the struggles of the victims with their murderers and how the wounds occurred. If the image is too unpleasant it is usually blurred or pixelated as in episode 51 when the face of a victim is burnt with acid. Therefore, graphic representations are frequently absent from the narrative of *Kanıt* as the signature shots of *CSI* franchise.

The ‘CSI shot’ which might be considered as the signature of *CSI* series is described by Deborah Jermyn as a ‘penetrative wound-cam technology’. These shots mimic the endoscopic cameras that are used to examine the body and are all about spectacle, capturing more of the physical drama. (Jermyn 2007, p. 80) As Jermyn states, the speed, adrenalin and drama offered by the ‘CSI shot’ create a child-like excitement regarding the new technologies as well as “the experience of the high-cost, high-octane forensic television which, at one level, threatens to shatter the illusion of a realist world.” (Ibid., p. 83)

A similar shot can only be seen in the episode 19 in *Kanıt* in which a graphic image of a beating heart is used in order to emphasize the pulsation. Apart from that, what has been shown in the narration does not foster a fascination or excitement concerning the spectacle of the body. Whereas in the *CSI* franchise, the body is presented as a ‘silent witness’ in a stylish and exhibitionist way, in *Kanıt*, the body does not carry much importance since the drama that is narrated is not a physical one. So, *Kanıt* is more inclined to ‘tell’ rather than to ‘show’ when it comes to the body, not only because of RTÜK laws but also due to cultural as well as national factors.

Turkish culture is hesitant when it comes to representing the body and the death. As Nurdan Gürbilek points out, if a dead body is openly represented on the third page of Turkish newspapers or in any other medium it is almost always political because it is either related to an issue of so called ‘terrorism’ or an object lesson which is taught through the dead body of a stranger. (Gürbilek 2001, pp. 30-32) In other situations, representing the dead, wounded body of Turkish people in graphic ways is not something favoured since the Turkish nation is symbolized by youth, power and vitality. In an attempt to affirm this approach, *Kanıt* avoids excessive depictions of dead bodies although it is all about investigating the forensic evidence that is found on and around the dead bodies. In this way, the series once again strengthens its ties with the official, Kemalist nationalist discourse which glorifies youth and vitality.

Along with its hesitant depiction of the body, *Kanıt* also takes a cautious stance when it comes to representing relationships between male and female colleagues. On the one hand, the series depicts a lot of women working as analysts in the crime lab, not only participating in business life but also working day and night without complaining about anything. The secular outlooks of the women in the narrative perfectly reflect ‘modern, Turkish women’, designed in accordance with the official, Kemalist nationalist discourse.

However, these ‘liberated’ images of women are frequently fractured when it comes to representing their relationships with their male companions. In his romantic relationship with the chief analyst, Zeynep, Selim constantly has jealousy attacks. For instance, in episode 13, when Zeynep has to meet a student of her professor to help him for his thesis,

Selim suddenly becomes upset and tries to keep Zeynep at a distance by being irritated about her meeting with another man. In episode 86, these attacks are carried to another level with Selim's jealousy of Gamze when she interacts with her male colleagues. Gamze tries to limit her everyday conversations with her male colleagues due to Selim's behaviour. Selim does not only put pressure on Gamze through his agitated behaviour but he also questions his friends about their interactions with Gamze.

The portrayal of Selim's behaviour as 'comical acts' tries to give this oppressive way of representing women an innocent cover. This hesitant approach of the series when the issue comes to women reveals itself in another form in episode 48. In this episode, while interrogating the acquaintances of a female victim in her neighbourhood, Ayça is informed of a piece of gossip about her. When one of the neighbours tells Ayça that the victim was not a virgin on her wedding night Ayça cuts the words of the neighbour short by stating that she does not care about the virginity of the victim, and neither should she.

Even though Ayça's response can be interpreted as a liberated reaction against the bigoted gossip of the neighbour, in the next sequence Sevil Atasoy interrupts the course of events and explains that in some cases the hymen might not be broken after having sexual intercourse for the first time. By means of this explanation, the virginity of the victim is restored and Ayça's liberated reaction against the conservative nature of the gossip is neutralized. Therefore, on the one hand, *Kanit* reacts against the conservative, narrow minded remarks of the neighbour by means of Ayça's response. On the other hand, it does not intend to upset the feelings of the conservative audiences and rehabilitate the 'honour' of the victim in the next sequence by means of Atasoy's explanations. In this way, the series tries to set a balance between standing behind conservative values and standing against dogmatic ideas.

Consequently, *Kanit* is inclined to avoid political controversy by mentioning challenging issues for the unity of Turkish national identity and preserves this attitude against the representation of sexuality and public morality as well. Despite being a successor of a TV show which is all about spectacle, *Kanit* prefers to tell rather than to show and designs its narrative by keeping the cultural and 'legal' limitations in mind. In a similar way,

cigarette and alcohol use never become an issue for the series because the characters are never seen smoking and they are only seen drinking alcohol on special occasions. Since during its broadcasting representing alcoholics drinks was not a concern, *Kanit* shows its characters while drinking *rakı* without a problem. However, in any other respect, *Kanit* complies with the limitations of television broadcasting and designs its narrative accordingly.

5.4.2.4 Representation of class dynamics

National stereotypes about lower and upper class characters are frequently reproduced in *Kanit*. Similar to Turkish soap operas and dramedies, wealth is conventionally depicted by certain symbols such as living in luxurious villas with big gardens, extravagant furniture and swimming pools, whereas poverty is associated with poorly decorated houses located in the slums of Istanbul.

Episode 17 strongly reflects the contrast between these two different, stereotypical representations. The episode opens in a shanty town where the body of a young woman is discovered in the disorganized garden of a squatter which is flooded the night before. The women who are seen around the house and at the crime scene wear headscarves in a traditional, rural way and are dressed in the same manner. This imaginary is recurrently reproduced in the later episodes of *Kanit* when lower class characters are included in the investigations.

In contrast with this scenery of a poor neighbourhood, in the same episode Orhan and Selim pay a visit to one of the suspects, a wealthy businessman living in the outskirts of Istanbul, facing Bosphorus Bridge. Apart from the big villa which is surrounded by an organized garden and a swimming pool, servants and security guards are seen hovering around the businessman in the sequence. When Orhan and Selim are invited to the study of the man, along with designer furniture a big portrait of Atatürk is seen behind his desk in an attempt to underline his secular position. In the episode, the luxurious lifestyle of the suspected businessman and his friends are also associated with parties in which they drink whiskey, spend time with Eastern European sex workers and talk about ‘business’.

Their unusual hobbies such as collecting exotic plants are also underlined in the episode together with their habit of dining in fine restaurants.

Kanit constantly comes back to reproducing these stereotypical images of lower and upper class characters. The series does not make an ideological choice between supporting one side over another. Upper classes are represented involved in criminal activities as much as the lower classes. However, as a part of the stereotypical depiction of wealthy classes they are always seen as more inclined to corruption and murder in order to protect their social class, wealth and business relations. For instance, in episode 11, while working on a case about the murder of a wealthy businessman, Selim reacts against the disappearance of the murder suspect by emphasizing how wealthy people always get away with everything. Selim says that these kinds of people must have a yacht somewhere. So, probably the man must have been already left the country and landed to a Greek Island.

By means of these kinds of responses *Kanit* contributes to the reproduction of national stereotypes of upper and lower classes. Together with the recognizable symbols of being wealthy and poor, class distinctions are underlined through familiar images in a banal manner.

5.4.2.5 The conception of the family

Rather than concentrating on the private lives of the characters *Kanit* prefers to keep its focus on police procedures. Therefore, the family does not appear as a major element in the series. However, the significance of the family for Turkish society is underlined on many occasions. Different lifestyles of Turkish families from upper and lower classes are frequently depicted in the narrative during the investigations of Orhan and Selim. They are regularly seen visiting the families of the victims or suspects in their houses and interrogating them about their lifestyles. In this way, *Kanit* draws a national portrait of Turkish families from different backgrounds.

Besides, family values are occasionally glorified through the promotion of the marriage in the series. Especially, through the love story of Selim and Zeynep, marriage is promoted as a romantic and holy union. Their relationship is frequently compared with the loneliness of Orhan who is seen to be romantically interested in Ayça and Ece from time to time but never takes a step to start a family. In episode 24, when Selim finds out that Orhan had a girlfriend once but their relationship went sour, Selim and Zeynep become highly determined to find a suitable match for Orhan. Even though due to the anxiety of getting caught they sneak around the homicide bureau to talk about potential matches they are motivated to become a part of a favourable union (*hayırlı iş*). But in the end, their efforts turn out to be pointless and Orhan remains married to his job.

Although starting a family is depicted as a festive and honourable event, family is not always mentioned on ‘favourable’ occasions in *Kanıt*. For instance in episode 11, each member of a wealthy family turns into a murder suspect after a business man is found dead in a forest. Even though this episode is particularly significant for centring the whole investigation around the family, in various episodes family members appear as murder suspects or killers. As part of this scenario, the family is depicted as a cunning setting in which murder plans are executed.

Consequently, on the one hand, through the promotion of marriage as a holy unification, starting a family is encouraged and glorified in the narrative of *Kanıt*. On the other hand, the family is regularly depicted as an open target which could be broken up any minute by inner or outer enemies. This dual representation simultaneously draws the attention to the importance of maintaining family union and warns the audiences about the ‘potential’ dangers that could be waiting for their families on their doorsteps. On both occasions, the family is represented in harmony with national stereotypes of upper and lower classes and a national portrait is drawn through these depictions.

5.4.2.6 The conception of the neighbourhood (*mahalle*)

In many episodes of *Kanıt*, the neighbourhood appears as a conventional location from which the investigation starts. As represented in episode 31, usually the first thing that the police officers do when they discover a body in a house is talking to his or her neighbours who give useful and detailed information about the lifestyles of the victims. The flashbacks that depict the everyday movements of the victims reveal the living patterns, relationships and customs in the neighbourhoods which mirror the national scene.

Talking to the shopkeepers in the neighbourhood is also among the methods that Selim and Orhan usually apply, depending on the location of the murder. Traditional shops and coffee houses (*kıraathane*) are visited by the police officers and the owners are interrogated about the events and the victims. As in episode 35, these visits are not only beneficial for deepening the investigation but also for giving an idea about the ‘national’ setting of the murder as well as the conservative nature of living, especially in a poor neighbourhood.

In poor neighbourhoods, women are frequently depicted in rural clothes and in headscarves, paying regular visits to each-others houses for watching television or having tea whereas men are seen in the coffee houses (*kıraathane*), playing cards and drinking tea. Gossiping about the lifestyles of the victims appears as a common habit of the neighbours who happen to know the personal lives of their neighbours very well. So, the neighbourhood is not represented as a place where people live in peace and harmony. Instead, it is depicted as a conservative platform in which the everyday activities of men and women are carefully separated and movements of the residents are regularly monitored by their neighbours. Therefore, *Kanıt* does not create a nostalgic image of the neighbourhood as Turkish dramedies regularly do but depicts it as a murky, conservative place which could even become a crime scene.

5.4.2.7 Melodramatic modality

Although *Kanıt* is all about forensic science and police procedures, melodramatic modality infuses its narrative in almost every episode. On the one hand, the documentary realism of the series is generally spiced up with motivational love stories. On the other hand, the law and order rhetoric which contributes to the black and white universe of *Kanıt* is strengthened by the melodramatic reactions of the characters to the heart-breaking cases.

There are a few motivational love stories that are mentioned in the series. Ayça and Ece happen to be presented as Orhan's love interests in different episodes. However, these relationships do not develop. The love affair between Selim and Zeynep which even leads to the engagement of the couple in the first season is the major love story that contributes to the infusion of the melodramatic modality in the narrative. This love affair, which has its own ups and downs, is regularly depicted in every episode, especially when Selim and Zeynep meet in the crime lab.

The flirtation between Selim and Zeynep is generally marked by the use of music which sets the mood for the upcoming sequence. If the sequence revolves around Selim's flirtation with Zeynep a funky melody is heard in the background. However, romantic moments of Selim and Zeynep can also be depicted in a video clip format as in episode 27 in which the couple is seen playing basketball and having fun. Although Gamze becomes Selim's romantic interest after Zeynep, this relationship is not represented as much as his former affair.

Apart from love stories, significant events like informing a family member about the murder of a relative, discovering the body of a child or listening to the memories of acquaintances of the murder victims are the moments in which the tone of melodrama reaches its peak. The mood of these sequences is conventionally set by the same, sad musical track before the tragedy even starts and this sad melody is heard in the background until the sequence ends.

These tragic moments are included in almost every episode of the series. But episode 45 could be given as a particular example of how the melodramatic modality infuses the narrative. This episode depicts the murder of a child and has a predominantly melodramatic tone. Apart from the sad musical soundtrack and the melodramatic performances of the cast members, the innocence and purity of the child is particularly underlined throughout the episode and positioned against the evil nature of the criminals. At the end of this episode, Orhan punches the killer in the investigation room but his behaviour is justified by means of the melodramatic tone of the episode.

Besides, increasing the tone of melodrama gives *Kanit* the opportunity to create its own responses to foreign texts. Similar to Yeşilçam films, the melodramatic modality is used in *Kanit* for Turkification. For instance, in episode 32, *Kanit* creates its own version of Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1960) by depicting the case of a murderer who kept the dead body of his mother at his house. However, instead of highlighting the monstrosity of the murderer, the series shows his tragic childhood in flashbacks, accompanied by a sad music and it bases its story on how a victimized child turns into a psychotic murderer. When the skeleton of the mother is found at the house by Orhan and Selim, a sad melody is heard in the background to emphasize the tragedy of the murderer and his social environment is blamed for his crimes.

The same formula is repeated in episode 34 which is based on the case of a psychopathic killer who eats his victims after he murders them like Dr. Hannibal Lecter in *Silence of the Lambs* (dir. Jonathan Demme, 1991). In this episode, once again, after the killer confesses his crimes the problematic childhood of the murderer is shown in flashbacks while tragic music is heard in the background. Together with the other occasions that the tone of melodrama peaks, *Kanit* creates its own response to the police procedural genre by using melodramatic modality as a common tactic.

As a successor of the *CSI* franchise, *Kanit* harmonizes Western generic conventions of the police procedural genre with national elements and cultural dynamics in Turkey. *Kanit*

draws a conventional portrait of a police procedural by means of its generic features. The appearance of dominant themes of the genre such as ‘law and order’ as well as ‘gender conflict’ and the adoption of conventional visual styles like ‘documentary realism’ and ‘excessive stylishness’ create several commonalities between *Kanit* and its global counterparts.

However, rather than turning into a mere imitation, *Kanit* sets a balance between ‘foreign’ and ‘local’ by creating an amalgam of Western generic conventions and Turkish national elements. Turkishness is represented in the series in accordance with the official, Kemalist nationalist discourse and it is disseminated through banal nationalist symbols like the Turkish flag or images of Atatürk. Although characters with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds are occasionally depicted in certain episodes, they are either stereotyped or approached as nostalgic items in the national mosaic of Turkey.

By following the official, Kemalist nationalist discourse, *Kanit* prefers to avoid representing everyday Islamic symbols and practices by creating a secular imaginary in a banal way. In terms of representing sexuality and public morality, the series neither upsets the broadcasting laws of RTÜK nor comes up against the cultural values attributed to the body. Whereas national stereotypes about upper and lower classes keep on being reproduced in different episodes of the series, family and neighbourhood maintain their positions in the narratives as significant tools to depict the national scene.

In this way, *Kanit* maintains the perpetual movement between national elements and Western generic conventions in its narrative. Through the references that are given to American TV series and American ways of policing as they are expressed in films and TV shows, the tension between the foreign and the local is always kept alive. Consequently, by utilizing melodramatic modality as a tactic of Turkification, *Kanit* simultaneously achieves to give a significant response to the Western police procedural genre and be a Turkish TV series ‘of our own’.

5.5 TURKISH POLICE PROCEDURAL WITH A POLITICAL VEIN: *BEHZAT Ç: BİR ANKARA POLİSİYESİ*

Behzat Ç.: Bir Ankara Polisiyesi (Behzat Ç.: An Ankara Police Procedural, Star TV, 2010-2013) started to be broadcasted on September 2010 on a mainstream, private TV channel, Star TV. The series was shown for three seasons and 96 episodes, making its finale in 2013. *Behzat Ç.: Bir Ankara Polisiyesi* (which will be referred to as ‘Behzat Ç.’ from now on) became so popular in Turkey that it generated two spin-off cinema films, *Behzat Ç. Seni Kalbime Gömdüm* (Behzat Ç: I buried you in my heart, dir. Serdar Akar, 2011) and *Behzat Ç. Ankara Yanıyor* (Behzat Ç: Ankara is burning, dir. Serdar Akar, 2013). Special events were organized in order to watch the season finales of the series. (Korkmaz 2012) When the series was cancelled the fans protested against the decision by gathering for a special screening in Kızılay, Ankara. They watched the series by chanting ‘Behzat Ç. ’ye uzanan eller kırılсын’ (the hands that intend to touch Behzat Ç. should be broken) (“Behzat Ç. ’ye uzanan eller kırılсын!” 2012) and started a petition on the Internet to prevent the cancellation. (imza.la 2012)

The series was adapted from the novel by Emrah Serbes who also acted as the creator of the series. Emrah Serbes, who is known for his leftist worldview, expressed his critical stance against the politics of the JDP government on many occasions such as the Gezi Park events (“Emrah Serbes: Başbakan’la görüşebilseydim cebimde gaz fişegi götürcektim” 2013) and was sued by Tayyip Erdoğan and his son, Bilal Erdoğan for libel for different reasons. (Abay 2014) Due to the persona of Serbes, Behzat Ç. is perceived as a ‘secretly’ leftist character. As the reception study of Şeker and Çavuş underline, the audiences believe that the series purposefully brings leftist groups into the forefront. (Şeker and Çavuş 2011, p. 100)

Although the scripts of the episodes were written by Ercan Mehmet Erdem Serbes did not isolate himself from the production process and due to his ideological standpoint, *Behzat Ç.* differed from other police procedurals on television in that period. Instead of proliferating national feelings, the series mostly dwelled on the drama of being a nation by exposing hidden traumas in the near past of Turkey and questioning contemporary

governmental politics from a leftist point of view. Due to this ideological position, the series disturbed people in powerful positions and was legally penalized by RTÜK for several times.

Behzat Ç. followed the international conventions of the police procedural genre. By using national elements, the series successfully adapted this formula in the Turkish context. However, opposite to other Turkish police procedurals *Behzat Ç.* referred to these national elements with a twist by utilizing them to question the very sense of being Turkish as well as past and present political issues. In this way, the series achieved to offer something different to the audiences by harmonizing national and international conventions of the genre in an innovative manner.

