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INTIMACY IN NEOLIBERAL TURKEY: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Ph.D. Thesis

Özlem YILDIZ

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SUPERVISOR: ASSOC. PROF. DR. NİLAY ULUSOY

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To my niece Cemre and to all the children of the world… With the hope that the future will be brighter for them…

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ABSTRACT

Intimacy in Neoliberal Turkey: A Discourse Analysis

Özlem Yıldız

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Though neoliberalism at face value may be understood as an economic doctrine, the infiltration of the neoliberal discourses into the private sphere have brought about drastic changes in the way quotidian life takes shape. In this thesis it has been analyzed how a men's lifestyle magazine, namely *Men's Health Turkey*, and a marriage show, *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* (*Esra Erol Show*), contribute to the adoption and production of neoliberal subject positions to bear on the intimate lives of individuals. Accordingly, intimacy today has become a resource which individuals draw on in their competition in fields like sexuality, reality shows and social media for its conversion into other goods, such as symbolic capital and, economic capital.

Two case studies are chosen for conducting the work, with the aim of showing how neoliberalism in today's Turkey affects the intimate life of different classes, as the inclusion of lower classes to the system is one of the ways neoliberalism governs today. The analyses of excerpts from *Men's Health Turkey* and from the *Esra Erol Show* form the bulk of the work, the former illuminating the new discourses on sexuality targeting upper class men, and the latter discussing how lower class individuals engage in the performance of their intimacy in reality shows. Accordingly, upper class men engage in conspicuous consumption of sex which is associated with lifestyle discourses and status claims; whereas performing intimacy is the tactic used by the lower strata in the *Esra Erol Show* mainly for social mobility. Sexual conquests form the basis of upper class men's self-evaluation against an imaginary public, making sexuality part of the public space. In the case of the*Esra Erol Show*, intimate matters such as affairs of the heart are spilled over into the public space, with the hope that they would confer fame.

The method used to analyze the data obtained has been Foucauldian discourse analysis. The excerpts are chosen according to their quality of being symptomatic of the general trends in the material analyzed. Repetitive data have been set aside.

The study shows how intimacy invaded the public sphere, to become fodder for competition, as part of neoliberal subjectivity. The consequences are dire not only for the public but also for the private sphere, of which intimacy forms an important part.

Keywords: neoliberalism, intimacy, *Men's Health Turkey*, *Esra Erol Show*, discourse analysis

ÖZET

Neoliberal Türkiye'de Mahremiyet: Bir Söylem Analizi

Özlem Yıldız

Sinema ve Medya Araştırmaları

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Neoliberalizm, ilk bakışta ekonomik bir doktrin olarak anlaşılmasına rağmen, neoliberal söylemlerin özel alana sızması, gündelik hayatın şekilleniş biçiminde büyük değişikliklere yol açmıştır. Bu tez çalışmasında bir erkek yaşam tarzı dergisi olan *Men's Health Türkiye*'nin ve bir izdivaç programı olan *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*'nin neoliberal öznelliklerin benimsenmesine ve üretilmesine nasıl katkı sağladıkları ve bu vasıtayla bireylerin mahrem alanlarını nasıl etkiledikleri incelenmiştir. Dolayısıyla, günümüzde mahremiyet bireylerin cinsellik, gerçeklik şovları ve sosyal medya gibi alanlarda, sembolik sermaye, ekonomik sermaye vb. gibi başka kaynaklar elde etme rekabetinde kullandıkları bir kaynak haline gelmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın yürütülmesi için iki vaka çalışması seçilmiştir; çünkü günümüz Türkiye'sinde neoliberalizm farklı sınıfların mahremiyetini etkilemektedir. Alt sınıfların sisteme dâhil edilmesi, bugünkü neoliberalizmin yönetme şeklinin bir parçasıdır. *Men's Health Türkiye*'den ve *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* programından elde edilen alıntıların analizleri, çalışmanın önemli kısmını oluşturmaktadır. İlki, üst sınıf erkekleri hedef alan yeni cinsel söylemleri aydınlatırken ikincisi, daha düşük sınıf bireylerin mahremiyet performanslarını tartışmaktadır. Buna göre, üst sınıf erkekler, yaşam tarzı söylemleri ve statü iddialarıyla ilişkili olarak gösterişçi cinsellik tüketimini benimserler. Mahremiyet performansı ise Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle'de, daha düşük sınıflar tarafından ve genellikle sınıf atlamak için kullanılan bir taktiktir. Cinsel fetihler, cinselliği kamusal alanın bir parçası haline getirerek, üst sınıf erkeklerin hayali bir kamuoyu nezdinde kendi kendini değerlendirmesinin temelini oluşturur. Esra Erol Show örneğinde ise, gönül işlerine dair mahrem konular, şöhret kazanma umuduyla kamusal alana yayılır.