5.5.1 Generic Conventions

5.5.1.1 Social classes, values and characteristics of the characters

Behzat Ç. concentrates on the investigations of the homicide bureau in Ankara. All characters appear as middle class figures who live humble lives. The team is managed by the chief commissar, Behzat Ç. (Erdal Beşikçioğlu), whose surname is never revealed throughout the series. Behzat is a complex character who is clinically depressed, aggressive and unbalanced. He has a daughter from a previous marriage, Berna (Hazal Kaya), who falls from the rooftop of a bar in her birthday celebration in episode 1 and nobody knows if it is suicide or murder. He has another daughter, Şule (Ayçe Eren), from his teenage girlfriend but the blood relation between them is not revealed until the end of the first season. All these facts about Behzat's past appear in the series as side investigations, turning *Behzat Ç.* into a 'serial'.

Behzat is an aggressive and disobedient chief commissar. He has a bad reputation and record in the police department. Although he is very determined and successful, his bad reputation prevents him from getting promoted but he does not care about getting promoted anyway. Behzat is respected by his team because he cannot be easily demoralized and has a strong conscience. He does not have a political view. He defines

himself as a ‘humanist’ but his team members describe Behzat as an ‘undisclosed leftist’. His unrevealed surname ‘Ç.’ which corresponds to the sound of ‘ch’ in Turkish is frequently interpreted as a reference to the Argentine revolutionary, ‘Che’ Guavera. (Atay 2013c) All these characteristics make it possible to associate Behzat with aggressive, depressed, heavy drinking police figures of the American police procedurals such as Detective James McNulty from *The Wire* (2002–2008).

Behzat’s team consists of commissar Harun (Fatih Artman), Hayalet/Sabri (İnanç Konukçu), Akbaba/İsmet (Berkant Şal), Selim (Hakan Hatipoğlu), and deputy commissar Eda (Seda Bakan). Later Cevdet (Berke Üzrek) and Emre (Engin Öztürk) are added to the team as new commissars whereas Selim leaves them by turning into a ‘dirty cop’. Harun is the most talkative person in the team. He always makes presumptions about a murder without checking any information, eats junk food even on the crime scene, or makes fun of the witnesses and suspects. Hayalet is called ‘hayalet (ghost)’ because no one really saw him throughout his entire life. He functions like a balance mechanism among his colleagues. Akbaba, which means ‘vulture’ in Turkish, is the self-educated commissar of the team. His speciality is forensic science and he can surprise anyone with his knowledge in the field. As it is revealed in episode 6, Akbaba wanted to work in the forensics department but his former education was not enough to work there since he is a high school dropout. Eda appears as the technical support of the team who helps them in following paperwork and digging into digital archives. She preserves her position in the homicide bureau despite Behzat’s disapproving opinions about having female colleagues in homicide. Other characters like Cevdet, Selim and Emre are always treated by the major team members Harun, Hayalet and Akbaba as rookies. By means of emphasizing these features, the series does not only reveal the class based or ideological distinctions between the characters but also determines their key talents that play a significant role in following the police procedural formula.

Apart from the ordinary criminals who appear in every episode, there are central antagonists that Behzat’s team regularly fights against. The young businessman Ercüment Çözer (Nejat İşler) functions as Behzat’s archenemy. He is connected with the Turkish

‘deep state’¹⁵ and runs his business by committing fraud and assassinations. Memduh Başgan (Güven Kıraç), who works for the Turkish national intelligence agency, appears as the protector of Ercüment. In episode 24, the facts about his shady past are clearly revealed. According to him, he worked as a member of the deep state, fighting against the Kurds in the Southeast and struggling against the Armenian militant organization, ASALA in Europe. He also confesses that he committed 50 unsolved murders in the name of Turkish state, mostly killing leftists. Later, by assassinating the leader of the deep state, he takes his position. By means of these features, the criminals which function as the arch-enemies of Behzat support the political vein of the series which contribute to the localisation of global conventions of the genre to a great extent.

5.5.1.2 Setting and tools

In contrast with most of the Turkish TV series, *Behzat Ç.* is set in the Turkish capital, Ankara. Many symbols of the city such as Atatürk’s Mausoleum, *Anıtkabir*, and the Monument of the Hittite Sun Disk appear in the series in order to emphasize the setting. Since this new capital of the secular Turkish Republic is usually perceived as the opposite of the old capital of the Islamic Ottoman Empire, Istanbul, this opposition is regularly highlighted in the series. Whereas Ankara is represented as the city of justice and conscience, Istanbul is depicted as a degenerate city of dirty cops.

In episode 20, a clean line is drawn between Ankara and Istanbul when the team members go to Istanbul to arrest Ercüment. Symbolic places in Istanbul like the Bosphorus Bridge, Galata Tower and Istiklal Street are depicted while musical motives that belong to the Ankara region are heard in the background. All police officers working in the Istanbul police headquarters are represented as rigid, unhelpful, vulgar people who have relationships with shady businessmen like Ercüment and his right hand, Memduh. Since this separation connotes various historical, national and cultural issues in the Turkish

¹⁵ As explained by H. Akın Ünver, Turkish ‘deep state’ could be described as an organization with a long history which could be traced to the Ottoman Empire. Turkish deep state is assumed to be constituted of underground groups who secretly struggle to give shape to internal and external politics. By having deep connections in different fields in Turkey, including the state, police, military, national intelligence service, media and mafia, deep state is presupposed to organize assassinations, bombings, military coups and provoke mass violence. (Ünver 2009)

context *Behzat Ç.* brings all these extratextual references to its narrative by drawing this line and contributes to the localisation process of the police procedural genre.

In terms of tools, Behzat's team members are depicted as highly attached to their pistols, cars and radio. Especially Behzat's look is composed of particular items that express his personality such as his pistol, radio, rosary and long, black leather jacket. The sound of the police radio is always heard in the background of the series as if it constantly interrupts everyday reality. Sometimes, the characters are even seen listening to the police radio as an evening activity while drinking *rakı* in Akbaba's house. Apart from these conventional tools of the police procedural genre, they do not use any special equipment. But the tools that they use are enough to set the iconographic atmosphere of a police procedural.

5.5.1.3 Plot construction

Behzat Ç. frequently follows a structured narrative formula that varies between whodunit and whydunit. In every episode, a new murder happens which Behzat's team hears over the police radio. Akbaba, who is generally first to know about the murder, informs Behzat about it by saying '*aga, cinayet var*' (agha, there has been a murder). The team could arrive at the crime scene any time of the day in every condition since they do not have regular working hours. It does not make any difference if they are drunk or not.

Different from *Kanıt*, *Behzat Ç.* creates its own generic conventions by drawing a more 'realistic' picture of crime scene investigation in Turkey and the prosecutor appears as a major character. The prosecutor arrives at the crime scene following the homicide team. He or she gets information from the team members and assigns them to the case if the case does not require the involvement of anti-terror or organized crime branches. After all evidence has been gathered from the crime scene, as a routine practice the team divides into pairs and talks to witnesses, neighbours, shopkeepers or people that hang around in the local coffee house (*kırathane*). By means of this routine practice, the series draws an accurate portrait of the national scene.

Although forensic details are not as important as in *Kanıt*, they carry significance for the investigation. The team frequently gathers around the body, gets information from Akbaba and brainstorms on the crime scene. However, as it is expressed many times in the series, the team gets the evidence from the accused, not from the crime scene. Therefore, interrogations play a major role in solving the cases. Behzat usually turns to violence in order to make the suspects talk. When the team gets enough information about the case they gather in the office to brainstorm. Behzat usually orders one of them to bring the whiteboard to construct a scheme which is designed in a very clumsy way.

Criminals who murder out of passion, financial gain or revenge are always caught by the team members and these ordinary cases are closed in every episode. However, in every season, a bigger case is investigated on the background. Whereas in the first season, Behzat's team concentrates on catching Ercüment, in season two they focus on investigating serial murders that Suna, a female police commissar from narcotics, commits as a vigilante act. In the third season, while they work on solving the murder of Behzat's second wife Esra who was a determined prosecutor, they also deal with the vigilante murders that Barbaros, the forensic examiner, and Muzo, the morgue janitor, commit.

Besides that, throughout the three seasons Berna's suicide/murder is never completely resolved and the developments in the private lives of the characters continue to be included in the narrative. Therefore, routine investigations of the team members are regularly interrupted by developments in the continuing cases or in their personal lives. So, most of the episodes are concluded with a cliff-hanger, leaving the audiences curious about what will happen in the next episode.

5.5.1.4 Dominant themes and ideologies

As a characteristic of the police procedural genre, *Behzat Ç.* focuses on the struggle over right and wrong. However, different from the classical examples of the genre such as *Dragnet*, the diegetic world of the series is not represented as a black and white universe. The line between the criminals and the law enforcers is not clearly drawn and the

procedures of the police officers are not always justified. The figures who should be maintaining law and order, including police officers, prosecutors, civil servants and state officials, could be easily positioned on the wrong side of the law and get out of line by taking the law in their own hands.

Therefore, the law and order rhetoric of *Behzat Ç.* is closely related to the question of who should be policing. Even Behzat is frequently seen to be incapable of policing, for instance by murdering a detained and handcuffed criminal under the influence of a hallucination, showing up at the crime scene drunk, violently beating the suspects, or disappearing in the middle of an investigation due to a personal crisis. Apart from questioning Behzat's capability of policing, other branches in the police department such as anti-terror, narcotics or special forces are depicted on the wrong side of law, serving the benefit of the state, not that of the people. For that reason, maintaining law and order is represented as a lost cause since the order and most of the people who sustain it are corrupted.

Besides, the series does not only take a critical stance against the law and order rhetoric but also regularly utters distrust in the legal system. The prosecutor, Esra (Canan Ergüder), turns into a key figure to express this distrust since she appears as a true believer of written law. She frequently confronts Behzat and tries to convince him to trust the law but never achieves it. As in episode 20, Behzat generally replies by saying that he wants to follow the law but the law continues to discriminate people, protecting the wealthy and oppressing the poor. Under these conditions, it ceases to be the law.

Esra loses her trust in the legal system in episode 68, when she falls into the trap of shady forces in the deep state and is detained for establishing an underground organization. When she is assassinated by an unknown shooter in the moment of her release from prison in episode 69, the hope for securing justice through the legal system is also lost in the series since Esra was the only character who truly supported and believed in the written law.

Vigilantism turns into another way to express distrust in the legal system, especially through the story of police commissar Suna (Mine Tugay), who personally punishes rapists and molesters. However, by referring to real cases in Turkey through Suna's story, the series also takes a critical stance against the Turkish legal system. When Suna confesses her crimes in episode 60, she refers to a real case from Turkey about a 13 year old girl, N.Ç. from Mardin who was raped by 24 different men. The court gave the men the minimum penalty by suggesting that the girl gave consent to them. ("N.Ç. davasında utanç kararı: Mahkeme 'rızası var' diyerek sanıklara alt sınırdan ceza verdi!" 2013) In this way, the series also states that it is not possible to trust the Turkish law system anymore.

In such a way to remind the plot of the popular American TV series, *Dexter* (2006–2013), the medical examiner, Barbaros (Serdar Orçin), and his janitor partner, Muzo (Gökhan Yıkılkan), appear as other vigilantes in the series. They commit serial murders by killing random criminals. In the last episode of the series, Barbaros who is obsessed with Esra's murder and believes that his own father is involved in the assassination as a judge gathers everyone who is responsible for the murder in a warehouse. The people are the father of Barbaros, the judge, Behzat's mother, the mafia leader, a member of the parliament and the right hand of Behzat's mother who manages all her connections in the business world. He gives Behzat a chance to murder everyone in the warehouse but Behzat prefers to detain Barbaros instead of seeking personal revenge because as he underlines in episode 67, serving justice is not granted to them in the form of vigilantism. Sometimes the justice is not served and he is unable to do anything but vigilantism only serves to satisfy oneself, not serving justice. Besides, apart from indicating Behzat's ideas about vigilantism, the variety of the characters who are regarded as responsible for Esra's assassination in this episode reveal the ideological point of view of the series regarding the issues of law and order. Apart from strengthening the political vein of the series, this ideological view contributes to the localisation of a major theme of police procedural genre in a culturally meaningful and political manner.

In terms of gender issues, similar to other Turkish police procedurals like *Kanıt* and *Arka Sokaklar*, *Behzat Ç.* adopts an extensively masculine discourse. Masculinity is performed by the major characters in the series not only by physical gestures but also by the usage

of Turkish language. Behzat, Harun, Akbaba and Hayalet frequently use slang words, talk in a rude way and swear a lot. Their extravagant performances of masculinity even diminish the manhood of other male police officers in the precinct like Cevdet, Selim and Emre who are mostly treated like clumsy, deficient rookies, called names like ‘Hansel and Gretel’ by Behzat and rarely or accidentally included in the male bounding moments. Behzat, Harun, Akbaba and Hayalet are regularly seen gathered in night clubs or taverns, drinking, talking about their troubles and bounding. However, their masculinity is also broken and childish. Despite their macho performances at work, they are not that tough in their personal lives and not ashamed of crying.

By especially focusing on the actions of the male police officers, the series particularly reflects a male point of view. In this male dominated universe, female characters constantly struggle to make their voices heard. Eda recurrently expresses her willingness to be in the field, working like a ‘real cop’ but her requests are overlooked by her colleagues. Sometimes, she even has to remind them that she is a cop too, as in episode 61 when Harun tries to keep her away from a potential crime scene.

Another major female character, Behzat’s future wife Esra, is placed in a powerful position as a prosecutor. Despite her appearance as an authority figure in the narrative, she also struggles to make her voice heard by Behzat. She usually appears yelling at Behzat in order to make herself heard but rarely achieves to do so. As it is revealed by the representations of these major figures, female characters are frequently seen struggling with male dominance in the series and have difficulties to gain victory against male authority.

Behzat Ç. does not have an LGBT character in its cast but the political vein of its narrative makes the series concentrate on hate crimes against transgender women in Turkey. In episode 48, the series focuses on the murder of a transgender woman, Çiğdem, by an ex-police officer and exposes a special squad in the police department which is established to threaten and humiliate transgender women. In this way, the series does not only show that murders of transgender women are political but also challenges their stereotypical

representations in Turkish TV series as sex workers by depicting them as social activists or graphic designers.

Throughout the whole episode, the characters try to raise public awareness about discrimination against transgender women and hate crimes. The episode even depicts a protest in Yüksel Street, Ankara which is organized by LGBT associations. In the protest, people hold rainbow flags and chant ‘hate kills’, ‘transphobia kills’, ‘don’t be silent, shout out, trans do exit’. In this way, even though female characters struggle with the male dominance in the diegetic world of *Behzat Ç.*, the series manages to approach gender issues critically by revealing discrimination against transgender women.

Referring to the tension among the foreign and the local appears as another dominant issue in the series. The characters are occasionally seen recalling American police procedurals in different episodes. For instance, in episode 6 Harun appears at the doorstep of a suspect and says that they come from ‘*CSI Dikmen*’ which is a neighbourhood in Ankara. However, the references are not limited to these instant reactions. In episode 79, Barbaros explains to Muzo their ‘signature’ as serial killers and suggests that they should give a message. Muzo reacts to the ‘philosophy’ of Barbaros by questioning his willingness to give messages like American serial killers. He states that since they are not American Barbaros should stop talking nonsense.

Besides, the series also refers to the tension between the foreign and the local by joking about the conventional vocabulary that is used in the dubbed versions of American police procedurals in Turkey. In episode 4, when Harun talks to a suspect about a case he says ‘*her türlü olasılığı değerlendiriyoruz*’ (we are checking every lead.) in a sarcastic manner. Then he turns to Behzat, laughing and saying: ‘I like to use this phrase, chief’. After that, Harun returns to the suspect and says ‘*şehir dışına çıkma*’ (don’t leave the town). Later he says to Behzat ‘I also love to use this phrase, chief’ with a smiling face. Behzat points his finger to the suspect and says ‘*bir yere ayrılma*’ (don’t go anywhere) by adding that this is the phrase he loves. Harun continues the dialogue by stating that he also loves saying ‘*yat yere, yat yere, polis*’ (get down, get down! police!).

However, the tension between the foreign and the local is intensified with the introduction of a new character, Emre, in episode 71. Emre is first seen on the crime scene, working as a commissar in the crime scene investigation team. He appears as a highly rigid and rule-bound person. The first thing that he does on the crime scene is warning an officer about wearing his bonnet in a proper way. In their first encounter, the tension between Emre and Behzat's team immediately rises. Emre tells them that they need to stay back because they can contaminate the crime scene. Unless they want to wear jumpsuits, gloves and shoe covers they should follow his instructions.

Hayalet, Harun and Akbaba become annoyed by Emre's presence. Eventually, Hayalet asks where he did come from and Emre says that he is newly assigned to crime scene investigation but before that he was in the U.S. As soon as Harun hears the word U.S., he says that he understands the situation. Emre was in the U.S., watched all the episodes of *CSI: Miami* and now he came to Turkey to show off but he should know that all these series are also shown in Turkey with subtitles. When the tension escalates Harun starts swearing at Emre and says that '*Burası Türkiye, öyle Amerika'ya falan da benzemez*' (this is Turkey, not the U.S.). Harun sits on the couch in the crime scene without caring for contamination. He also says that he does not understand the bragging tone in Emre's voice since in Turkey they solve more cases than the FBI.

After this quarrel, Harun challenges Emre to warn the prosecutor about his 'inappropriate' clothing as well. Emre falls into this trap and is harshly reproached by the prosecutor. In order to get further back at him, Harun reminds the prosecutor that Emre is American, just arrived in Turkey in a sarcastically pitiful tone of voice. The prosecutor does not allow Emre to explain himself and says that he should tell his nonsense to American prosecutors. Harun is seen smiling in the background and whispering into Emre's ear '*Turkish savcı, Turkish*' (Turkish prosecutor, Turkish).

The tension between the characters rises when Emre comes to the tavern after work and continues to lecture the homicide team about the 'standards' of the job in a bossy manner. He states that they tried to oppress him in the crime scene and he will not let them to do that again. He adds that they will hate him just for doing his job which is typically

‘Turkish’ to him. When the tension gets really high Hayalet politely asks him to leave. Emre who seems very cool at the table is seen heavily breathing and swearing outside the tavern as if he had been having an anger attack. After Emre leaves, Hayalet comments on what happened by saying that he acts as if he was in an American movie.

In later episodes, Emre is frequently picked on by Harun, Hayalet and Akbaba. Harun is seen shouting English words like ‘professional’ or ‘wonderful, okay, alright’ after him. He also gets annoyed by the new order that Emre sets like roping off the crime scene. However, a few episodes later Emre is gradually assimilated to the policing methods of the team and learns to work in harmony with them. For instance, in episode 76, Emre and Akbaba are seen working together on the crime scene, asking each other’s opinions. In episode 79, Emre starts to appear in his everyday clothing on the crime scene. When Harun asks him why he does not wear a bonnet anymore he says that he forgot and adds that maybe he starts to be like them.

However, this does not change the fact that Emre never becomes one of them. Throughout the series, he never finds a desk for himself in the homicide bureau and his colleagues continue to treat him as a rookie and less of a man. Besides, since Emre works to solve Berna’s murder behinds the scenes and proves that Şule is the murderer, he always appears as a ‘foreign’ threat to destroy the harmonious unity between Behzat and Şule. In this way, the tension between the foreign and the local never ceases in the series. Besides, when Şule is arrested for murder at the end of the series as a result of Emre’s notice, his ‘Western’ ethic appears to only cause tragic and ‘unnecessary’ partings.

5.5.1.5 Visual styles

Every episode of *Behzat Ç.* opens with a warning which says that the characters and events in the series do not have any connection with real people or organizations and the series is completely fictive. Despite this warning, the series is frequently associated with the real, political agenda of Turkey and this narrative feature is supported by its visual style. The camerawork that is used in the series does not include signature movements of documentary realism such as hand-held shooting, zoom ins or canted angles. However,

jump cuts are regularly used in the series in order to intensify the tension between the characters during confrontations.

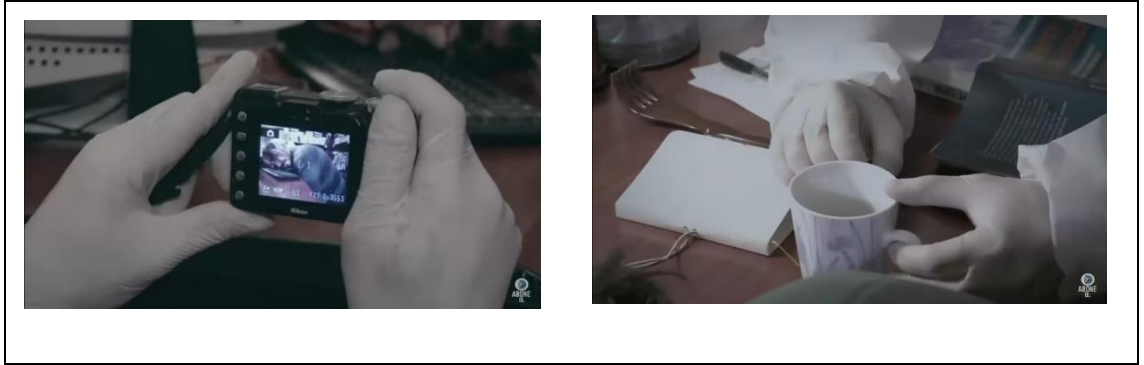
Figure 5.5 : Behzat Ç. and Esra after the football match¹⁶



Exterior sequences are always shot on location. In this way, significant parts of Ankara are always in the background together with the cultural capital of the city. Behzat regularly watches football matches of Gençlerbirliği, a major team from Ankara. Folkloric music of the Ankara region as well as its folkloric dance are regularly included in the narrative. The characters use a lot of slang words such as ‘*hoca*’ or ‘*bebe*’ which are especially used in Ankara to address people. Together with the swear words that are always bleeped, the everydayness of the language is deliberately emphasized in the series. In this way, although the camerawork of the series does not usually support its ‘truth claim’, the usage of actual locations, natural acting and everyday language create a sense of documentary realism.

¹⁶ The still image is taken from the Youtube video, *Behzat Ç. 12. Bölüm* (Behzat Ç. 2015)

Figure 5.6 : Crime scene investigation shots from *Behzat Ç.*¹⁷



Forensic realism could be listed as another influential style. In each episode, the movements of investigators on the crime scene are shot in a special manner. While a different kind of music is used in these scene to inform audiences that they are about to enter a crime scene, the camera moves slowly on the officers who do their jobs by collecting evidence in special clothing. The colour of the scenes gets much darker and the wounds of the bodies are clearly shown in close-ups. Occasionally, a flash sound effect is heard while depicting the wounded parts of the body, mimicking the camera that records all forensic evidence. The influence of forensic realism is only detected in these small segments in each episode and does not expand to other sections. Similar to the limited emphasis on forensic evidence during the investigations, forensic realism is only partially included in the visual style of the series.

While depicting police procedures, documentary and forensic realism dominantly influence the visual style of the series but the personal crises of the characters are usually represented with excessive stylishness. Dreams and hallucinations play a big role in the series in order to reflect on the unstable psychology of the characters and reveal their past traumas.

¹⁷ The still images are taken from the Youtube video, *Behzat Ç. 87. Bölüm* (Behzat Ç. 2015)

Figure 5.7 : In Akbaba's apartment¹⁸



These segments regularly interfere in the police procedures and are represented in innovative ways. For instance, in order to emphasize the mood of the characters, music videos regularly interfere in the narrative. The series is entirely designed as a dream within a dream in episode 81 in order to reveal Behzat's traumatic childhood. Episode 78 is completely set in one location, in Akbaba's apartment, depicting the characters drinking *rakı* and confessing their deepest fears and secrets to each other. Episode 87 is completely based on a self-reflexive narrative in which Behzat and his team investigate the murder of a scriptwriter who works in the Turkish television industry. These kinds of innovative ways of expression are not frequently seen on Turkish television. Therefore, *Behzat Ç.* turns into an early example of how excessive stylishness could be achieved in Turkey by stylistic innovation. In this fashion, the series achieves to harmonize visual styles that are majorly used in the police procedural genre in its own way and creates a distinctive look for itself.

5.5.2 National Elements

5.5.2.1 Turkishness as a supranational identity

Behzat Ç. intends to avoid nationalist discourse. Instead of reproducing a particular nationalist discourse or harmonizing different variations of official, Turkish nationalism, the series questions the foundational elements of the Turkish Republic. However, it would

¹⁸ The still image is taken from the Youtube video, *Behzat Ç. 78. Bölüm* (Behzat Ç. 2015)

be insufficient to state that the series does not adopt any sort of nationalist symbol in its narrative due to its critical stance against the foundations of the official Turkish nationalism and the governmental policies of the JDP.

Nationalist symbols like the Turkish flag, the Turkish police badge which is decorated with a star and crescent, as well as different portraits of Atatürk, are regularly made visible in the series. Besides, since Ankara is the capital of the Turkish Republic which was especially chosen by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as the heart of the new nation, the city is full of republican symbols. Monumental markers of the city such as Atatürk's Mausoleum, the Monument of the Hittite Sun Disk and the Monument of Güvenpark which are frequently used in cityscape shots are all related to the republican history of the Turkish nation.

Behzat is a Turkish man who has always dreamed of being a military man like his father. The portrait of his father in military uniform is seen hanging on the wall of his house at all times. An Atatürk calendar is placed on Behzat's desk and a Turkish flag is seen hanging on a lamp in his office. In episode 20, while all team members dream of their alternative futures, Behzat imagines himself in Turkish military uniform, ordering soldiers to do push-ups in the freezing cold. Once, in episode 75, he is seen sitting on the hood of his car and drinking beer overlooking the scenery of Atatürk's Mausoleum, *Anıtkabir*, in melancholy. Even the football team that Behzat fanatically supports, Gençlerbirliği, is established in 1923 in Ankara in the same year as the foundation of Turkish Republic. Because of this connection, the team is commonly called the team of the Republic.

However, instead of proliferating Kemalist nationalist sensations by including nationalist symbols in its narrative, *Behzat Ç.* uses these markers to criticize the common, nationalists discourses that are adopted by Turkish citizens without a question as well as the foundations of official, Turkish nationalism and contemporary Turkish politics. The series touches upon many different 'sensitive' subjects which challenge the foundations of the Turkish Republic and the unity of Turkish national identity. By underlining Behzat's political stance against these 'sensitive' issues despite his apparent

‘Turkishness’, the series indicates alternative ways to approach certain matters and deconstructs official, Turkish nationalist discourse.

The series regularly criticizes state policies on different subjects, including the use of nuclear power (episode 33), imprisonment of journalists (episode 30), hate crimes against minorities like the Nigerian footballer Festus Okey (episode 24), harsh methods that are used in military service (episode 91) and conscientious objection to military service (episode 47). However, the series makes its political stance most apparent in the episodes in which it questions hidden violence and traumas in Turkish history, governmental policies against the Kurdish issues and ultra-nationalism in Turkey.

The Kurdish issue is mentioned in different episodes in order to raise public awareness about certain subjects and challenge nationalist discourses. Instead of depicting Kurdish characters as criminals and terrorists in a stereotypical manner, *Behzat Ç.* represents them as ordinary citizens, participating in everyday life. In episode 44, a Kurdish police officer is brought to Behzat’s office in order to translate the words of a Kurdish mother, looking for her son. In episode 79 Muzo, the vigilante janitor, working in the morgue, is seen speaking in Kurdish with the family of a victim, translating their statements to Harun and Emre. In this way, *Behzat Ç.* does not criminalize Kurdish identity but draws a portrait of Kurdish people as everyday citizens.

The series also draws attention to the discrimination that Kurdish characters face in their everyday lives. In episode 80, the series concentrates on the murder of a Kurdish university student who is killed by the father of his girlfriend who did not want his daughter to be married to a Kurdish-Alevi. The episode also focuses on the actions of Kurdish activists who fight for their right to give statements in court in their native language. While Behzat and his team work on the case, lots of references are made to the activities of the Kurdish movement, depicting them while protesting, speaking and chanting in Kurdish in the background.

The team members also interrogate different suspects with an ultra-nationalist worldview and allow them to express their discourse in this episode. Ultranationalists say that they

do not want these ‘terrorists’ to express their ideas anywhere in the city. Whereas they believe that it is their democratic right to attack the Kurdish protestors, they do not accept that the Kurds have a democratic right to demonstrate. One of them states that ‘Kurds are our brothers’ but Harun responds by asking ‘and you are their big brother, right?’ in order to highlight the hierarchy between being Turkish and Kurdish that he constructs in his discourse. Another one says that their ethnicity might be Kurdish but everyone who was born in Turkey is a Turk. By including the critical reactions of its characters against this ultranationalist discourse, the series takes a pro-Kurdish position which is something rarely seen on Turkish television.

Episode 44 gets inspiration from the real story of Berfo Ana who spent all her life to find the grave of her son (“Ne oğlunu ne mezarını ne de davasını görebildi” 2013) and concentrates on the story of an old Kurdish woman who intends to find the dead body of her long missing son who is assumed to be murdered by the police 30 years ago in the 1980s. By focusing on the violent past of the Turkish Republic during the time of the military coup on September 12, 1980 and expressing the tragedy of a Kurdish mother, the series touches two ‘sensitive’ issues at the same time. In this episode, the horrifying realities of Turkey during the time of the military coup are revealed during the investigation. The witnesses of the period explain how the soldiers tortured their prisoners during detainment, which is depicted in flashbacks. Military men of that time defend themselves by glorifying their work in a proud and aggressive manner without showing any sign of remorse or shame.

Murder by unknown assailants is criticized in another episode of *Behzat Ç.*. In episode 16, the series concentrates on the case of a Turkish scholar who conducts research on minorities in Turkey. The scholar gets killed because of his research in the same way as the journalist from Armenian descent, Hrant Dink, who was assassinated on January 19, 2007. The series refers to the same ruthless reactions that come from the public and police officers about the murder, justifying the act of killing in the name of nationalism. However, the characters are seen giving a sharp reply to these reactions by emphasizing the cruelty of the event. These responses also reveal the ideological positions of the

characters, placing them in opposition with the ultranationalists who perceived the murder of Hrant Dink as a 'justified' act to protect the nation against its internal enemies.

Consequently, it can be said that *Behzat Ç.* is not a conventional Turkish police procedural in terms of depicting Turkishness as a supranational identity. By challenging the discourses of official, Turkish nationalism and its variations, the series questions the foundations of Turkish national identity and intends to depict what it means to be 'Turkish' under these circumstances. The series struggles against the historical and cultural contradictions, traumas, dilemmas and conflicts of being Turkish in many different ways and criticizes the idea of 'Turkishness' itself by reflecting its symbols and questioning them at the same time. Therefore, while harmonizing the global generic conventions of the genre with local dynamics, *Behzat Ç.* takes the process one step further and criticizes the symbols of nationality by taking an ideological stance.

5.5.2.2 Representation of Islamic figures and practices

Behzat Ç. generally builds its narrative on a secular imaginary. None of the main characters are religious even though they are implicitly assumed to be Muslims. Main female characters like Eda, Esra and Aslı (Zeynep Koltuk) are uncovered women, wearing modern and sometimes revealing clothes and having secular lifestyles. But this does not mean that the series overlooks the Islamic foundations of Turkish national identity and the conflicts that come with these features. The series most apparently refers to the conflict between secular and Islamic lifestyles by including a female character, Meliha, in the narrative. Meliha, who comes from a religious family and wears a headscarf in an Islamic manner, is introduced as Harun's fiancée from an arranged marriage.

In episode 29, when Harun meets Meliha for the first time he finds out that she is covered and cannot hide his surprise. While he introduces himself he clumsily mentions that he goes to the mosque to perform prayer on religious holidays. But he also adds that he had previous relationships with women and drinks alcohol. In order to not offend Meliha he says that he gave up drinking, apparently lying. Meliha responds to Harun's comments very maturely but emphasizes that she does not like to see people drinking at home. Harun

wrestles with this response and silently decides to completely give up drinking if they get married. By means of this confrontation, the series particularly underlines the difference in secular and Islamic lifestyles without taking sides.

However, the real intention of the series by adding Meliha to the cast is to question Kemalist judgements against people with Islamic lifestyles. Meliha's story reveals the obstacles that she faced in order to get university education as a covered woman and the discrimination that she struggles against in her everyday life. In episode 30, when Harun and Meliha go to a movie theatre Meliha is targeted by an elderly, secular lady who says that 'they are everywhere now', intending to comment on Meliha's presence in the movie theatre despite her Islamic identity. Harun accepts Meliha as she is since his mother is covered too. But apart from his secret love for Eda, the conflicting lifestyles and expectations of the couple tear them apart. Their different worldviews are represented in the series from the point of view of Harun's sister Aslı who objects their marriage.

As it is seen in the story of Meliha and Harun, Islamic figures and practices are included in the narrative of *Behzat Ç.* as a challenge to the secular foundations of Turkish national identity. Similar to the other political issues that are addressed in the episodes, the series intends to reveal the everyday conflicts between secular and Islamic lifestyles and stresses the discrimination against women in headscarves. So, the series includes both secular and Islamic imaginaries in its narrative and depicts a 'realist' portrait of Turkish society.

5.5.2.3 Representation of sexuality and public morality

Behzat Ç. was penalized by RTÜK on several occasions for containing images which could offend public morality. RTÜK is mostly concerned with the usage of alcohol in the series as well as the language used by the characters. In 2012, the series was penalized for depicting Behzat drinking alcohol and swearing. RTÜK reported that on the one hand, this depiction could be harmful for children who idealize television characters like Behzat. On the other hand, representing characters drinking and swearing could be harmful for the reputation of the Turkish police department since the audiences could

believe that every police officer is like the characters in the series. (“17 Dakikalık İçkinin Faturası Geldi” 2012)

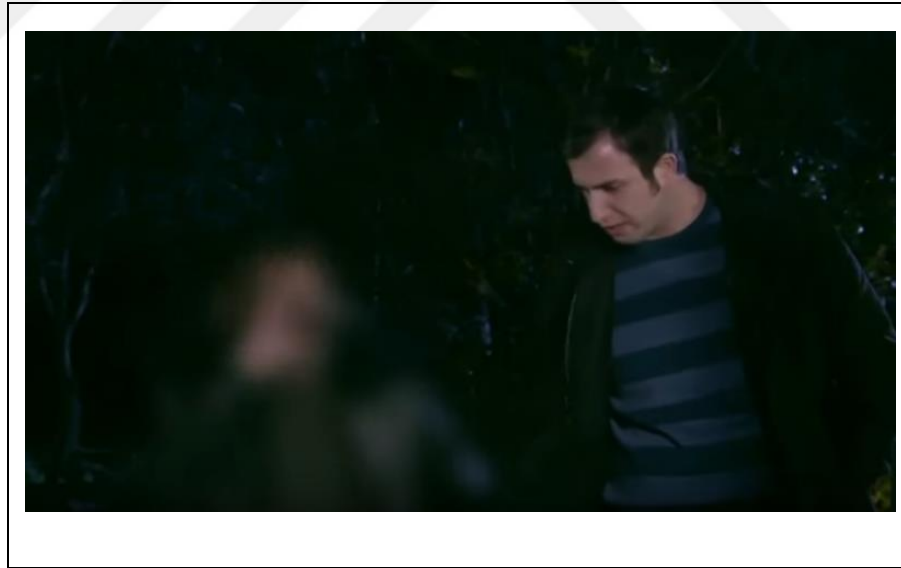
After 10 days, the series was penalized again for depicting the characters drinking alcohol in various places and driving under the influence of alcohol. According to RTÜK’s calculations, it is reported that the total duration of the scenes which show the characters using alcohol is 17 minutes. The report also attracts the attention to the slang and swear words that the characters use. Although these phrases are bleeped by the TV channels, the bleeping is not properly managed so the slang and swear words can be clearly understood according to RTÜK. (“17 dakika içti!” 2012) In 2013, *Behzat Ç.* was cancelled by the production company, Adam Film, because they started to have difficulties to find a TV channel which could broadcast the series since RTÜK’s penalization turned into an economic burden. (“Behzat Ç.’yi yayınlayacak kanal kalmadı” 2013)

Besides, it is not only RTÜK that found the series harmful for public morality. Bülent Belen, the deputy from the Nationalist Movement Party at that time, filed a parliamentary question concerning the alcohol use in the series. For Belen, the characters which should be representing the state as police officers both harm the reputation of the police department and the structure of the Turkish family by their behaviour. (“Çanlar Behzat Ç. için çalışıyor!” 2012) In order to respond to Belen’s complain, Bülent Arınç who was a Deputy from JDP and Vice-President at that period stated that they closely monitor the content of *Behzat Ç.* (“Behzat Ç.’ye yakın takip” 2012)

The series gave various self-conscious responses to RTÜK penalizations and reactions from the government. For instance, in episode 29, after getting furious about a situation, Behzat says that ‘now I will swear and it will cause quite a stir’ in such a way as to refer to the complaints about his regular usage of swear words and slang. In episode 48, while sitting with his brother Şevket in his office, Behzat states that he gave up drinking alcohol because he does not want to harm the development of children, directly quoting from the RTÜK law. In the scene, he does not drink himself but offers his brother a glass of vodka.