Elde edilen verileri analiz etmek için kullanılan yöntem Foucault'cu söylem analizi olmuştur. Alıntılar, analiz edilen malzemedeki genel eğilimleri semptomatik olarak yansıtma niteliklerine göre seçilmiştir. Tekrar eden veriler kenara ayrılmıştır.

Çalışma, neoliberal öznelliğin bir parçası olarak mahrem olanın kamusal alanı ne derece işgal ettiğini, rekabet için nasıl bir malzeme haline geldiğini göstermektedir. Bunun

sonuçları sadece kamusal alan için değil, aynı zamanda mahremiyetin önemli bir parçası olduğu özel alan için endişe vericidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: neoliberalizm, mahremiyet, *Men's Health Türkiye*, *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*, söylem analizi

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1. INTRODUCTION

Has my heart been shot?
Beat and stopped?
Is this [so]?
Love in modern times
Has got tired?
Is this [so]?[1]
(Karaibrahimgil, 2006)

Nil Karaibrahimgil asks in her song whether or not love in modern times got tired. This question will be understood here as beinmg concerned with the neoliberal times. A scene from the TV series *Nip/Tuck* (2003), painting a picture of neoliberal dystopia where every human relationship was indexed to sex, money and physical looks is telling: in the first episode, the co-star of the series, plastic surgeon Christian Troy, a womanizer operating a thriving clinic in Miami with his partner Sean McNamara meets one of the principal characters Kimber, a model in a bar. His first approaches are met with rejection, as Kimber insists that she is waiting for her boyfriend. However when Christian mentions to the barman that he has an operation the next day, Kimber gets suddenly interested. She asks: "Are you a doctor?" The answer gets even better: "Plastic surgeon." In the next immediate shot, the two are presented making passionate love. The path to sex when one is a plastic surgeon seems drastically short. What made Kimber change her mind in a super drastic way throwing herself into the arms of a man for whom she displayed obstinate disinterest if not outright condescension while she was boasting of being a model and rejecting Troy's offers for a drink based on the argument that models don't drink? What can be inferred from fiction which might reflect tendencies occurring in real life?

At a time when *Nip/Tuck* was a distant but probably abrasive memory in the minds of its viewers, the Turkish spectator met Bahar Candan in the gameshow *İşte Benim Stilim* (*Here is My Style*), who turned into a phenomenon with her babyish voice, her spoilt girl style exaggerated demeanor, the way she laughed and cried as well as with her

[1] *Kalbim vurulmuş mudur? / Ça çarpıp durmuş mudur? / Bu Mudur? / Modern zamanlarda aşk / Yorulmuş mudur? / Bu Mudur?*

outbursts like complaining about her family's lack of factory ownership. The authenticity of Candan's screen persona has been the subject of constant debate, some thinking that she was an example of extreme stupidity, whereas others believed that Candan was an extremely smart woman mocking everybody through a fake identity. In the meanwhile, Candan produced a single and a video clip and together with her sister, an ex-contestant of the same gameshow, became associated with celebrity figures such as pop star Murat Boz as the rumors spread that the sisters spend a night together with Boz and Eser Yenenler[2] in the latter's house (Anon. 2017a).