Eventually, alcoholic drinks started to be blurred and words like ‘beer’ started to be bleeped in the series in order to avoid contradictions. RTÜK censorships not only caused the dissemination of uncensored versions of the episodes on the Internet but also started to be used as material for jokes in the series. For instance, in episode 87, while working on a case on the set of a TV series, Behzat and his team are seen drinking whiskey and watching the shooting from a safe distance. They are warned by the cameramen who states that they are in the background of the scene and should wait in another place. Behzat insists on not changing his place and suggests that they can blur their images in editing. In this whole sequence, Behzat is seen holding a whiskey bottle in his hands which is already blurred and asks the cameraman to blur their images instead of moving them. The cameraman says that they cannot blur them completely but Harun says that his chief, Behzat, is best seen when he is blurred from head to toe. While Harun describes how the cameraman should blur his chief Behzat is seen completely blurred since he constantly moves the blurred whiskey bottle in his hand while drinking it.

Figure 5.8 : Blurred image of Behzat¹⁹



However, it was not only the amount of alcohol consumption or usage of slang and swear words which was found disturbing in *Behzat Ç* by the government officials. In his parliamentary question, Bülent Belen also addressed Fatma Şahin, the Minister of Family

¹⁹ The still image is taken from the Youtube video, *Behzat Ç. 87. Bölüm* (Behzat Ç. 2015)

and Social Policies at that time and claimed that *Behzat Ç.* ‘puts a dynamite stick in the structure of the Turkish family’ because it represents a chief commissar and a prosecutor, living in the same house without getting married. (Söylemez 2012)

Public morality is one of the issues which is deliberately targeted by *Behzat Ç.* as a ‘sensitive’ subject to mention in the Turkish context. Relationships between men and women are used in the series in order to raise public awareness on the pressure that is put on couples who are willing to live their relationships freely outside the limits of public morality. Despite Belen’s emphasis on the relationship between Esra and Behzat who are regularly seen living together in each other’s apartments or lying in bed together, the affair between Harun and Eda approaches the issue of public morality more critically and provocatively.

After Harun and Eda start dating the series begins to depict them in controversial situations in which they are harassed by conservative people around them. For instance, in episode 62, when Eda and Harun walk in the park at night, holding hands, a man accuses them for being immoral and shouts ‘there are families in here’. Harun shouts back at him, asking what they have done wrong and the man responds that they should be ashamed of themselves. When the man goes his way Harun says that he attacked them just because they were holding hands. If they had been kissing he could have burned them alive. In episode 71, the couple starts to be harassed by a neighbour who asks them if they live together. The neighbour eventually causes Eda to be thrown out of her apartment by informing her landlady, who in turn accuses Eda of being immoral and not behaving in an exemplary manner, neither as a police officer nor as a young woman.

Although Harun and Eda seem more relaxed after they move into another apartment together, they still do not tell their parents that they live together. In episode 78, talking about their sex life, Harun uses the word ‘fornication’ in order to ‘confess’ that they are having pre-marital sex. So, despite their willingness to live outside the limits of public morality, the series highlights that they are still under the influence of its codes. Besides, whereas Harun intends to live freely with Eda without a care about what anyone thinks, he obsessively monitors every move of his sister, Aslı, and limits her romantic

relationship with Cevdet. By emphasizing Harun's hypocrisy, the series intends to underline how relative the codes of public morality are and how 'some' women are oppressed by men who are granted the power of controlling every step they take in their lives.

By means of depicting its characters in 'inappropriate' positions, consuming extensive amounts of alcohol, swearing and having premarital sexual affairs, *Behzat Ç.* criticizes the traditional codes of public morality in Turkish society. Besides, by constructing self-conscious reactions against governmental interferences and RTÜK penalization, the series also questions the intention of the members and voters of the JDP government to impose their own lifestyle on their opponents. As a result, the series preserves its political vein through its approach to sexuality and public morality and continues to refer to national elements with a twist.

5.5.2.4 Representation of class dynamics

Class dynamics are included in the narrative of *Behzat Ç.* in order to draw an accurate portrait of Turkish society. The series frequently introduces people from different classes throughout its narrative. The characters are regularly seen talking to various characters on the streets, asking them about their financial difficulties and mentioning the high cost of living. In this sense, instead of referring to national stereotypes of upper and lower class characters the series approaches the representation of class dynamics critically as any other subject that it mentions.

Behzat Ç. does not usually discriminate between classes when it comes to represent ordinary crimes. However, it recurrently associates wealth with fraud, unfairness and shady relationships. Characters like Ercüment and his competitors in the business world strengthen this association by being depicted as conspiring in government tenders or murdering anyone who comes on their way. Therefore, Behzat who always struggles to catch powerful, wealthy criminals frequently complains about how wealthy people get away with everything in this country.

Besides, wealth is not only associated with committing crime but also with exploitation in the series. For instance, in episode 22, Behzat and Harun find out that the luxurious lifestyle of an ordinary dry cleaner is supported by an underground sweatshop to make stonewash jeans. The family members of the dry cleaner wear headscarves to challenge the national stereotype of being secular and wealthy. However, in order to preserve their traditional but luxurious lifestyle the workers that they employ in the sweatshop get sick due to their working conditions.

Contrary to wealthy people, lower and middle class characters are usually associated with financial difficulties, oppression and resistance in *Behzat Ç.*. Credit card balances of the main characters are frequently insufficient. They live in small houses with dreary decorations in middle class neighbourhoods or slums. However, despite their financial difficulties they live honest lives in contrast with the wealthy characters that appear in the series.

Neoliberalism turns into a major subject that influences their lifestyles, especially through the issue of gentrification. Hayalet becomes a central figure to emphasize this matter. He is introduced in the beginning of the series as a character who lives in the slums of Ankara. In episode 9, his neighbourhood is raided by the police and threatened to be destroyed by the state. While the residents stand up against the police by resisting and blocking their access to the neighbourhood, Hayalet, as a police officer himself, stands on the side of his neighbours against the police.

The series draws attention to the everyday problems that the lower and middle class characters have to face due to the neoliberal politics of the JDP government. By emphasizing the financial difficulties of lower and middle class characters, *Behzat Ç.* intends to question the struggling economy of Turkey under the governance of the JDP. Issues such as working on a minimum wage, having credit card debt, getting a bank loan or protesting against the low salary increase and gentrification are frequently mentioned in the narrative. Consequently, instead of building its narrative upon national stereotypes of lower and upper class characters, *Behzat Ç.* achieves to draw a more realistic portrait of different classes in Turkey and to address their contemporary problems.

5.5.2.5 The conception of family

The family lives of the main characters in *Behzat Ç.* are frequently depicted as highly problematic. Instead of being a peaceful haven where the characters could find peace after dealing with violent criminals all day, their family houses are either represented as broken or in crisis. The characters mostly have serious problems with their fathers. Behzat is introduced in the beginning of the series as a failing father who is always in conflict with his daughter, Berna. After Berna's death, the narrative recurrently dwells on Behzat's regret of being a bad father for his daughter and his remorse of not being able to protect her.

Behzat also has his own childhood traumas about his father. He always feels less of a man than his father because he never managed to become a military man like him. In episode 21, he and Şevket talk about their father and Behzat asks Şevket if their father died of a heart attack because of him. When Şevket replies that their father loved him very much, even loved Behzat more than him without showing his affection, they hug each other and start crying loudly.

All Behzat's team members have struggling relationships with their fathers. Eda has grown up without a father. Hayalet suffers from the childhood trauma of reporting his father to the police in coup years. Akbaba even attempts to kill his father who did not stand against his uncle raping his girlfriend in episode 61. Despite having an actual family living together under the same roof, Harun also has conflicts with his father who always makes him feel like a failure.

In episode 21, Harun, Hayalet and Akbaba talk about their fathers and express how they never felt loved by them, how their fathers never understood them or always underestimated them. Their problematic feelings for their fathers bring the team members together by putting Behzat in the place of their fathers. On many different occasions, either Behzat or one of the team members underline the fact that they see Behzat as a father figure. They frequently talk about their personal problems with Behzat who interferes in their relationships, either showing his pride or resentment.

For that reason, instead of depicting the family as the smallest unit of society in which traditions and values of Turkishness are practiced, *Behzat Ç.* represents the family in an unconventional manner. The characters are portrayed as traumatized by their actual family members, especially by their fathers, and found an unconventional variation of the family in the precinct, sharing the same worldviews and lifestyles with their colleagues. Through this depiction, the series challenges the conservative portrayal of the Turkish family which is united under the same roof for raising pious generations. Besides, by associating authority figures in conventional families with childhood traumas and replacing them with Behzat, the series redefines authority by correlating it with fairness, conscience and loyalty instead of oppression and apathy.

5.5.2.6 The conception of the neighbourhood (*mahalle*)

In *Behzat Ç.*, middle class neighbourhoods are depicted as urban places without any significance, constituting of properly aligned apartment buildings and a few shops. In contrast with this image, lower class slums which are regularly visited by the main characters either for personal or professional reasons are frequently depicted as rural places rather than as urban centres. In these places, lots of people are seen living in half-built houses, walking around on the narrow, disorganized streets or chatting in the corners in rural clothes. Visiting a traditional coffee house (*kirahathane*) is presented as a shared characteristic of lower and middle class neighbourhoods.

Instead of being represented as a nostalgic place, lower class neighbourhoods are depicted under a constant police threat in *Behzat Ç.*. The series creates a portrait of these neighbourhoods as places in which all residents are united in solidarity but not in a conventional way. On many occasions, neighbourhood residents appear united against the demolition of their houses by state authorities or resisting against the police for other political reasons. For instance, in episode 38, when Hayalet revisits his old neighbourhood and chats with his old neighbours they inform him that they will continue to fight their battle and protect their neighbourhood against gentrification.

In episode 62, a murder investigation reveals the conflict between a group of neighbourhood residents and the executives of a construction company. Residents are seen fighting against the construction company which intends to build a luxurious gated community with a shopping mall by dispossessing the residents of their houses. A banner is seen in the neighbourhood square. The slogan ‘we do want neither a villa nor a palace, we just want a roof over our heads’ is written on the banner. Later in the episode, the anti-terror branch raids the neighbourhood, forcefully arresting the residents by taking people out of their houses because of a political matter. When the neighbours are cleared from being murder suspects they are shown preparing to celebrate May 1, the International Workers’ Day, making placards and banners in laughter, demonstrating another kind of solidarity which is very different from the conservative depiction of neighbourhood values in most of the Turkish TV series.

By means of these depictions, *Behzat Ç.* draws another portrait of contemporary neighbourhoods in which people are united in solidarity in order to stand up for their rights and protect themselves against the neoliberal and authoritarian politics of the government. Instead of representing the neighbourhood as a nostalgic and peaceful place, the series underlines that the neighbourhood has become a politicized space in contemporary Turkey and extends the connotations that are attached to the neighbourhood as a national element.

5.5.2.7 Melodramatic modality

In *Behzat Ç.*, melodramatic modality appears as a major element which does not only give the narrative a sentimental tone but also grants it with a national touch. Whereas the stories of victims are not usually told in a melodramatic manner, the personal lives of the main characters are narrated in such a way that allows melodramatic modality to infuse into the narrative. Berna could be perceived as a central motive in strengthening melodramatic modality in the series. Behzat’s hallucinations of Berna’s childhood in the earlier seasons always recall his melodramatic past to interfere in the general course of events and change the neutral tone of the series.

While thinking about Berna, Behzat is usually seen doubled up with pain and sobbing. Usually, sad music is heard on the background in sequences like these or the sequence itself adopts a music video format. For instance, in episode 55, Behzat is seen in his car, driving irresponsibly, dreaming of being in a radio station, hearing the voice of Berna's childhood who says that he plays great songs on the radio every night. She wants him to pick a song for him and "Zaman Duruyor" (Time Stops) by Pilli Bebek starts to play. Dissolves link the images of synthesizers and playing records on the turntable to Behzat's crying face and flashbacks of Berna's childhood while the song is heard in the background. When Behzat comes out of the dream he gets furious, switches off the car radio and puts his pistol to his head while the song still plays. The sequence lasts almost five minutes until the song ends.

The same style is adopted several times in depicting the characters absorbed in their own sorrows which are frequently related to their problematic relations with authority figures like their fathers, their repression of romantic feelings for certain women or their constant guilt and regret of not being enough of a man as a father, police officer or lover. While depicting the characters as drowning in their sorrow, the series usually draws a childlike portrait of them. Behzat, in particular, is usually represented as lying in foetus position on the lap of his lover and sobbing while the woman caresses his hair. This portrait could be easily associated with a very common motif that is used in Yeşilçam films. Nurdan Gürbilek defines this motif as '*acıların çocuğu*' (suffering child) and relates it to the famous painting of the Italian artist Bruno Amadio entitled "The Crying Boy."

For Gürbilek, this painting was very popular in Turkey in the 1980s and could be commonly seen in local shops and family houses. She states that people in Turkey identified themselves with the image of the crying boy and thought that it represented the feeling of undeserved misery. According to Gürbilek, the portrait became a symbol of being an innocent victim, getting an underserved penalty and being persecuted by an unfair justice system. However, it also gave people the power to resist by symbolizing preserved honour. She associates the popularity of this image in Turkey with an entrenched sensation of living in a childlike society which intends to overcome the feeling

of insecurity with the image of the innocence and purification of the child. (Gürbilek 2001, pp. 39-41)

In reference to Gürbilek's association, it can be claimed that melodramatic modality infuses the narrative of *Behzat Ç.* not only to symbolize the everlasting struggle between good and evil but to revitalize national feelings of insecurity and being exposed to an undeserved injustice and pain. These feelings, which can be associated with the historical and cultural ferocity of the nation building processes in Turkey, can be described as inherently 'Turkish'. For that reason, by proliferating the melodramatic tone of the series as interrupting the neutral course of events, *Behzat Ç.* not only refers to the personal crises of its characters but also gives its narrative a national touch.

Behzat Ç. focuses on the investigations of a middle class chief commissar with an attitude and his team members in the homicide bureau in Ankara. The series follows the conventional police procedural formula in terms of plot construction and iconography and designs its narrative in accordance with the dominant visual styles of the genre. However, together with its localisation of the police procedural iconography, *Behzat Ç.* builds its response to the 'Western' characteristics of the genre by criticizing the dominant themes and ideologies of police procedurals from a 'Turkish' perspective.

The series expresses distrust in the legal system and private enterprises with an emphasis on the collaboration between businessmen, legal experts, police officers, governmental officials and the Turkish deep state. The law and order rhetoric is deconstructed in the series by its depiction as a lost cause due to these unpreventable, shady relationships. By exposing these corrupt associations, the series intends to emphasize the unfairness of the contemporary social and political order in Turkey and explicitly refers to the injustice that Turkish people face in their everyday lives.

While depicting the national elements, *Behzat Ç.* preserves its critical stance against these national markers. Every element is represented in the series with a twist in order to question generally accepted discourses. The foundations of Turkish national identity,

stereotypical representations of certain characters, problematic issues like sexuality, public morality and family values as well as the direct influences of rising neoliberalism are criticized in the series. Along with these, the perpetual tension between the foreign and the local which is inscribed in the practices of the police procedural genre in Turkey is included in the narrative through the conflicting methods of characters who are educated in Turkey and the U.S.

Consequently, together with the infusion of melodramatic modality, *Behzat Ç.* achieves to adapt the police procedural formula in the Turkish context by harmonizing conventional features of the genre with the conventional national elements of Turkish TV series, with a twist. By means of this efforts, it does not only become a critical and provocative TV series which stands out amongst others with its innovative structure but also turns into an exemplary, national response to the police procedural genre.

5.6 NEO-OTTOMANISM AT WORK: THE OTTOMAN POLICE PROCEDURAL, *FİLİNTA*

The Ottoman police procedural *Filinta* (Flintlock, TRT 1, 2014-2016) started to be shown on public television channel TRT in December 2014 and was cancelled after the broadcasting of 56 episodes, divided into two seasons, in 2016. The reason behind the cancellation remains unknown. On the one hand, *Filinta* could be considered as an extension of the global trend to combine the police procedural genre with historical drama. The British TV series *Ripper Street* (2012-) and the American TV series *Copper* (2012-) could be listed as examples of this trend. On the other hand, the series could be conveniently related to the rising neo-Ottomanist interest in the Turkish television industry which was triggered by the worldwide popularity of *Muhteşem Yüzyıl*.

Besides, for being broadcasted on the state-run TV channel TRT, *Filinta* is frequently described as a governmental project for nation building. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's visit to the set of the series, spending time in the director's chair, confirmed this governmental support. ("Cumhurbaşkanı Filinta'nın yönetmen koltuğunda!" 2015) Accordingly, the high budget that is allocated to the series by TRT has been recurrently

criticized by the deputies of the Republican People's Party (RPP). In 2015, RPP Istanbul Deputy Umut Oran discussed the budget of the series in parliament, claiming that TRT paid 5 million dollars to the production company of *Filinta* despite the low ratings of the series. ("TRT Filinta'ya bölüm başı 5 milyon dolar mı ödüyor?" 2015) In 2016 RPP Niğde Deputy Ömer Fethi Gürer drew attention to *Filinta*'s budget once again by officially requiring that TRT should clarify the budget allocated to the series. As a consequence of this inquiry, it was revealed that TRT had paid 57 million Turkish Liras for the series of 56 episodes ("TRT'de yayınlanan Filinta dizisi için 57 milyon TL ödenmiş" 2016) which is an extremely high amount for a Turkish production.

The high budget allocated to the series by a governmental organization like TRT and Erdoğan's explicit support are enough to define the series as a pro-governmental project. For that reason, when the series started to be shown Tayfun Atay stated that *Filinta* could play a major role in the historical nation building process of the 'new' Turkey. For Atay, the initial intention of the series is to set the present in the Ottoman period instead of rejuvenating the Ottoman past in the present by creating parallels between past events and present political tensions. (Atay 2014) Therefore, especially in the first season, *Filinta* managed to become a police procedural of the 'new' Turkey by harmonizing international conventions of the genre with national elements in an updated manner.