Later in May 2017, the sisters gave an interview to Armağan Çağlayan. Bahar Candan stated that she trolled everybody during the program, probably putting an end to the authenticity debate. In the interview, the two sisters present themselves as the two well-behaved girls of an educated family, enjoying their present fame both financially and mentally, with the awareness of its transience. They make an effort to argue that theirs is a *clean* fame not involving concessions from their normal lifestyle. In fact, both sisters used the space provided by a reality show as a leverage to become famous in a skillful way, but they seem to be at pains for legitimizing this choice of social mobility, emphasizing instead their education in law. Why?

Of these two seemingly irrelevant questions, this thesis aims to bridge the answers which in fact both point to the impact of neoliberalism on intimacy, beginning with the 1980s but making a peak during the second millennium. Though neoliberalism at face value may be understood as an economic doctrine, the infiltration of the neoliberal discourses into the private sphere brought about drastic changes in the way normal life takes shape. These changes infiltrate society through various ways and among them the impact of the media such as lifestyle magazines, reality shows, dating sites, social media, and television series, etc. is remarkable. This thesis will analyze how a men's lifestyle magazine, namely *Men's Health Turkey,* and a marriage show, *Esra Erol'da*, contribute to the adoption and production of neoliberal subject positions to bear on the intimate lives of individuals. How these media affect components of human intimacy that are deemed at the heart of one's very personality and what do neoliberalism has to do with it will thus form the subject of this thesis.

[2] A Turkish celebritywho as of today has appeared as an actor, a game show host, as well as a comedian.

The journey of this thesis began with 10 years of personal observation from dating websites and applications. With few exceptions, men were seemingly reluctant to establish long-term relationships, enjoying rather a lifestyle based on accumulating casual hook ups. In the meanwhile, a handful of but influential movies came out one after the other treating the theme of men preferring a casual private life to a monogamous relationship. In fact, what was happening resembled sexual revolution, but something was wrong. The hook up culture seemed nurturing a compulsion to sex and proliferated within a culture of neoliberalism, reflecting and reproducing its values rather than that of sexual liberation. The words of MacKinnon (1982, p.515) uttered within a feminist context, then resonated with a new meaning: "Sexuality is to feminism what work is to Marxism: that which is most one's own, yet most taken away". Truly, sexuality, supposed to be one's most intimate, was also a privileged site for the formation of neoliberal subject positions. This was mostly visible in the case of heterosexual white-collar men who tended to adopt frequent casual sex as a lifestyle marking their class identity, their sex life conferring them status. And the lifestyle magazine Men's Health Turkey seemed to be the incarnation of this lifestyle-sexuality-status triangle, apparently offering its male readers tips about health, fitness, nutrition, sexuality and relationships but more than that offering them an identity based on a particular lifestyle, in which the pursuit of sexual quests plays an important part. Thus, to understand how sexuality is constituted through discourse to offer its male readers neoliberal subject positions, excerpts about sexuality chosen from the magazine's issues have been analyzed.

In the course of the thesis, it has become obvious that neoliberalism's cultural project not only targets the relatively upper segment of society, but encompasses individuals from all walks of life, without distinguishing class, gender or age. A common neoliberal culture filters down from the upper classes to the lower ones, each adapting it to their own circumstances. Valentine's Day adopted by people from all walks of life, each according to their means and the segmentation of the erotic underwear market within a spectrum along Victoria's Secret and its cheap Chinese counterparts are among the examples. Similarly, people from all walks of life are implicated in the changes affecting intimacy taking shape with the advent of neoliberalism. Therefore, it has been decided for the study to employ two case studies, one on *Men's Health Turkey*, a

magazine targeting middle to upper middle class men, and the other on *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* (*Marry Me at Esra Erol*) that used to be a marriage showas of the writing of this study[3]with a predominantly low to lower middle class female audience.It will be referred to as *the Esra Erol Show*[4] in this thesis. In the beginning, it was postulated that the two case studies corresponded roughly to two analytical distinctions between sexuality and marriage/family. Conspicuous consumption of sex was therefore an identity marker of the new middle class men, whereas the family as an institution was reproduced in marriage shows such as *the Esra Erol Show*, catering to the tastes of a lower strata; bearing in mind that this sexuality-upper class men/family-lower class women duality was an analytical distinction revealing two ideal types rather than being a neat description of reality. However, the analysis of *the Esra Erol Show* proved to take a detour which seemed to become more fruitful than a discussion of the reproduction of the family institution, which as an argument is also ironic given the heated discussions about marriage programs' damage to the Turkish family structure. A different approach has been adopted for the study of the show, not because it did not reproduce the family institution and traditional gender roles (which it did). Rather, this framework which then has been given up had a tenuous relationship with neoliberalism: The reproduction of the family institution and of gender roles is not something special to the neoliberal era: the previous framework did not fit well in a study inquiring the transformations affecting the intimate sphere in Turkey following neoliberalism.

What however was of greater significance and of relevance to the present work was the fact of the marriage show's participants' experiencing a very intimate event (meeting a potential match and being refused/accepted or accepting/refusing) on television, raising the question of authenticity for the participants' on screen persona. In fact, the reality show as a genre turns the dichotomy of authentic versus fake into a spectrum with many shades of grey in between. Hill (2005, pp. 460-461) and Bignell (2005, pp. 93-114) solve the dilemma by introducing the concept of "performing oneself". In this study the concept of *performing intimacy*will be employed to point to the strategic use of intimacy as a resource to draw upon for acquiring visibility in television. The

[3] After the ban on marriage shows with Decree 690 in 29/04/2017 (Anon 2017b), these programs underwent a change of format.

[4] This shorthand to use Esra Erol Show for *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* is adapted from Zeyneb Feyza Akınerdem (2015).

performative character of the Esra Erol Show participants' on screen persona relatively shields them from the hazards of direct exposure to the public eye. Drawing upon one's private life and making it public through social media, reality television etc. in order to acquire visibility is part and parcel of neoliberal subjectivity (Yıldız 2013). What used to be intimacy invades today what used to be public spaces with consequences to follow. The purpose of the case study of*theEsra Erol Show* is to understand how ordinary people turn their intimacy into an asset and how they negotiate the hazards of public exposure, changing the nature of intimacy for the good. However, there is also a particular aspect to this performance of intimacy, not specific to *the Esra ErolShow* but rather specific to reality shows in Turkey: reality television rewards the performance of a rather exaggerated version of oneself which will be framed here as *poshlost*. The concept is brought forward to Turkey by Alev Alatlı, who in an interview with Şenay Yıldız in 2011 translates the Russian word into Turkish as *paçozluk*[5]. Alatlı's definition however implies much ill will on the part of those deemed *paçoz* which is somewhat not the case for reality TV participants. Nabokov, who is well known for his discussion of the concept, made a slightly different description of poshlost in 1967 in an interview with Herbert Gold:

> *"Poshlust," or in a better transliteration poshlost, has many nuances, and evidently I have not described them clearly enough in my little book on Gogol… Corny trash, vulgar clichés, Philistinism in all its phases, imitations of imitations, bogus profundities, crude, moronic, and dishonest pseudo-literature—these are obvious examples.*

Drawing on Nabokov's definition, it is argued that reality television rewards poshlost, that is to say trashy, vulgar, Philistine, crude, and moronic performances of intimacy, which at times emerge through naiveté but are at their best when achieved through the acumen of the performer. The above mentioned case of Bahar Candan who said she trolled everybody is the examplar of this acumen to reach poshlost in performing intimacy. Hence, as Alatlı (2011) stated, poshlost has no class, gender or ethnicity. But it has become a common staple of television and seems to evolve into a salient feature of the neoliberal culture.

[5] According to Alatlı, paçoz is who is "Machiavellian, immodest, trashy, dodger, spoony, addicted, banal, bouncer, ratty, coarse, insincere, sleazy, parsimonious, ill mannered, base, immoral, and piker" (Yıldız 2011).