5.6.1 Generic Conventions

5.6.1.1 Social classes, values and characteristics of the characters

Filinta concentrates on the investigations of the law enforcers in the *Galata* precinct (*Galata Zaptiyesi*) in the Ottoman Empire, in the last quarter of the 19th century. The precinct is administered by Qadi (*kadı*) Gıyaseddin Hatemi (Mehmet Özgür) who is an Islamic judge. 'Filinta' Mustafa (Onur Tuna) and 'Bıçak' Ali (Cem Uçan) are the major officers who work under Gıyaseddin. They are ranked as *müşir* which corresponds to marshal, the highest military rank in contemporary Turkey. Ali is specialized in throwing knives. Therefore, his nickname is 'bıçak' (knife). Mustafa uses a revolver that is especially designed for him. Due to his shooting skills, people call him '*filinta*' which

means revolver in Turkish as well as strong, handsome man. Mustafa is the main character giving the series its name. He is a middle class man who survives on his monthly salary like his colleague Ali. His policing skills are underlined at the beginning of episode 1 when he is awarded by the Ottoman Sultan himself for his achievements in Britain where he is temporarily sent for training.

Mustafa and Ali, both deserted by their families, are raised by Gıyaseddin as his own sons. So, apart from being the highest ranking officer in the precinct, Gıyaseddin is a father figure for them, lecturing them about their policing methods and impulsive moves by relying on his knowledge and wisdom of Koran. Gıyaseddin is actively involved in the investigation processes and he also acts as the judge in trials. He analyses the evidence and the testimonies of the witnesses in the court of justice and comes to a verdict in accordance with Islamic law. Gıyaseddin cannot be demoralized under any circumstance and is the moral compass of the series. He regularly performs daily prayers in religious clothing, talking to Allah in difficult situations to show him the right direction. When he dies in episode 28 after getting shot in action, Davut Paşa (Mustafa Avkıran) partially replaces him, providing guidance to Mustafa and Ali. But the empty place of Gıyaseddin is never really filled. By means of the religious presence of Gıyaseddin, *Filinta* achieves to combine the ‘global’ conventional portrayal of police officers as ordinary, middle class citizens with Islamic symbols, traditions and knowledge.

The forensic processes of the investigations are conducted by Abdullah (Kamil Güler) who has a photography shop in Istanbul’s Pera district. He has a secret laboratory behind his shop where he works on his scientific discoveries. Tubes, chemical liquids, several books and unidentified machines surround his laboratory. Apart from being a genius of science and the inventor of Mustafa’s enhanced revolver, he is an intellectual.

The team is regularly challenged by the same enemies who commit several criminal offences against the state. Boris Zaharyas (Serhat Tutumluer) appears to be the archenemy of Mustafa, Ali and Gıyaseddin. Boris works in collaboration with international forces who intend to destroy the Ottoman Empire by means of international conspiracies. In episode 23, Boris appears before a mysterious council which is run by a ‘serene highness’.

The members of this international council manage a group of warriors, called ‘the fellowship organization’. By means of their clothing and hairstyles, the members of this fellowship look very much like the Viking warriors in the Irish-Canadian TV series *Vikings* (2013-). Through this intertextual appropriation, they are not only separated from the devoted citizens of the Ottoman Empire via their physical appearance, but their clothing and hairstyles also make it easier to describe them as warriors of a ‘foreign’ power and religion.

The council commits several criminal offences, varying from provoking public uprisings to assassinations by using the warriors of this fellowship as their secret army. Apart from these greater organizations, ambassadors of Western countries like Britain, Germany, France and Russia are also involved in the political conspiracies to destroy the Ottoman Empire. Mustafa, Ali and Gıyaseddin work in collaboration with the other officers in the precinct (*zabit*) such as Hasan (Kayra Şenocak), Gazanfer (Emre Canpolat) and Ahmet (Berk Güneşberk) in order to fight against these enemies of the state.

5.6.1.2 Setting and tools

Istanbul’s Pera district and the historical peninsula are represented as the main settings of the series. Ottoman ships that are anchored in the Karaköy harbour constitute the main surroundings of the scenery of Galata Tower. Dolmabahçe Palace is depicted as the residence of the Sultan. The historical peninsula of Istanbul that is constituted of the image of Topkapı Palace and Hagias Sophia on the top is also regularly represented in the series.

Beginning from episode 1, Istanbul is represented as a cosmopolitan urban centre in which people from different religious and social backgrounds live together. People are shown spending time in the coffee houses and shopping from local bazaars. Whereas some men wear a fez over their suits, some of them wear melon hats or quilted turbans. Both covered and uncovered women are depicted walking on the streets side by side. Whereas some covered women make their hair more visible, wearing their headscarves loosely, some of them cover all their hair.

Portable butcher shops, sherbet sellers, oil wrestlers and coolies that carry large baskets full of fruits on their backs are regularly seen in the background of *Filinta*. Shops from the Ottoman period, selling hats and medicine, as well as the Beyoğlu tramway and horse carriages are spotted on the streets. Old institutions of the Ottoman Empire like *tulumbacılar* which corresponds to the contemporary fire department are also represented in the series in order to draw a nostalgic portrait of Istanbul in the Ottoman period. This nostalgic, cosmopolitan look of everyday life in the Ottoman period corresponds to the constructed image of the Empire in the 2000s, providing a united national identity for all people living within the borders without discriminating among them. This imagined portrait is presented in *Filinta* as an aspired setting for the ‘new’ Turkey, carrying the long lost habits, institutions and the values that they represent to the present.

In terms of tools, Abdullah’s photography shop, which also contributes to the portrayal of Istanbul in a nostalgic manner, appears as the production centre of the extraordinary devices that Mustafa and Ali use in their investigations. Abdullah, who is depicted as a highly talented inventor, provides them with unusual equipment that could take them one step ahead of their enemies. For instance, in episode 8, Mustafa is saved from a shooting by the steel armour that Abdullah designed for him. In episode 23, Abdullah’s new invention is used to copy the description of a wanted woman which is drawn by the sketch artist. In episode 36, while going to a mission in the secrets tunnels under Istanbul, Mustafa and Ali use a new invention of Abdullah which mimics an electrified lantern. By means of these tools, *Filinta* not only provides its characters with unconventional devices for the period that it is set in but also glorifies how developed the Ottoman Empire is imagined to be in terms of science and technology.

5.6.1.3 Plot construction

Filinta’s plot generally concentrates on several incidents at the same time without following a certain order. International conspiracies dominate the narrative of the series. These conspiracies cause different incidents in every episode such as the murder of a British military attaché as in episode 1 or an assassination attempt on an important, political figure like Şeyh Bender as in episode 44. While the team members work on

revealing the perpetrators of these incidents, other international conspiracies are planned in the background.

In every episode enemies of the nation are depicted one by one as making plans to destroy the Ottoman Empire and committing crimes parallel to Mustafa's struggle against them. Mustafa and his team try to solve criminal incidents which are usually related to international conspiracies, figuring out the next steps of their rivals, planning their defence strategies or acting against the conspiracies of their enemies. If the incidents require regular police work, like visiting the crime scene, collecting evidence, performing an autopsy, interrogating suspects and busting the criminals red-handed, Mustafa and his colleagues are seen performing these duties.

For instance, as in episode 2, Mustafa is portrayed as following standard procedure of collecting evidence from the crime scene and taking these leads to Abdullah for forensic analysis. In other episodes, like episode 11, Mustafa examines the dead body in an autopsy room and interprets forensic evidence as part of the investigation. However, these procedures are not regularly performed in the series. Mustafa and the other members of the team change their ways and methods according to the requirements of the crimes. In many cases, they are mostly seen fighting against their enemies in shootouts or brainstorming about cracking the plans of their enemies in Gıyaseddin's office or in the Sultan's presence. This preference allows the series to be more action-oriented, similar to *Arka Sokaklar*.

When Mustafa, Ali and Gıyaseddin are dismissed from their former duties in the Galata precinct and appointed as the agents of the Ottoman Intelligence Service at the beginning of season 2, their policing methods and procedures are also altered to a great extent. As the Sultan (Hakan Kurtuş) himself explains in episode 27, the investigation methods of the intelligence service do not resemble police work since they do not require a fair fight. Instead of gathering in the precinct, Mustafa and his colleagues continue their work in the secret location of the Ottoman Intelligence Service which is depicted as an expansive hall full of top secret documents like folders, books, reports and maps.

In their new location, Mustafa and his colleagues frequently gather in a hidden room, brainstorming over the information that they collect in order to evaluate the plans of their enemies and develop counter attacks. Disguising turns into a significant tactic that is used both by the law enforcers and by their enemies in the second season. For instance, in episode 28, when she still works for the fellowship, Farah (Berrak Tüzünataç) dresses as a Muslim governess in order to sneak into an Ottoman social complex, *Küllîye*, as an undercover spy of the fellowship. In episode 33, the Sultan orders Davut Paşa to infiltrate to British embassy in Istanbul to get more intelligence about the council. Again, in episode 40, the serene highness of the council, Kenan Miloş (Suavi Eren) appears to be attending the Sultan's council by acting as one of his advisors in disguise.

All these different methods are combined in different episodes in various ways. Personal crises about the unrevealed pasts, family lives and love affairs of the characters also interrupt the course of events by getting entangled with the political conspiracies and criminal investigations. Therefore, instead of depicting police procedures in an orderly constructed plot, *Filinta* represents the events in a soap opera-like narration, following a complex, intertwined structure. This structure also allows the series to be inspired from multiple sources both local and global. For instance, the concentration of the series on intelligence services in the second season could be interpreted as an influence of Turkish crime series such as *Kurtlar Vadisi* as well as the global popularity of American crime series like *24* (2001–2010) and *Homeland* (2011–) which especially focus on political conspiracies. This flexibility in constructing its plot structure allows *Filinta* to be open various intertextual influences and simultaneously address many different audience interests.

5.6.1.4 Dominant themes and ideologies

The law and order rhetoric is strongly emphasized in almost every episode of *Filinta*. The line between right and wrong is clearly drawn. Whereas Gıyaseddin and his prodigies, Mustafa and Ali, are always represented on the right side of the law, their enemies which target the unity and prosperity of the Ottoman Empire are portrayed as opposing their worldviews. Since the law that determines their approach is based on the essentials of

Islam, Gıyaseddin frequently explains the notion of justice by giving references to the Koran and talking about the justice of Allah. In this way, the law and order rhetoric of the series is explicitly based on the understanding of justice in Islam and the fairness of Allah.

Gıyaseddin usually comments on maintaining law and order both in this world and in the presence of Allah. For instance, in episode 8, Hasan comes to Gıyaseddin and confesses that he struggles to trust in justice since he regularly sees bad people getting away with their crimes. Gıyaseddin states that Allah is the only one who is fair and just. Petty crimes could be punished in local courts and bigger crimes could be punished in the mayor's courts. Similar to this, much bigger crimes which appear to be overlooked on earth are punished in the hereafter by Allah. For Gıyaseddin, this is the true justice since their courts are much less important than Allah's court because no one can get away with their sins in the presence of Allah.

Therefore, in the black and white universe of *Filinta*, being a true believer and follower of Allah turns into a significant marker of separating the criminals from the right doers. In order to preserve the clear line between good and evil, securing justice is represented as a divine duty which is only granted to certain people who follow the path of Allah. Whereas Mustafa and his colleagues who always work for the benefit of the state do their jobs to secure justice, dirty cops like Rıza (Ceyhun Ergin) or malicious ministers like Esat Paşa (Yosi Mizrahi) only victimize people with their actions. As Gıyaseddin declares in episode 26, every occupation that is granted to them first belongs to Allah and then to the state. So, they are only intermediaries of Allah and the state while acting fairly. As good Muslims and Ottoman citizens, they secure justice by means of the power that they receive from their belief in Allah and the state. However, their enemies who do not fear Allah and are willing to destroy the state are not granted with this power.

After Gıyaseddin's death in episode 28, although the characters never leave Allah's path and continue to be good Muslims, the methods of maintaining law and order slightly change in the series. Whereas acting fairly, frankly and impartially has been the essence of Gıyaseddin's approach to securing justice and protecting the prosperity of the state, this attitude is transformed after his death. In episode 29, Mustafa breaks down after

losing his father figure. He goes after the perpetrators, beating and shooting them one by one as if he was in a battlefield. He even executes some of them with a bullet in their heads. When he goes to bust their camp he starts to shout loudly with revenge, calling them to duel and firing his revolver in the air. Although Mustafa clarifies that he does not seek personal revenge and is only concerned with the prosperity of the nation, the series particularly underlines that something has changed in him.

In this sense, it can be claimed that Gıyaseddin's approach to maintaining law and order partially disappears after his death. This disappearance is supported by the transfer of Mustafa and Ali from the Galata precinct to the Ottoman Intelligence Service since the different methods of policing between these two institutions are especially highlighted. Whereas Mustafa and Ali who are gathered under the leadership of Gıyaseddin in the Galata precinct use much more direct and justifiable methods, they are forced to act more discreetly and subtly under the administration of Davut Paşa. However, this does not mean that they depart from Allah's path in their new occupations. Maintaining law and order continues to be perceived in *Filinta* as a holy duty that is granted to the characters by Allah in order to protect their nation. By means of basing the law and order rhetoric upon Islamic rules and values, the series achieves to localize one of the global themes of the police procedural genre in the Turkish context.

Different from other contemporary Turkish police procedurals that are examined in this chapter, Freemasonry appears to be another dominant theme in *Filinta*. The narrative of the series mostly concentrates on international conspiracies that are conducted by higher powers. These powers, which are depicted as above every nation, work in collaboration in order to change the world order in their favour. These higher powers are visualized in episode 23 with the depiction of the Masonic council. In this episode, faces of the council members cannot be seen because of the lighting and the leader of the group hides his identity by wearing a cowl and talking in a robotic tone of voice.

The series uses several symbols of Freemasonry in representing the members and the gatherings of this council. As described by Lynn Brunet, Freemasonry borrows particular elements from ancient religious beliefs "such as the dualistic notion of 'light' and 'dark'

symbolised by the tessellated pavement within the Lodge, as well as some of its Egyptian and Greek influences.” (Brunet 2007, p. 46) Reflecting this description, the Lodge that the members of the high council gather in is depicted as an expansive space, surrounded by Greek columns and Byzantine bricks. The floor is covered with black and white tessellated pavement. High contrast lighting of the room represents the dualistic notion that Brunet mentions. The sculptures and paintings in the Lodge also give reference to the Masonic symbols that are used in arts. The top of the chair from which the serene highness manages the meetings is shaped as an equilateral triangle which is described by Brunet as another symbol of Freemasonry. (Ibid., p. 78)

The Compass and Square which are used to identify the institutions of Freemasonry (Ibid., p. 130) become apparent in episode 45 when the serene highness, Kenan Miloş, meets with a man in Thessaloniki, Greece. Miloş, who is disguised as an Orthodox Jewish, visits the man in his office. When they sit between two flags, the masonic symbol of the all-seeing eye (Ibid., p. 78) can be clearly seen on the flags. At one point, the camera changes its focus from Miloş to the flag behind him in order to emphasize the symbol on it. By means of these symbols the high council is evidently described as a Masonic organization that works beyond every visible, national power.

By training and using the members of ‘the fellowship organization’ and placing their collaborators inside the Ottoman institutions, the council intends to take the Ottoman Empire under its control. Kenan Miloş frequently explains the great qualities of the Ottoman Empire like having the third largest marine corps and longest railways and how these qualities could turn the Empire into a serious threat in the future. For Miloş, the council should do whatever it takes to prevent the further progress of the Ottoman Empire in order to take the nation under control and administer it behind the scenes. In this sense, by bringing Freemasonry into the forefront as a dominant theme, the primary goal of *Filinta* is glorifying the qualities of the Ottoman Empire and how these qualities turn the state into an open target. Different from the global examples of the genre which prefer to use Freemasonry to explain the relationship between police officers and private entrepreneurs based on self-interest, *Filinta* utilizes this theme to comment on more bigger issues and point at the national threats that the Ottoman Empire faces. Therefore,

despite using a dominant theme of the genre, the series narrates it with a local touch by harmonizing it with the political conspiracies of the Ottoman Empire.

The tension between the foreign and the local appears as another dominant theme in *Filinta*. This tension is not only emphasized by the constant threat of the external enemies but also by bringing ‘foreign’ and ‘local’ characters against each other in combat. For instance, in episode 8, four American cowboys appear in Istanbul’s Karaköy harbour. Their identities are highlighted by the cowboy hats that they wear over their suits. Another cowboy, named ‘Kid’ arrives just after them. He is more stereotypically represented in comparison to the others, wearing a long coat, a cowboy hat and an inlaid gun belt and chewing a toothpick.

Kid is introduced as the most talented gunman of the Wild West. His quickness is especially underlined in the series and causes Mustafa and his colleagues to identify him as a very dangerous man. In order to reveal Kid’s plan to smuggle arms to the British colonies to start a civil unrest, Mustafa confronts the American ambassador about his presence in Istanbul. The ambassador states that he knows neither Kid nor the victims, apparently lying. When the tension gets really high Mustafa threatens the ambassador by saying that America is a newly established nation whereas the Ottoman Empire has been in power for 600 years. If they want to conduct an operation in the Ottoman capital they would not allow it.

Mustafa stands by his words by confronting Kid in Karaköy harbour which is decorated by Ottoman/Turkish flags. After taking up the duel position, Mustafa says: ‘*Kid’ misin nesin, burası Istanbul, adam gibi teslim ol*’ (You are called Kid or what. This is Istanbul. Now, be a man and surrender). Kid does not take Mustafa seriously and shoots him several times in his chest. But Mustafa is saved by the steel armour that Abdullah designed for him and shoots Kid, the best gunfighter of the Wild West and defeats him by means of his cleverness. In a similar way, in episode 20, a talented and powerful British agent named 001 is sent by the British intelligence service to the Ottoman Empire in order to assassinate the Sultan. 001 is introduced in the series by showing off his talents of

gunmanship and fighting skills. Like Kid, he is also defeated by the Ottoman law enforcers who achieve to act as a team and protect each other in a compelling street fight.

The tension between the foreign and the local peaks when Sultan Mehmet (Bülent Alkış) confronts Akbar Eyyam (Hazım Körmükçü), the American representative of the masonic council, in prison in episode 52. The Sultan asks Akbar to explain himself and his worldview. Akbar, who is chained in the dungeon, covered in blood, says that they are the future. For Akbar, in this future, there are no nation states. Everything is administered by the capital and all the flags are green like the American dollar. He emphasizes that this is the future that is awaiting the Ottoman Empire.

The Sultan asks why they hate nation states so much. Akbar responds that they have nothing personal against the nation states but their determined leaders, like the Sultan himself, stand in their way to build a new world order. The Sultan says that everybody wants to belong to a community and a family. This need keeps the nations and the Muslim ummahs alive. If they want to destroy nation states, how would they satisfy this need? Akbar suggests that they would fill that emptiness with consumption and entertainment. The Sultan replies that they would turn the greatest being that Allah created into a dissipated and hedonistic creature. Akbar disagrees with the Sultan and states that people would turn back to their basics in their world.

The Sultan says that there is only one thing that they overlooked in this plan, which is Allah. For him, Allah tests the greatest being that he created with evil like Akbar himself, but he never lets evil rule the world. But Akbar insists on his idea that they are the future and the future is unpreventable. The Sultan states that under these circumstances, the Ottoman Empire would become the past. But Akbar disagrees with this account and suggests that the Sultan is a prescient person and the Americans could work with a person like him to build the new future. Akbar makes a proposal to the Sultan who is seen getting advice from his council and praying all night. Eventually, he rejects the proposal and refuses to be a part of Akbar's hidden agenda. In this way, the series underlines that Allah tested the Sultan with the proposal of the 'evil' but he does not give in to this proposal and proves that he is a true believer.

As it can be seen in these examples, the tension between the foreign and the local can revive in many different forms and occasions in *Filinta*. On the one hand, the tension can be emphasized by putting the cleverness, organization and team work of the Ottoman law enforcers over their American and British rivals. On the other hand, it can be revealed in political conflicts by putting the religious values and culture of the Ottoman Empire over the foreign others which are explicitly described as ‘evil’. Together with the intrusions of the masonic high council as well as the foreign ambassadors in Istanbul, the tension between the foreign and the local is kept alive in *Filinta* and appears as a dominant theme.

Gender issues are not explicitly discussed in *Filinta* as a dominant theme. But the series constructs a predetermined discourse in depicting female characters. In episode 8, Gıyaseddin explains that Allah created men and women differently on purpose because the courage of men and the compassion of women complete each other to overcome every obstacle. As it is emphasized in this statement, whereas men are represented in a perpetual fight against the enemies of the state, women are seen as their biggest supporters by providing them with a solitary shelter to come after a fair fight. In this picture, the series gives the women highly traditional roles.

Alternatively, women are also depicted in powerful positions in *Filinta*. In episode 16, Süreyya (Nur Fettahoğlu) who appears as the future wife of Ali, is introduced as a wealthy woman who has inherited a fortune from her deceased husband. She does not only have economic power but also knows how to fight, knocking down men twice her size. In episode 27, Farah also appears as a powerful woman who knows how to fight and protect herself from any physical attack. In the same episode, Leyla (Asena Tuğal) is introduced as a determined woman who managed to become a medical doctor in a male dominated world by studying medicine in Germany.

However, although major female characters are placed in important positions in *Filinta*, they are also represented as being divided between performing their jobs and maintaining their daily duties at home. In episode 36, Ali advises Süreyya to leave the banking business and concentrate on cooking because she is really good at it. Süreyya responds by saying that a woman can both work and run her daily duties at home. In episode 51,

Leyla also appears to take care of her household duties like peeling potatoes and preparing dinner for her husband alongside working in the hospital. In this way, the series underlines that despite being active in the business world, these women keep providing a safe shelter for men who work for the benefit of the nation because running the house is their ‘natural’ duty.

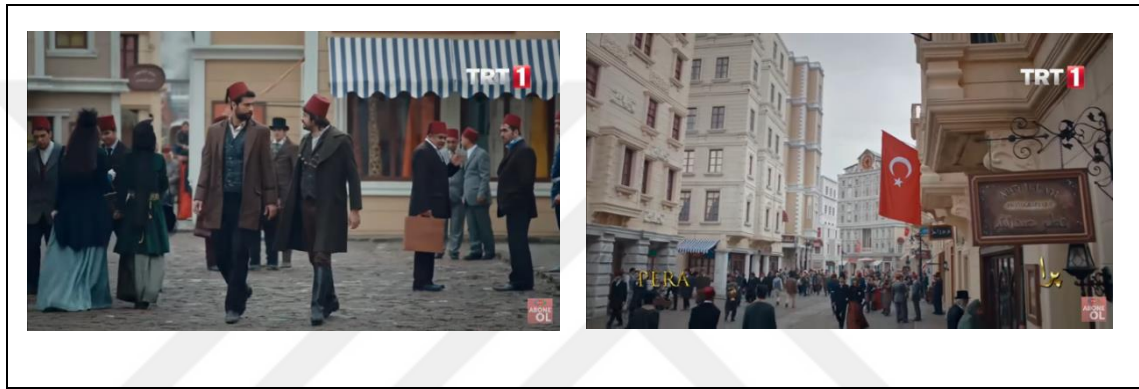
Eventually, neither of these women survive in the masculine world of *Filinta* which is managed by men like Mustafa and Ali who prefer the prosperity of the nation over their own happiness and family. In episode 56, Süreyya gets shot and killed in a rescue mission by the enemies of the state. Farah dies by getting shot by Miloş in the same episode and no funeral is shown to say goodbye to her. Leyla, who turns into a traitor, attempts to commit suicide in prison and dies in the hospital afterwards. Through the disappearance of the strong female figures, *Filinta* states that there is no place for powerful women in its universe. Women can only temporarily become a part of this world since men like Mustafa and Ali are only married to their duties to serve the nation. In terms of its depiction of female characters, *Filinta* adopts a highly masculine discourse similar to the American police procedurals of the 1970s.

5.6.1.5 Visual styles

Filinta partially gets its inspiration from historical political conspiracies that happened in the Ottoman Empire under the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz (1861-1876). The series especially concentrates on the military intervention which was implemented by Ottoman politicians such as Mithat Paşa and Hüseyin Avni Paşa against Sultan Abdulaziz in 1876. By reflecting the intentions of these politicians to replace Abdulaziz with his nephew, Prince Murat, (Zürcher 2004, p. 73) the series aims to achieve a particular kind of documentary realism by explaining these historical incidents from its own ideological point of view. However, this intention of ‘truth claim’ is not supported by the visual style of the series which could only be defined as excessive stylishness in comparison to other Turkish police procedurals.

Exterior shootings of *Filinta* are carried out in the Seka Film Studios in Kocaeli, which are especially designed for the series on a 170.000 m² field and continue to be used for other purposes. Using this size of a set for a television series is something that has never been encountered in Turkey. Therefore, together with the meticulously designed costumes and decors which complete the historical setting, *Filinta* becomes a highly innovative TV series by doing what has never been done in Turkey. So, the stylishness of the series becomes recognizable by the audiences at first sight.

Figure 5.9 : Galata and Pera districts in *Filinta*²⁰



Computer generated images also strongly contribute to the stylization of *Filinta*. In order to draw a nostalgic picture of Istanbul's past under the Ottoman reign, cityscapes that represent Karaköy harbour, Galata Tower, Hagias Sophia and its surrounding in the Historical Peninsula are created in the series by CGI effects. Visual effects are also dominantly used in the series while depicting other historical places like churches, interiors and exteriors of particular houses, Istanbul's mythical underground tunnels or crowds on the streets of the Pera district. Action scenes such as bombings, fires and gunfights are also created by means of visual effects which contribute to the particular visual style of the series.

²⁰ The still images are taken from the Youtube video, *Filinta 1. Bölüm* (TRT Televizyon 2014)

Figure 5.10 : Visual effects in *Filinta*²¹



Together with shot reverse shot sequences which are used to depict long dialogues and slow-motion sequences that enhance the tone of melodrama in particular scenes, visual effects create a stylish visual universe in *Filinta*. In this way, the series manages to generate a particular, recognizable look for itself which is highly innovative not only for the police procedural genre in Turkey but also for Turkish TV series in general.

5.6.2 National Elements

5.6.2.1 Turkishness as a supranational identity

Filinta bases its narrative on a nationalist discourse which is especially designed in accordance with the contemporary Neo-Ottoman, neoliberal and Islamic national values of the ‘new’ Turkey. However, the series also adopts certain elements of the official, Kemalist nationalism such as the glorification of Turkishness as a supranational identity, the sanctity of national borders and the Turkish flag as well as the xenophobic approach towards foreign nations. These foundational features continue to dominate the nationalist discourse of the series by being stripped of their secular connotations.

²¹ The still image is taken from the Youtube video, *Filinta 1. Bölüm* (TRT Televizyon 2014)

First of all, for being an ‘Ottoman’ police procedural, *Filinta* adopts a neo-Ottomanist approach. The Ottoman period is nostalgically depicted in almost every episode of the series. Apart from the Ottoman/Turkish flags that are seen on the streets, the Sultan’s signature hangs on the office of Gıyaseddin. The famous ‘Ottoman slap’²² is visualized in episode 3 by being performed by Gıyaseddin who smacks a criminal, immediately knocking him down. Together with depicting several historical landmarks of the Ottoman Empire in contemporary Istanbul, the series intends to create a glorified, nostalgic image of the Empire by adopting the nationalist discourse that is frequently disseminated by the JDP government.

Every episode of the series opens with the caption, “*Dünyayı adaletle yöneten Osmanlı ve onun torunları olan bu büyük milletin; adaleti sağlarken hayatını kaybeden aziz şehitlerinin hatırasına...*” (In memory of the Ottomans who administered the world justly, this great nation who are the grandchildren of the Ottomans and the precious martyrs who lost their lives in securing justice...) With this caption, the series embraces the redefined origin story of the nation and rebuilds the historical connection between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic by creating a historical as well as national continuity.

The culture and values of the Ottoman Empire are glorified on every occasion and represented as the ‘lost’ merits of the nation. The series always emphasizes that the Ottoman Empire was equal to Western civilizations in many aspects. The characters who are introduced as geniuses of science and technology are used as mediators to disseminate this message. Abdullah’s inventions turn into great markers to emphasize the scientific and cultural sophistication of the Ottoman Empire. As in episode 2, Abdullah regularly works on magnificent inventions. He describes one of his on-going projects as the vocal version of the telegraph by apparently defining the telephone. In his laboratory, a zoetrope is seen in the background.

In a similar manner, the teenage mathematical genius Fatih is introduced in episode 23. His cleverness is depicted in the series in an innovative manner. While the young boy looks at the grinding machine, his calculations about the working principles of the device

²² A fictional military tactic that is used in the Ottoman Empire for killing their enemies.

are drawn over its image in chalk. The captions on the images are written in Arabic alphabet in order to emphasize the scientific power of the Ottoman culture. Fatih works for the Ottoman Empire as an accountant and tax auditor. By means of putting Fatih in an active position as a civil servant, the series also underlines that the Ottoman Empire does not ignore real talents and always finds a way to use them effectively.

These qualities are asserted as the main reason behind the constant threat that the nation remains under. The series disseminates the message that if the Empire was not destroyed by the international powers it could be much more developed than the Western nations. This message is usually circulated by the conversations of the external enemies of the nation. For instance, in episode 36 Miloş, the serene highness, states that the Sultan pays particular attention to education by opening several schools all around the country to raise cultured, pious generations. For Miloş, this situation constitutes great danger because in twenty years, they might find themselves fighting against a literate generation which is raised according to the foundations of Islam and specialized in science and knowledge.

However, international powers are not only regarded as responsible for the disappearance of the Ottoman civilization. In episode 33, the series starts to comment on the political matters on the agenda of the public at the end of the 19th century. Two ordinary men are depicted sitting in a coffee shop and discussing over a newspaper column. They criticize the ideas of the Young Turks²³ as they are written in the article. For them, in the article, the Young Turks claim that the superiority of the West is hidden in their culture and in order to become a developed nation, ‘we’, the Ottomans, should change ‘our’ ways to embrace Western culture as well. One of the men asks in anger ‘who these, Young Turks think they are?’ The other one answers that they think they are more clever than the nation (*millet*) and they continue to drink their coffees by nodding in disagreement.

²³ Young Turks was the name of a political group which appeared in the second half 19th century in the Ottoman Empire. They were against the modernising conservatism of the Sultan Abdulhamid II. They believed that progress and prosperity could only be achieved through following the path of Western countries. Because of that, they supported constitutional monarchy for the survival of the Empire. (Fleet and Kasaba 2006, pp. 151-152)

By positioning itself against the Young Turks, the series also reflects a highly ideological position against the Kemalist foundational ideals of the Turkish Republic. The ideas and writings of the Young Turks were highly influential on Mustafa Kemal Atatürk when he was a schoolboy. By getting inspiration from the pro-Westernization ideals of the Young Turks, Mustafa Kemal trained himself in the military school by taking French lessons and reading the writers of French Enlightenment. His favourite poet was Namık Kemal who was considered as a leading intellectual of the Young Turks. (Fleet and Kasaba 2006, p. 153)

Mustafa Kemal later became a member of another organization called Committee of Union and Progress which was the successor of the Young Turks and played major role in the War of Independence of the Turkish Republic. (Ibid., pp. 153-156) Therefore, by criticizing the ideas of the Young Turks, *Filinta* positions itself against the Kemalist ideals on which the Turkish nation was built in the early 1920s. In this way, the series reinforces its support to the contemporary nationalist discourse and glorifies the neo-Ottomanist and Islamist ideals inscribed in the Turkish national identity of the 'new' Turkey.

In *Filinta*, the 'ideal' foundations of Turkish national identity are listed in episode 54 while the Sultan declares constitutional monarchy. In the decree, it is said that all Ottoman citizens are free to choose their own religion. But the religion of the Empire is Islam. Freedom of religion and rights of the non-Muslim communities are guaranteed by the Empire on the condition of not causing civil unrest and Turkish is determined as the official language of the state. Together with the glorification of neo-Ottomanism, these essentials outline the contemporary nationalist discourse of the 'new' Turkey. Embracing this definition, before going to a secret mission in episode 52, Mustafa, Ali and two other officers take an oath to fight for the continuity of the nation by putting their hands on the Koran and the Ottoman/Turkish flag.

These types of connections between 'Turkishness' and 'Islam' are frequently underlined in the series in order to stimulate nationalist feelings and build a connection between the Ottoman past and present. Before going into a battle, the characters recurrently pray to

Allah to give them the power to protect their nation against its enemies. Turkishness is represented as an all-embracing national identity for all Muslims. Characters with different ethnic background are proudly mentioned as the building blocks of the nation.

Beginning from episode 41, Ahmet, an Albanian soldier fighting for the Ottoman Empire becomes one of the main characters in the series. Hasan, a police officer who dies in episode 14, is introduced as a Cherkess Turk and is utilized to explain the tragedy of the Cherkess Turks who were exiled by the Russians after the Crimean War in the 1860s. In episode 43, Caucasian Turks are also represented through the story of the Caucasian leader Şeyh Bender. While portraying these characters, the musical heritage and language of these ethnicities are included in the episodes. Ahmet first appears in the series in order to help Mustafa and his colleagues to translate a text from Albanian. Hasan's story is combined with the Circassian song "Yistambilako" by Ayşenur Kolivar. Caucasian melodies are played in the background when the public greets Şeyh Bender in Karaköy harbour.

However, these ethnicities are chosen very carefully in order to avoid conflicts. For instance, instead of representing Greeks, Armenians or Kurds living in the Ottoman Empire, the series prefers to portray Albanians, Cherkess Turks and Caucasian Muslims. Religious populations like Jews and Alevis are also ignored by the series. In this sense, the multicultural, all-embracing foundation of the Ottoman Empire is only allocated to 'certain' Sunni-Muslims groups who do not have a conflicting history with the Turkish Republic. Therefore, *Filinta* ideologically chooses to ignore the cultural heritage of other religious and ethnic group in the Ottoman Empire. Religious and ethnic multiplicity which is celebrated by the series as a glorified characteristic of the Ottoman Empire is actually a carefully constructed diversity to create a nostalgically peaceful, all-embracing portrait of the Empire.

Besides, instead of being included in the narrative as ordinary citizens, non-Muslims are frequently depicted as the enemies of the Ottoman Empire which conspire against the unity and prosperity of the nation. These enemies, such as the Russians, Frenchs, Brits or Germans, threaten the nation through their embassies in the Ottoman Empire. Foreign

spies like the British agent 001 or German singer Anita von Wilhelm (Wilma Elles) infiltrate important institutions of the nation to destroy its unity. Christian members of the international Masonic council and their collaborators always work for damaging the peace and prosperity of the Empire.

However, the nation is not only threatened by external enemies like the hostile, foreign nations and their collaborators. Internal enemies such as Boris Zaharyas are also represented as their helpful hands who intend to bring the nation down from the inside. Legally established non-Muslim institutions like seminaries in the Arnavutköy neighbourhood and on the Princess Islands are depicted as organizations which train local children to become national enemies. In this way, internal threats are portrayed as equally dangerous as external threats and support the discourse of constant xenophobia.

Filinta not only maintains a feeling of constant threat through adopting a xenophobic approach. Opponents of the Ottoman Sultan like Young Turks are also depicted as being against the unity of the nation. According to the Sultan, the opponent critiques arise from the inferiority complex of the educated and cultivated segments in the Ottoman Empire against the rapid progress of the West. In episode 54, the Sultan defines this situation as an ‘abduction of reason’ and for his advisor, some newspapers contribute to this awful situation by provoking the public for civil unrest. The advisor questions if publishing articles like these can be considered as ‘freedom of press’. For him, it can only be defined as treason. The Sultan agrees with him and states that whereas people who are blamed for being illiterate stay calm and reasonable, the enlightened and intellectual segments of the public become clay in the hands of the evil. The Sultan declares that they would stand against these dangerous opponents as they stand against the external enemies of the state in a revengeful manner by directly looking at the camera.

As a result, *Filinta* proliferates the contemporary nationalist discourse of the ‘new’ Turkey by glorifying nationalist, neo-Ottomanist and Islamist values. The Ottoman Empire is represented as an all-embracing, multicultural nation in the series. Nationalist symbols are used to suggest that ‘carefully chosen’ ethnic and religious identities are united under the roof of ‘Turkishness’ in the Empire. Patriotism is frequently emphasized

in the series through the images of the Turkish flag, usage of military marches on the soundtrack and glorification of militarist markers like making formal salutes or martyrdom.

National feelings are encouraged by the depiction of the Turks as an everlasting nation. In episode 52, Sultan Mehmet emphasizes that even if the Ottoman Empire falls, the nation would not surrender to higher powers. People would fight back against their enemies at the cost of their lives to build a new nation. In this way, the series gives direct references to the War of Independence and the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. But Sultan Mehmet also adds that history would never forgive those who contribute to the fall of the Empire. By means of these words, the series also criticizes the denial of the Ottoman heritage by the Kemalist elites who built Turkish national identity on secular, Westernized and anti-Ottomanist ideals in the early 1920s. Therefore, the national identity that is meticulously described in *Filinta* directly reflect the values and ideals of the ‘new’ Turkey under the administration of JDP by disguising behind the Ottoman imaginary.