To recap, the study aims to delineate the transformations affecting the private sphere through the case studies of *Men's Health Turkey* and *theEsra Erol Show*. Through these transformations emerge new ways "by which… human beings are made subjects" (Foucault 1982, p. 777), and a new relationship between what is private and what is public. What was considered to belong to the private sphere, to be intimate is now being made public through social media, reality shows etc. for circulation in a competitive social market. What, how and where it is put on display differs according to gender, class and age, but it seems that intimacy is a resource on which everybody can draw. This new understanding of intimacy as a resource to be put on display changes the way it is experienced, putting an element of public surveillance into everyday existence. Whereas intimacy turns into the fodder of competition for symbolic capital, the feeling of being before the public eye à la Big Brother becomes entrenched, as we come to judge ourselves as if before an anticipated public. Hence a woman might be more interested in making pictures of what she eats than enjoying her meal when out with friends, or a man can imagine himself making a score in the competition for sexual accomplishment while out for a casual hook up. As the marketing of what has been lived becomes more important than the experience itself, a new neoliberal subjectivity emerges. The Kardashian family is the exemplar of this new subjectivity, making it a public spectacle out of their own lives and turning that into fame and eventually cash. This is for instance, very different from the story of Princess Diana who achieved huge popularity through her charity work and activism and was at great pains to keep her intimate life away from the paparazzi.

Within the general framework of the transformation of intimacy under neoliberalism in Turkey, the study explores how sexuality becomes a site of competition for middle to upper middle class men –through the analysis of *Men's Health Turkey*- and how reality shows like marriage shows offer to lower classes an opportunity to use their intimacy as a resource for upward mobility –through the analysis of *theEsra Erol Show*-. In both cases, intimacy falls prey to the logic of competition which has become ever more acute with the advent of neoliberalism. To understand the logic of these transformations is the subject of this thesis.

It was apparent that a history behind the observed transformations in the sphere of intimacy existed, which could be drawn back to the inception of neoliberalism during the 1980s in Turkey. Studies on the recent cultural history of Turkey have been employed in order to understand the cultural climate which gave birth to the present situation. Theories on commodification and on consumption have been introduced to understand the present state of sexuality. Foucault's oeuvre in general and his work on sexuality in particular, and Bourdieu's theoretical framework with an emphasis on his concepts of capital and field have been the main theories shaping the work. Stuart Hall's theory that culture is an arena of class struggle has also been important for the study of *the Esra Erol Show*. Apart from other theories not mentioned here, Althusser's concept of interpellation is also worth noting since it is a key concept for explaining how individuals thorough the interpellation of discourses take up and embody the subject positions offered to them.

The main method employed in this study is Foucauldian critical discourse analysis. It is critical in the sense that it is concerned with the role of discourse in maintaining/resisting power relations and Foucauldian because it attempts to shed a light to the process through which new subject positions emerge as a result of the new developments affecting the intimate sphere. Employing a theoretical framework based on the argument that individuals are interpellated through discourses to new neoliberal subject positions, discourse analysis is the perfect fit to understand the nature of these subjectivities. For the purposes of analysis, the case of *Men's Health Turkey* is more straightforward as its discourse is unilaterally disseminated from one source to interpellate its readers to neoliberally sexualized positions. The targets and the producers of the magazine's discourse are distinct analytically, making discourse analysis a good tool for its study. In the case of *the Esra Erol Show*, the distinction is blurred due to the dual position of its participants. Within the analytical framework of this study, more than being the targets or the disseminators of the discourse, they are its embodiments. However, discourse analysis is still adequate because it shows that discourses do not function in a unilateral way but are dispersed throughout the society and reproduced by different agents for different purposes. The case of the magazine provides an instance for understanding how a dominant neoliberal discourse is disseminated. Though traditional discourses on family and relationships are mobilized

on *theEsra Erol Show*, the show turns into a neoliberal space through the participants' performance of intimacy. This discursively constructed intimacy can be best brought to analysis through discourse analysis.

The study aims to contribute to the literature in the subjects of neoliberal subjectivity, sexuality and intimacy. National and international work on neoliberal subjectivity is abundant; however the present study takes a new approach by suggesting the new interlocking of the public and private spheres as part and parcel of the new neoliberal subjectivity. As far as the research conducted during the study, the researcher was unable to find a comprehensive study of sexuality in Turkey, a gap which the study tried to address. On the other hand, the entry of intimacy into the public sphere through television has been subject to debate via various arguments. Some viewed it as a democratic development providing representation to the oppressed whereas others adopted the position that the private invasion of the public was detrimental to democracy and freedoms (Özsoy 2012, p. 153). Among others, Cicioğlu's (2011, pp. 87-89) position affirming that participants in marriage shows transform intimacy into exhibitionism to acquire fame and eventually get a husband is very close to this study's framework. However the present thesis adds to the literature by providing the link between neoliberalism and the "transformation of intimacy into exhibitionism".