5.6.2.2 Representation of Islamic figures and practices

Islamic figures, practices and references are dominantly present in the narrative of *Filinta*. The first episode opens with the reading of a section from the Koran, *Surah an-Nisa*, which puts the presence and judgement of Allah above anything else and informs the believers that if they give false testimony Allah will know and punish them. These kinds of Islamic references continue in the following episodes. The sound of call to prayer is regularly heard in the background. The characters recurrently perform daily prayers, praying to Allah or saying Allah’s name before taking new steps. Names of Islamic thinkers like Mevlana and caliphs like Hz. Ömer are frequently mentioned in the daily conversations of the characters.

For instance, in episode 19, before confronting a perpetrator, Gıyaseddin performs an ablution and says ‘*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*’ and ‘*ya Allah Bismillah*’. In episode 43, while Ali points his gun at an assassin the camera especially focuses on his ring on which

the phrase ‘Allah sees’ is written in Arabic alphabet. This ring is regularly emphasized in the next episodes as if it gave Ali superpowers. Many more of these examples could be given since Islamic references dominate the narrative of *Filinta* by constructing an Islamic imaginary.

Figure 5.11 : Islamic imaginary in *Filinta*²⁴



Apart from building the narrative on the Islamic imaginary, Islamic references are also included in the series to express the idea that Islam is a foundation of Turkish national identity. In episode 43, the Sultan defines himself as the Islamic leader of all Muslims around the world since he has inherited this duty from the prophet Muhammed. In this way, the series particularly emphasizes that beyond being practiced privately, Islam is something that defines the foundation of the state and its institutions which are administered in accordance with Islamic rules.

Accordingly, Islamic references are used in *Filinta* to stimulate nationalist feelings. The characters frequently pray to Allah to give them strength to fight against the enemies of the state. As in episode 45, martyrdom is usually depicted as a holy status which is represented together with Islamic funeral rituals in a melodramatic manner. On different occasions, the characters recite the *kalima shahadah* as they think that they are about to

²⁴ The still image is taken from the Youtube video, *Filinta 1. Bölüm* (TRT Televizyon 2014)

be killed in action for the sake of their country. In this sense, *Filinta* builds its narrative on Islamic imaginary to a great extent, not only to depict Islamic practices as everyday activities but also to trigger nationalist feelings and underline that Islam is a foundation of Turkish national identity.

However, despite being a dominantly Islamist series, the headscarf continues to be a problematic issue for *Filinta*. Most of the leading female characters such as Lara, Süreyya, Farah and Ferihanur appear uncovered both in public and private life. Female antagonists like Azize and Anita who get a lot of broadcasting time in the series are also uncovered. In *Filinta*, only Leyla and Gıyaseddin's wife are seen wearing a headscarf throughout the episodes. In this way, as in most Turkish TV series, when the issue comes to the headscarf *Filinta* hesitates to bring covered women into the forefront and prefers to give most of its female characters a secular look. Therefore, in *Filinta*, Islamic discourse is mostly proliferated through the dialogues and performances of the male characters whereas uncovered female characters keep the balance between the Islamic and secular imaginaries.

5.6.2.3 Representation of sexuality and public morality

By building its narrative on the Islamic imaginary and adopting a nationalist discourse in support of the JDP's definition of the 'new' Turkey, *Filinta* approaches the issues of sexuality and public morality with caution. As a consequence of the influence of the Islamic imaginary, the characters never drink alcohol. In episode 2, the series especially portrays a Muslim character rejecting the offer of alcoholic drinks by stating that drinking alcohol is sin and haram for him. In episode 43 Cemil Efendi, one of the enemies of the state, drinks wine in the office of Kenan Miloş. However, he is not actually seen taking a sip but only represented as holding the glass which is completely blurred. Therefore, since drinking alcohol does appear neither as a common nor as an 'acceptable' practice in *Filinta*, the series does not have any problems with RTÜK laws concerning alcohol consumption.

Sexuality, another significant matter which is perceived as a potential threat to public morality by RTÜK, does not appear as a problematic issue in *Filinta* either. Intimacy between male and female characters is highly limited in the series. Unmarried couples are rarely seen touching each other and they never kiss on the lips. In episode 4, when Mustafa and Lara (Damla Aslanalp) meet in front of the precinct they show an example of how romantic relationships should be conducted. Mustafa says that he would like to see Lara again and he will reach her through her nanny which is the suitable way to manage their affair. In episode 8, they are seen walking together in a park while the nanny monitors them from behind. When Lara takes Mustafa's hand out of excitement the nanny gets alarmed and warns them by clearing her throat. Lara removes her hand in panic and Mustafa looks at her with adoration. When they depart they politely and timidly nod at each other.

When the relationship between Lara and Mustafa progresses they are seen sitting in a pastry shop, talking about Hasan's death and holding hands in episode 14. However, they live their most intimate moments when Lara dies in his arms in episode 27 by calling each other 'my love' or 'sweetheart' when Lara passes out and touches Mustafa's lips. So, the realization of the fact that they would never be together as a married couple brings them closer in their last moments. But this intimacy is not carried further. In *Filinta*, even married couples do not go further than holding hands and looking at each other's eyes with compassion in order to express their love.

So, the series challenges the codes of public morality neither through depicting the intimate moments of the characters nor through their drinking habits. As a consequence, *Filinta* is never penalized by RTÜK for offending the structure of the Turkish family or the codes of public morality. Besides, by representing its police characters as pious and good Muslims, respecting the codes of public morality in their relationships with women, *Filinta* gives its own response to the global conventions of police procedural genre and creates conventional, Islamic police figures with certain characteristic features of their own.

5.6.2.4 Representation of class dynamics

Class dynamics are not represented in *Filinta* in a conventional way. As it is set in the Ottoman period, the series does not apply contemporary national stereotypes of lower and upper class characters. In the Ottoman Empire, the class system was highly different than in contemporary Turkey. Administrative and military occupations played a great role in separating the people who administer from the people who are administered. As Zürcher explains, people who belonged to the ruling elite were strictly separated from the mass population and had either military or religious duties to keep the Ottoman civilization at its best. The interaction between the ruling elites and the rest of the population was provided by certain channels such as fraternities (*tarikats*), merchants, bankers and *ulema*, religious scholars who were responsible of keeping the moral order through education and justice system. But each group knew their own place in society and respected the boundaries between different groups. (Zürcher 2004, pp. 11-13)

Filinta manages to emphasize this difference on certain occasions. For instance, in episode 20, the Sultan is seen outside the palace in order to observe the needs of the public in disguise. During his tour, he enters the house of a sick man whose wife and children live in bad conditions. When they leave the house the Sultan directly orders his grand vizier to send a doctor to the house and take care of the children as if they were his own. The living conditions of the family constitute a great contrast with the characters in administrative and military positions like Gıyaseddin and Mustafa. In a similar way, in episode 4, Gıyaseddin visits a random house whose lights are on in the middle of the night and finds himself in a comparable situation.

Filinta depicts the characters in administrative positions as the protectors of the helpless people who live outside the premises of the palace. Even though the series do not represent the living conditions of these characters extravagantly, their regular encounters with poverty separate their lifestyles from the 'lower classes'. People who try to survive in difficult conditions are depicted as having less food on their table or living in unhygienic, poorly decorated, murky houses. The characters in administrative positions are always properly dressed, live in beautifully decorated houses with a lot of sunshine

and have proper food on their tables but avoid extravagance which is usually associated with living ‘Westernized’ lives.

The ‘extravagant’ people who are mostly depicted in collaboration with shady characters like Boris attend his ‘Westernized’ dinner parties or dances and are seen waltzing in very chic cloths. Playing an instrument is also utilized to symbolize the difference between ordinary, Ottoman and Muslim characters like Mustafa and the people who live in extravagance. For instance, Boris’s daughter, Lara, plays the piano like her father. In episode 51, Akbar Eyyam who is the American representative of the Masonic council in the U.S. is depicted as playing a ‘modern’, jazzy tune on the piano as well. Contrary to these characters, Muslim characters who live more traditional lives play local instruments instead of the piano. For instance, in episode 2, Mustafa is depicted as playing a Sufi tune on the reed flute. In episode 44, Leyla’s nanny is portrayed as playing a traditional tune on the oud²⁵.

Consequently, it can be stated that *Filinta* does not use stereotypical images of lower and upper class characters in order to emphasize their differences. However, certain symbols are placed in its narrative in an attempt to underline the diverse lifestyles and social status of the characters. These differences are not depicted in the series as clashing but they highlight the multicultural social environment of the Ottoman Empire, helpfulness of the administrative classes and contrasting features of Westernized and traditional lifestyles. By means of these images, the series achieves to draw a nostalgic, pluralistic and equitable portrait of the Ottoman Empire and support its neo-Ottomanist approach.

5.6.2.5 The conception of family

The family is utilized in *Filinta* as a theme to increase the tone of melodrama in the narrative. On the one hand, traditional family values are promoted in the series to a great extent. For instance, in episode 2, Gıyaseddin’s family life is depicted in detail. Mustafa wrestles with Gıyaseddin’s sons on the floor as a part of the family while Gıyaseddin

²⁵ Oud is stringed instrument which is frequently used in the Middle Eastern region to perform traditional music.

reads a book. Women of the house who are covered in front of men bring food to them. In this way, whereas women are conventionally portrayed as being responsible for running the house in passive roles, men are seen spending time bounding with other men or cultivating themselves intellectually.

Marriage is promoted in different episodes as a duty of men to continue their bloodline. In episode 2, Gıyaseddin's wife talks about marriage by emphasizing that Mustafa cannot stay a bachelor forever since he could be a great father. She implies that if Mustafa has an intention to get married and raise a family she could find a suitable match for him. In episode 14, even a street seller makes a comment and tells that it is not appropriate for Mustafa to stay single forever. In episode 28, Gıyaseddin gets involved in matchmaking and advises Mustafa to get married to Leyla and tells his wife that if something happens to him his dying wish is the marriage of Mustafa and Leyla. In order to carry out Gıyaseddin's will, Mustafa finally gets married to Leyla after an Islamic marriage ceremony in episode 37.

On the other hand, despite being promoted as necessary acts, getting married and raising a family are represented in *Filinta* as lost causes because the internal and external enemies of the nation do not only threaten the unity of the Ottoman Empire but also the institution of the family itself. In episode 27, Gıyaseddin's wife explains to Leyla that Mustafa, Ali and Gıyaseddin are married to their weapons before their wives and they walk around by carrying their shrouds with them. Since they always put the prosperity of the nation over their own happiness their families have a secondary importance. So, by keeping them busy with state affairs, the enemies of the nation do not only harm the nation but the structure of the family as well.

Besides, through the story of the lost children of the fellowship, the series emphasizes that the Ottoman family is also under the constant threat of external enemies. As it is revealed in episode 27, the warriors that are trained by the masonic council as members of the fellowship are actually the kidnapped children of Ottoman families. Throughout the seasons, children of the fellowship discover their actual families and their tragic stories are told in a melodramatic manner. For instance, in episode 39, Farah finds out

that Davut Paşa is her real father just before Davut Paşa gets killed in action. In episode 45, the leader of the fellowship, Celal, appears to be the son of the next head of the intelligence service, Hulusi Paşa. But Celal is shot and killed by Mustafa right after he learns the identity of his real family.

By means of these stories, the Ottoman family is represented as a broken institution which is targeted by the enemies of the state. In this way, the series emphasizes that the enemies target the new, young generation of the Empire and intend to destroy the future of the nation. The constant national threat also keeps the characters busy and prevents them from building constructive relationships with their families. Therefore, the family is included in the narrative of *Filinta* as an element which is utilized to proliferate the nationalist discourse of the series and support its melodramatic tone.

5.6.2.6 The conception of the neighbourhood (*mahalle*)

The neighbourhood is a highly significant element to emphasize the community relations, traditional values and codes of public morality in Turkish TV series. However, in an interesting manner, the neighbourhood is not particularly used as a national element in *Filinta*. Certain locations like Galata, Pera and Karaköy are mentioned in the series and vivid urban life in Istanbul is portrayed through its setting. The family houses of the characters are also occasionally represented without giving reference to their outer surrounding. But neighbourhood life is never depicted in detail in *Filinta*.

According to Işık Tamdoğan-Abel, many people defined themselves through where they lived in the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, *mahalle* (neighbourhood) was very important for identification. In court cases, neighbourhood spokesmen frequently used the possessive noun, 'we' while talking about their neighbours. For Tamdoğan, this community structure created an ambivalent platform in the Ottoman Empire. On the one hand, the 'we' feeling which was created in the neighbourhoods resulted in the exclusion of 'others'. On the other hand, neighbourhoods proliferated tolerance towards diversity and differences. (Tamdoğan Abel 2002, pp. 66-70)

In accordance with this definition, instead of concentrating on a particular place, *Filinta* prefers to imagine the Ottoman Empire as a giant neighbourhood by means of adopting a highly nationalist discourse. Gıyaseddin, Mustafa, Ali and their colleagues are depicted as being responsible for securing the lives of everyone living in the Empire. They regularly pass through some neighbourhood-like places and interfere in certain situations in the family houses or street fights. Gıyaseddin's helping hand to the people in need is recurrently emphasized on many occasions. In this way, under the fair administration of the Sultan, the Ottoman Empire is portrayed as a prosperous place in which all residents from different ethnic and religious background live in peace and solidarity unless they are provoked by the enemies of the state. Therefore, community relations, traditional values and codes of public morality are highlighted in the narrative of *Filinta* by the depiction of the Ottoman Empire as a place of shared values and sensations, resembling a giant neighbourhood.

5.6.2.7 Melodramatic modality

The melodramatic modality is constantly infused into the narrative of *Filinta* in order to encourage national feelings and separate the pure and national from the malicious and traitorous. By using this separation, the series intends to tell the epic story of the Ottoman Empire as a constant struggle against the 'international' powers that work against its development and prosperity. In this way, from a neo-Ottomanist point of view, *Filinta* aims to create a continuous nationalist link between the Ottoman Empire and contemporary Turkish national identity and to promote its story as the heroic tale of nation building. Stylistic elements like dissolves, slow motions, close-ups and the soundtrack are used in order to set the mood of the sequences and highlight the melodrama.

Glorification of the 'sacred' national flag frequently triggers the infusion of the melodramatic modality into the narrative in a nationalistic manner. For instance, in episode 37, on the way back to Istanbul from a victorious mission, a folded Ottoman/Turkish flag is unfurled by the Ottoman princess behind a carriage. While the flag waves an old military anthem starts to play as the soundtrack and the words of the song, '*ey şanlı ordu, ey şanlı asker*' (o! glorious army, o! glorious soldier), are heard in

the background. The song continues when the flag is seen being waved behind Mustafa from a different camera angle in a melodramatic manner in order to emphasize his victory over the traitors.

In a similar manner, in episode 43, on the site of the assassination attempt on Şeyh Bender, when Ali sees a body lying on the ground, holding a Turkish flag, the same military anthem starts to play in the background once again. The blood on the flag is shown in close-up in the sequence. Ali's approach to the body is melodramatically depicted in slow-motion. He very slowly takes the flag from the ground, cleans it and holds it very tight. Dissolves connect Ali's image to the images of the fighting Caucasian Muslims on battlefields. The anthem continues to play when flashbacks that depict Caucasian Muslims on their horsebacks, waving the Turkish flag, images of the Sultan who greets the public while walking on the streets and Mustafa's heroic moments are connected with dissolves. The sequence is closed when Ali hangs the Turkish flag in a higher place in slow motion and states that as long as Allah gives them the strength, the Turkish flag would never be seen on the ground. He kisses his fist as a final act. His image overlaps with the image of waving the Turkish flag.

The death of heroic figures like Gıyaseddin and the Sultan is also depicted in a highly melodramatic manner. In episode 28, when Gıyaseddin is shot by several arrows in his chest it takes a lot of time for him to die. When he is discovered by Mustafa and Ali he starts to give them one last lecture in his dying moments. Ali and Mustafa are seen crying beside him while sad music is heard on the background. He starts to recite *the kalima shahadah* at his last gasp. His voice is mixed with the sobbing of Ali. Gıyaseddin prostrates as if he was performing a prayer when he dies. This sequence, which has an extremely melodramatic tone, lasts almost 7 minutes.

The melodrama that is built up through Gıyaseddin's death continues in the following episode. Funeral prayer is heard before Gıyaseddin's burial in episode 29. Images of Istanbul's famous mosques such Hagias Sophia and the Blue Mosque are shown together with the sound of the prayer. Eventually, the prayer turns into an Islamic hymn when Gıyaseddin's coffin is carried by Mustafa and Ali to the cemetery in slow motion.

Dissolves connect the images of sad faces performing their duties like committing the body to the ground to flashbacks portraying Gıyaseddin's heroic moments. Some religious motives like whirling dervishes are also depicted. The sequence lasts until the hymn is over, approximately ten minutes.

The same melodramatic approach recurs in depicting the Sultan's assassination in episode 47. The *Sela* prayer which is said before the funeral prayer is heard in the background at the last moments of the Sultan. The struggling of the Sultan is depicted in close up, slow motion and out of focus. Details like showing his fez falling on the ground or his grabbing the assassin's arm in pain make the situation more dramatic. Images of the Sultan as a whirling dervish overlap the image of his suffering face and these images are connected to Gıyaseddin's smiling face with dissolves. At the end, the Sultan recites the *kalima shahadah* and gives in.

As it is seen in these examples, the melodramatic modality is persistently used in the series in order to stimulate nationalist feelings, mark the heroism of the characters who give their lives for the nation and distinguish the good from the evil. *Filinta* utilizes the melodramatic modality to disseminate and practice its own version of nation building which differs from Kemalist nation building. Using melodramatic modality as a tool to address nationalist sensations, *Filinta* aims to rebuild this connection and create a new national identity for the 'new' Turkey by highlighting Islamic and neo-Ottomanist motives.

Filinta is a Turkish TV series which describes itself as an Ottoman police procedural. The series is set in Istanbul in the second half of the 19th century under the Ottoman reign. It combines the conventions of the police procedural genre with historical drama and is inspired by multiple local and global resources such as other popular genres in Turkish televisions like the soap opera, crime series and political thriller. By portraying historical police figures in an urban centre, referring to dominant themes such as law and order as well as freemasonry and using a conventional visual style like excessive stylishness,

Filinta creates the familiar setting of a police procedural in a global sense, especially in the first season.