The thesis is organized into five chapters: a) introduction, b) theoretical background, c) data and method, d) findings, and e) conclusion. The fourth chapter is divided into two main blocks, one for each case study.

The theoretical background begins with some general information on neoliberalism as theorized by important thinkers such as Michel Foucault and David Harvey. Then a longer discussion on the historical background of neoliberalism in Turkey is held, beginning with general remarks on the political climate shaping the adoption of neoliberalism in the 1980s. Then the cultural atmosphere of the period and the adoption of neoliberal values by the society are explained. The following section is on commodification and consumerism, with special emphasis on Veblen and Baudrillard. A brief history of sexuality in Turkey is presented as drawn from original and secondary sources.

The third chapter explains the methodological framework of the study. Althusser's interpellation andStuart Hall's concept of encoding/decoding are addressed. How the data from the sources were obtained and through what methods they were analyzed are explained.

In the first section of the fourth chapter, on Men's Health Turkey, excerpts are chosen from the magazine's selected issues and are discursively analyzed. These particular analyses are then put into a general framework through references back to the theory chapter as well as through the discussion of Foucault's work on sexuality, Connell's work on hegemonic masculinity and Bauman's and Giddens' work on the transformation of intimacy. The following section on *theEsra Erol Show* begins with a brief discussion of reality television's general as well as domestic history. Then excerpts from *the Esra Erol Show* are discursively analyzed and put into perspective within the framework of the study.

The concluding chapter recapitulates the results of the study, establishing once again the connections between its parts while pointing to further implications that may become an inspiration for further research.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 SOME GENERAL REMARKS on NEOLIBERALISM

Holding the view that neoliberalism is the process of the reconstitution of class power, David Harvey (2005, p. 2) makes the following definition of neoliberalism:

> *Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence, police and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. But beyond these tasks the state should not venture. State interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit.*

The postulate of neoliberal thinking according to this description is "entrepreneurial freedom" that should be given leeway through the mechanism of markets of which the functioning is ensured but which is not interfered with by the state. It should be observed that neoliberalism has an ontology of the human being as enterprising agents from which emanates the principle of the organization of the society alongside the institution of the market. In this way, neoliberalism envisages a society in its own image on the basis of which it legitimizes its own claims. This is the tautological logic of neoliberalism. Foucault's (2008) concept of governmentality as developed in his lectures at the Collège de France: "construes neo-liberalism not just as ideological rhetoric, as an economic reality, or as a practical anti-humanism, but above all as a political project that endeavors to create a social reality that it suggests already exists" (Thomas Lemke 2016, p. 6). For instance, *Men's HealthTurkey* to be analyzed below draws on specific assumptions about human sexuality that are in line with the neoliberal project, such as ascribing to men a limitless sexual drive and situating women as the relatively reluctant targets of men's sexual quests. The discourses disseminated by the magazine aims in fact "to create a social reality" while projecting its discursive reality

as the natural order of things: Men seek sex, women are reluctant; the problem is how to persuade them. In this way, neoliberal discourses permeate ways of being and produce desires as power is not only repressive but also productive as pointed out by Foucault.

Foucault (2008, p. 117) is very keen on arguing that neoliberalism is not the resurgence of classical liberalism in his Lectures at the Collège de France in 1978-79, published as The Birth of Biopolitics. His account of German neoliberals or ordoliberals as they named themselves, who at the aftermath of the WWII developed a core of neoliberal theories, shows how neoliberalism differs from classical liberalism. According to Foucault, the problem for both was accommodating the state's legitimacy with economic freedom: The 18th century solution was considering markets as resources that would enrich and increase the power of the state, from which derived the principle of state's non-interference of classical liberalism.

Foucault (2008, pp. 84-116) continues his account on German neoliberals by stating that their problem was rather producing legitimacy for the state in the aftermath of the Nazi experience and this through the economy. According to Foucault, they stood against all forms of economic interventionism through showcasing the atrocities of the Nazi experience and argued from there that the state was defective whereas the market was not. The solution was simple: "a state under the supervision of the market rather than a market supervised by the state" (p. 116), hence "the organization of society on the basis of the market economy" (p. 117).

As Foucault (2008, pp. 118-121) continues, German neoliberals made an important change in the understanding of the markets' functioning: the shift is from exchange to competition. According to Foucault, under classical liberalism, the exchange of equal partners in the market was the prime postulate necessitating the principle of laissez-faire, but for German neoliberals, it was competition which ensures through the price mechanism the proper functioning of the market. Foucault continues to state that competition's not being a natural given it has to be produced by active governmentality. In his following remarks, Foucault (p. 131) states:

> *So, what is this neo-liberalism? Last week I tried to indicate at least its theoretical and political principle. I tried to show you how the problem of neo-liberalism was not how to cut out or contrive a free space of the market within an already given*

> *political society, as in the liberalism of Adam Smith and the eighteenth century. The problem of neo-liberalism is rather how the overall exercise of political power can be modeled on the principles of a market economy. So it is not a question of freeing an empty space, but of taking the formal principles of a market economy and referring and relating them to, of projecting them on to a general art of government.*

The concept of human capital as introduced by American neoliberalism within neoliberal thinking as discussed by Foucault (2008, pp. 219-230) is also important for this study. As Foucault contends, it is introduced in order to solve the problem of labor which constitutes lacunae in the classical political economy theories addressing the three factors of production, namely land, capital and labor. According to Foucault, American neoliberals take up the worker's standpoint but treat wages not as what the worker gets paid for his/her labor power but as income. Foucault explains the logic here: capital according to political economy is what generates an income, and conversely, a worker becomes human capital as through working he/she generates an income. According to this neoliberal logic as explained by Foucault, human capital is comprised of genetic factors and any other factors that might contribute to its growth, such as education, professional training or the quality time one spent with his/her parents during childhood. In this way, everybody becomes an enterprise and a CEO of him/herself.

At the seminar entitled *Authoritarian Populism: (Is It) An Inevitable Stage of Neoliberalism?*held at Boğaziçi University Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, Fikret Adaman (2017) depicts the same picture with different emphases. The lecture starts by reminding the audience of the three schools of economic thinking which played a crucial role in the evolution of neoliberal mentality: the Mont Pelerin Society founded in 1947 with its main figure Hayek, the Chicago School with Milton Friedman and the MIT tradition crystallizing around 1970-1975. As remembered in the seminar, Hayek postulated that economic freedom would bring about political freedom as a side-effect, the Chicago School endorsed the validity of cost-benefit analysis in all areas of human life to propose as a logical step the constitution of markets where they are non-existent, and the MIT tradition's views found its expression in the concept of strategic behavior, denoting an understanding of a particular human nature based on shrewdness and opportunism. As Adaman pointed out, the outcome of this threefold legacy has been neoliberalism's evolving into a model of governance based on the

principle of human responsiveness to economic incentives, and on the conviction that societies can be smoothly governed be these incentives well set up, an approach orthogonal to the rights based one.

These theoretical positions, though different in important respects, converge on a common ground: neoliberalism's economic and political project builds on specific assumptions on the human nature. The human being may thus be postulated as having a propensity to enterprise,as homo oeconomicus or as strategically behaving agents responsive to economic incentives. Departing from its own postulates, neoliberalism strives to actualize a world where these postulates hold true and then uses the results of this process as proof of the validity of its own thinking. As an example from this thesis, the conspicuous consumption of sex, meaning that sexual activity tends towards becoming an activity of consumption in a social market marked by competition is a result of the dissemination of neoliberal discourses. But based on this process, the same neoliberal discourses stop and say: "Look, I was right, human sexuality is subject to market rules as anything else." As stated above, neoliberalism is "a political project that endeavors to create a social reality that it suggests already exists" (Thomas Lemke 2016, p. 6).