National elements that are embedded in the narrative, such as the representation of Turkishness as a supranational identity as well as Islamic practices, keep the balance between international influences and the conventions of Turkish TV series. *Filinta* adopts an Islamist and neo-Ottomanist nationalist discourse while depicting its characters and their worldviews. It conforms to the national narrative of the ‘new’ Turkey as it has been constructed by the JDP government. In this way, the series contributes to the on-going nation building process since 2002 and utilizes the national elements which are inscribed in the narrative in order to disseminate this newly established nationalist discourse.

The xenophobic approach to international powers which is a significant feature of the ‘new’ national narrative of Turkey gives the series the opportunity to keep the tension between the ‘foreign’ and the ‘local’ alive. Apart from representing Ottoman/Turkish characters individually conflicting with their American and British rivals, *Filinta* underlines that the Ottoman Empire has to constantly struggle against foreign threats. By using the melodramatic modality, the series uses this perpetual threat to tell the drama of nation building as an epic story and encourage nationalist feelings. The increasing nationalist tone and epic narrative cause the series to partially desert the police procedural formula and travel to the domain of the political thriller, especially in the second season. However, through these intertextual combinations, the series achieves to become more involved in the Turkish context by anachronistically referring to contemporary Turkish politics while depicting political conspiracies during the Ottoman period. In this way, *Filinta* creates its own national response to the police procedural genre and harmonizes global influences with local dynamics.

5.7 CONCLUSION

Contemporary Turkish police procedurals are formed by bringing the global conventions of the genre and the national elements together. Keeping the balance between those ‘foreign’ and ‘local’ features plays a significant role in determining the success of the

series and securing their broadcasting agreements with the channels. For that reason, in order to endure longer in the extremely competitive television environment in Turkey, successful Turkish police procedurals pay particular attention to effectively manage the tension between the 'foreign' and the 'local' which is inscribed in the formation of the genre in the Turkish context. In an attempt to achieve this, they localize the global conventions of the genre by offering accustomed police figures, familiar settings and meaningful social and political contexts while narrating the dominant themes of police procedurals. Additionally, they utilize the national elements that are discussed in the third and fourth chapters to give a 'Turkish' touch to the narratives.

As previously explained, national elements are always in the making because they are not exempt from social, political and cultural transformations. They change parallel to the shifting nationalist discourses in society and widen their range of references. By means of this change, national elements do not only become up-to-date but also their expanded coverage of different nationalist discourses allow the series to address as many audiences as possible from different backgrounds. However, the series do not make use of national elements in uniform ways. Their ideological positions influence their approach and narration of these national reference points as well as their localisation of global generic conventions. The analyses made in this chapter reveal how influential these positions are for Turkish police procedurals in localizing global conventions, in determining their approach to the 'local' dynamics and in producing their own discourses about crime.

In terms of localizing the global generic conventions of police procedurals, the nationalist discourses that dominate the narratives of the series play a significant role. For instance, whereas the dominant Kemalist discourse that is adapted by *Kanıt* leads the series to create an upper middle class, intellectual police figure who strictly follows police procedures, the ultra-nationalistic, conservative discourse of *Arka Sokaklar* allows the series to form more patriotic police figures with traditional, middle class lifestyles. In a similar manner, even the urban settings that are chosen by Turkish police procedurals reveal their ideological positions. *Filinta* which is conveniently created to foster the 'new' national narrative of Turkey from a neo-Ottomanist point of view prefers the 'old' Ottoman capital, Istanbul as setting. In comparison to this choice, *Behzat Ç.* which intends

to criticize the foundational elements of official, Kemalist nationalism as well as contemporary governmental politics is deliberately set in the republican capital, Ankara, to profoundly comment on the trauma of nation building in the early republican years. Apart from these choices, even the narration of major themes of the police procedural genre such as the ‘law and order rhetoric’ or ‘distrust in the legal system’ is affected by the dominant nationalist discourses of the series.

Besides, along with the global conventions of the genre, the representations of national elements are influenced by the ideological worldviews that are reflected from the series. For instance, as a consequence of its conservative and ultra-nationalist approach, *Arka Sokaklar* does not only approach contemporary social and political issues by creating an alarmist discourse of ‘national threat’ but also draws a more traditional portrait of the nation while representing the lifestyles of the characters. By taking this discourse of *Arka Sokaklar* one step further, in an attempt to support the nation building processes of the JDP government, *Filinta* furnishes this ultra-nationalist discourse with Islamic and neo-Ottomanist symbols and glorifies the Ottoman merits as the ‘original’, long lost values of the Turks. By means of this glorification, the series presents its aspiration for constructing a much more conservative, Islamist and patriotic identity for the nation in every segment of life.

In contrast with these discourses, by embracing the official, Kemalist nationalist discourse, *Kanıt* forms a republican, secular identity for its characters. This identity does not only affect the outlook of the characters or the approach of the series to Islamic figures and practices but also leads the series to construct a much more uniform diegetic world, resembling the early Turkish police procedurals on TRT in the 1990s. However, from another perspective, the foundational features of republican Turkey that *Kanıt* vigorously embraces are deconstructed in *Behzat Ç.* with an attempt to attract the attention to their banality. Everything that implicitly points at the national is represented in this series with particular twists in an attempt to strengthen its critical approach.

Additionally, the ideological preferences of the series play a significant role in constructing their discourses about crime which build the bases of forming the police

procedural genre in Turkey. In accordance with the nationalist discourses that they adopted, the series decide on whether to be more action or procedure oriented. Turkish police procedurals like *Arka Sokaklar* and *Filinta* chose to be more action and intrigue oriented for building their narratives on the discourse of national threat and patriotism. Instead of paying particular attention to procedures, the urgency of the crimes that are committed against the unity of the state lead the police officers in these series act more impulsively. However, a forensic police procedural like *Kanıt*, which intends to glorify the power of the Turkish police officers by emphasizing their efficient usage of Western technologies and methods, prefers to be more procedure oriented by revealing every process of forensic analysis. Crimes that are committed in this series do not have a particular target but surround the city of Istanbul, causing the destruction of families and friendships. Different from all these, *Behzat Ç.* keeps the balance between representing action and focusing on police procedures, shifting between those two options regarding the nature of the crimes. When the episode focuses on an ordinary crime the series prefers to be more procedure oriented. However, if the crime that is committed points at a possible collaboration between a governmental institution and an underground organization, *Behzat Ç.*'s narrative gives weight to action. So, similar to *Arka Sokaklar* and *Filinta*, when the crime concerns the state, either by targeting its unity or signalling its criminalization, the urgency of the situation requires action.

Consequently, every Turkish police procedural creates its own response to the genre by not only harmonizing the global and local ingredients but also by interpreting both from their own ideological point of views. The perpetual tension between these two concepts is always kept active. In some cases, this tension is materialized in the narratives through representing the characters conflicting with 'Western' police figures or 'Western' methods of policing. By depicting local police officers defeating or overcoming these 'foreign' interferences, the series symbolically glorify their success to adapt a global television genre like police procedural on a textual level. As a result of this formulation, the series achieve to become innovative, 'original' works rather than mere imitations of their Western counterparts and emphasize that 'Turks' can create police procedurals of their own as long as the constant interplay between the global and the local is kept alive.

E. CONCLUSION

Television in Turkey has always been in close contact with the forces of globalisation. This connection has started with the high number of imports from Western countries, especially from the United States in the 1970s, and continued in later years by changing shape. Many different countries like Turkey underwent the same process of representing ‘global’ and ‘local’ images side by side during that period. Besides, as Sinclair et al. explains, even the future regional leaders like Latin America, India or Hong Kong were among the earlier victims of cultural imperialism because of their extreme importation of U.S. films and TV series in the 1970s. (Sinclair et. al. 1996, p. 13)

When television industries found the financial means to produce domestic television programmes which address the expectations and interests of the local audiences more conveniently, a new tendency appeared in television cultures all around the world. Sinclair et al. explain that the U.S. generic models started to be indigenized by local television industries for different purposes. In an attempt to become the best in the international practice, decrease foreign influence or create diversity in television programmes, local television industries formed their own version of the U.S. generic models. (Ibid.)

According to Sinclair et al., what appeared at the end of this indigenization process was not the passive homogenization of television programmes all around the world but rather their heterogenization. In Australia, Canada and the UK, the U.S. genre conventions were assimilated and the programmes had their own look and sensation. U.S. genres such as MGM musicals or soap operas were adapted in the rest of the world “beyond recognition in a dynamic process of cultural syncretism.” (Ibid.)

Turkish police procedural TV series appeared as a consequence of this global phenomenon. Various factors played a significant role in seizing this international tendency and influenced the formation of the genre in the Turkish context. The main intention of this thesis was to understand this formation by approaching Turkish police

procedurals as dynamic products, caught up in the interplay between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’. Without criticizing these series for being incompetent to properly appropriate the ‘Western’ conventions of the genre or trying to understand their formation by separating them from ‘foreign’ influences, the thesis aimed at understanding them in their multiplicity.

To achieve this intention, the thesis adopted a discursive approach to television genres by getting inspiration from Jason Mittell (Mittell 2001). Mittell’s approach which is broadly discussed in the introduction gave the thesis the opportunity to understand Turkish police procedurals as culturally designed, changeable products and to comment on the different details that have an impact on the formation of the police procedural genre in Turkey. By concentrating on various contextual instances such as the development of Turkish television broadcasting as an extension of nation building processes the thesis intended to expose the issues that circulate around the genre by interfering in its formation.

In an attempt to articulate on as many instances as possible and situate the police procedural genre in a wider context, as Mittell suggested (Ibid.), the thesis touched on various issues that play a significant role in the indigenization of the police procedural in Turkey. The first chapter concentrated on nation building processes in the early republican period in the 1920s and introduced concepts of Westernization, secularization and the idea of progress which constituted the basis of Turkish national identity. The chapter discussed the conception of the West both as ‘threat’ and ‘progress’ in the republican national narrative and how this conception had an impact on programming in the early years of television broadcasting. By means of this discussion, the thesis created a platform to question the hesitant approaches to the police procedural genre in Turkey in following chapters.

The first chapter also provided the background information on the dominance of official, Kemalist nationalism on television in Turkey from its inception until the end of the 1990s. The chapter explained how television programmes were strictly designed in accordance with the republican ideals by adopting a distant and formal tone on public television channel TRT and how this tone changed with the establishment of private TV channels

in the 1990s. However, the chapter defined this change as a momentary liberation and clarified how the official, Kemalist nationalist discourse maintained its dominance on the design of television programmes during that era. Through this background information, the chapter also introduced the banal representations of official nationalism in Turkey such as the constant reproduction of ‘Turkishness’ as supranational identity and its secularist imaginary. Since these representations determined the iconographical and ideological design of early Turkish police procedurals, the chapter was very useful to understand the national context of the era in which these series were born and built upon.

The discussion was broadened in the second chapter with a concentration on the concepts of ‘globalisation’ and ‘localisation’. After introducing foundational discussions surrounding these two concepts such as media imperialism, homogenization and Americanization, the chapter affirms that the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ are interactive terms which cannot be studied separately. These two concepts do not only transform but also define each other since the local is the domesticated or indigenized form of the global. As it is profoundly debated in this chapter, global television forms are appropriated by local television industries and return to the global arena in heterogenized manners.

In order to closely look at the impact of the processes of globalisation and localisation on the Turkish television industry, this chapter further commented on the micro instances in which these processes are activated. By elaborating on localisation practices like dubbing, retitling and publicity, the chapter revealed how imported police procedurals were localized in Turkey, especially in the 1970s and 1980s. In this way, the thesis managed to articulate on the ‘proper’ vocabulary that was particularly created for imported police procedurals to restore the slang words that were used in these series. Since this vocabulary was among the most noticeable features of public television broadcasting in Turkey and was further used in early Turkish police procedurals, it was accepted as a significant cultural contribution to the discursive formation of the genre in Turkey.

Along with discussing the heterogenization of television contents under the mutual influence of globalisation and localisation, the chapter also drew attention to the commodification of television systems all around the world. By getting inspiration from

Ien Ang (Ang 1996, p. 135), the chapter affirmed the idea that television channels in different countries offer similar routines of television schedules and as a consequence broadcast localized versions of the same genres. This global phenomenon is discussed in the chapter through the intense globalisation of Turkish television industry in the 1990s. The introduction of concepts such as audience measurement and competition were explained together with the role that imported police procedurals played in this process. In this way, the chapter achieved to reveal the popularity of police procedural genre in Turkey and relate the appearance of early Turkish police procedurals to the new conditions of survival in this commodified television environment.

In an attempt to elaborate more on this defining moment for Turkish police procedurals, the third chapter majorly focused on the localisation of the police procedural genre in the 1990s. The chapter began with giving some background information about the historical development of Turkish TV series in order to clarify the practice of different genres before and after the process of intense globalisation. By criticizing the scholarly works that define Turkish variations of the global television genres as ‘authentically’ local formations, the thesis strengthens its approach to Turkish police procedurals as simultaneously local and global products.

Alternatively, the chapter utilized the concepts that are used to define Turkish TV series in the 1990s by separating them from the influences of the global and suggested a list of national elements that play a significant role in the localisation of the police procedural genre. Since these concepts are closely connected to the dominant nationalist discourses of the period, the chapter also mentioned the major nationalist tendencies in the 1990s. By means of discussing these discourses and the national elements under their influence, the chapter pointed at the banal markers of the ‘national’ in Turkish TV series, including the police procedurals. In order to offer a broadened context about this issue, the chapter also underlined the storytelling practices that television producers borrowed from Yeşilçam filmmakers and suggested that these practices are also among the elements that banally address to particular national sensations.

After setting this background, the chapter deepened its discussion on this defining period for Turkish police procedurals and revealed how early Turkish police procedurals like *İz Peşinde* are designed by appropriating the global generic conventions and reflecting the national elements at the same time. In order to articulate as much information as possible about the genre, the chapter also focused on behind the scene stories of these early Turkish police procedurals. This concentration provided the necessary context to understand the aspirations and ambitions that motivated the producers of these series. Their statements concerning their own productions were considered among the key enunciations that contributed to the discursive formation of the genre in the Turkish context. The ambitions of the producers to create Hollywood-like police procedurals and their hidden awareness of the impossibility of this ambition situate these series right in the middle of the power dynamics between Turkey and its ‘Western’ other. By revealing this connection, the thesis achieved to reflect another aspect of the intrinsic tension between the ‘foreign’ and the ‘local’ that is embedded in the formation of police procedural genre in Turkey.

With the intent to carry the discussion to a more contemporary level, the fourth chapter aimed at questioning the same issues together with the changing social, political, economic and cultural dynamics in Turkey in the 2000s. By particularly concentrating on the nation building processes that were activated under the administration of the JDP governments, the chapter explained the ‘new’ national narrative of the ‘new’ Turkey. The rising neoliberalism, neo-Ottomanism and Islamism were considered among the main driving forces behind the dissemination of this new national narrative. On the one hand, the chapter concentrated on the political consequences of this dissemination such as the increasing conservatism and authoritarianism in Turkey together with their influence on the narratives of Turkish TV series. On the other hand, it focused on the economic outcomes of these processes, resulting in the strong expansion of the Turkish TV series industry.

Since the changing national narrative radically affected the representation of national elements in contemporary Turkish TV series, giving this contextual background carried great importance for the thesis. Together with the discussion of how national elements have transformed under the influence of the nation building processes of the JDP, the

chapter prepared the ground to comment on how contemporary Turkish police procedurals struggle to keep the balance between appropriating the ‘foreign’ conventions of the genre and harmonizing them with national elements.

The chapter especially underlined how significant this balance is for the survival of Turkish police procedurals in the extremely competitive television environment. Apart from many other factors, keeping the balance between the ‘foreign’ generic conventions of the genre and ‘local’ dynamics plays a significant role in the success of the series in the domestic market. Turkish police procedurals which miss the chance of gathering the ‘proper’ ingredients together are frequently criticized for being an ‘imitation’ of the Western, mostly American, model rather than being an ‘original’ work.

Inspired by Nurdan Gürbilek’s theory on the Western model and its copy (Gürbilek 2003), the chapter suggested that Turkish police procedurals can be defined as always on the move between being an imitation of ‘the Western original’ and becoming ‘original’, unique and interesting. However, the chapter also underlined that this movement is not an either/or situation. The Western and non-Western elements coexist in Turkish police procedurals and this coexistence recurrently stimulates the tension between the ‘foreign’ and the ‘local’ which is embedded in the very foundation of the genre in the Turkish context. Turkish police procedurals regularly reposition themselves against their ‘Western counterparts’ as a consequence of this tension which does not only influence the narratives of the series but also their production processes.

After suggesting that Turkish police procedurals create their own responses to the genre as a consequence of these delicate dynamics, the thesis concentrated on the meanings that are reflected from the texts. By following Jason Mittell’s advice on creating an interpretive approach for analysing television texts (Mittell 2001), the fifth chapter mainly examined four contemporary Turkish police procedurals that are *Arka Sokaklar* (Backstreets, Kanal D, 2006-), *Kanıt* (The Evidence, Kanal D, 2010-2013), *Behzat Ç.: Bir Ankara Polisiyesi* (Behzat Ç.: An Ankara Police Procedural, Star TV, 2010-2013) and *Filinta* (Flintlock, TRT 1, 2014-2016).

In these examinations, the chapter particularly dwelled on the localisation of global generic conventions and their harmonization with national elements. As a consequence of these analysis, the chapter pointed out that every Turkish police procedural created its own response to the genre by bringing the ‘foreign’ and the ‘local’ elements in their own ‘unique’ manners. The nationalist discourses that they adopted play a significant role in interpreting the major ingredients of the genre, both ‘foreign’ and ‘local’, and Turkish police procedurals reflect their own discourse about crime as a consequence of their ‘innovative’ formulations of these ingredients.

By means of discussing these issues, this thesis intended to offer an extensive study on genre and television in Turkey with a particular focus on the formation of Turkish police procedurals. The thesis was especially interested in this subject due to the alluring intertwinement of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ in the Turkish television scene from the 1990s when Turkey came under the influence of intense globalisation. The formation of the police procedural genre was an interesting case to study because Turkish police procedurals were among the most apparent responses that Turkish television gave to the changing conditions of survival both in the global and the local market in that period. For that reason, understanding the formation of police procedural genre in Turkey meant questioning a number of issues concerning television broadcasting in Turkey as this thesis aspired to do.

Besides, focusing on these issues gave the thesis the opportunity to refer to the broader discussions about globalisation in the areas of media and culture. As the thesis investigated the formation of police procedural genre in the Turkish context it found the necessary ground to comment on the impacts of the intense globalisation on local cultures. The significance of pointing at the ‘national’ in appropriating global forms was reconfirmed as a result of exploring the local responses to globalisation. With this reconfirmation, the thesis aspired to be a useful contribution to the debates concerning globalisation and localisation processes and inspire further studies about these issues.

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