As neoliberalism is both a political doctrine with a specific view of human nature, a political project, and a model of governance with its own form of governmentality; it is pervasive and targets all areas of human life. The private sphere, the subject of this study is no exception, far from it: the private sphere is one of the principle targets of a neoliberal doctrine keen on transforming the social reality based on its own postulates on human nature. At first glance, the neoliberal project seems to imply an erosion of the difference between the private and the public sphere: it seeks to govern both the public and the private sphere by carefully setting up economic incentives. Thus the same governmental mentality filters through the whole of social life in a capillary way, as in the example of regulating smoking by raising the cost of health services (Adaman, 2017). However, it should be noted that the private sphere was always already regulated through previous governmental mentalities. The difference is that neoliberalism governs through freedom as Rose (2004) states: To return to the smoking example, given the costs of health services, one is free to choose to smoke or not to smoke, or says the

neoliberal logic. Therefore, neoliberalism governs through acting upon the configuration of choices available to individuals, offloading the responsibility of their well-being to them within an ideology of the fetishism of the choice. Eating well presented as a personal responsibility in the midst of an unhealthy food industry is an example.

There is one more thing to add to this story: in the private sphere, neoliberalism turns other forms of incentives into incentives functioning in the logic of the market. Social media is an example. Perhaps the paramount instances are the use of Facebook and Instagram. In these spheres, the social incentive of getting recognition operates in a sphere marked by the the market logic, in fact the likes or the comments on one's post function on the logic of accumulation. Like the stock market, the individuals getting the most likes and comments to their posts gain market value in the social market of social media. Hence, people are induced to post more and seek attention. The purpose here is not to condemn all uses of social media which can differ significantly in purpose.However, it should be acknowledged that social media like Facebook and Instagram have an in-built neoliberal rationality. From these and similar venues –one is reality show format that is addressed in this study- neoliberalism filters into the private sphere and transforms human experience. These general remarks drawn from the Western experience of neoliberalism apply well to Turkey. But it is also important to know the specifities of the Turkish case, which is the subject of the next section.

2.2 TURKEY'S TRANSITION to NEOLIBERALISM

Turkey's transition to neoliberalism resembles and differs from the Western experience in important respects. The first divergence is obviously the fact that the transition though starting before September 12, 1980 with the January 24 Decisions did culminate at the aftermath of a military coup which crushed all political opposition and created an environment favorable to the application of neoliberal policies. As Belge (1997, p. 14) states, Turkey was undergoing a process of depolitization together with the world, the former in military and the latter mostly in civil ways; new norms replacing older ones. Kozanoğlu (1995, pp. 35-68) warns against the widespread arguments associating the 1980 coup with the restoration of Kemalist cadres to power despite its having been

legitimized in the name of Kemalist principles: the ones benefitting from the intervention were the big investment groups. Kozanoğlu states that treating the militarization of the economy as a Turkish phenomenon is myoptic considering the cases of Pinochet, Videla and Papadapulos. Kozanoğlu remarks that the Kemalist cadres in fact voluntarily handed over the governmental power to the DP in 1950 for the transition to democracy, their last attempt at seizing power corresponding to the 1960 coup.[6]

In a similar vein, Gürbilek (2001) argues that the 1980s were the years of a cultural explosion marked by a certain demise of the Kemalist vision of modernization which excluded the periphery and their forms of cultural expression as antagonistic to the modernization project of the elite. However, this should not be understood as a radical break with Kemalism at the political and discursive level: The problem of Özal who emerged as the principal political leader of 1980s, was not with the founding ideology of Kemalism, but with the political legacy of İsmet İnönü in its emphasis on the "Guardianship of the Republic," and the transition to a free market economy was not inconsistent with the Kemalist principle of etatism, which was adopted as a result of the non-existence of a local bourgeoisie capable of free enterprise at the time of the constitution of the state (Köker, pp. 203-206).Thus, Özal was to truncate the bureaucracy, supposedly to end the control of appointed cadres, but was to govern through his own appointed staff, by-passing the National Assembly (Kozanoğlu 1992, p. 21).

After Turkey's transition to a multi-party democracy, ANAP became the second party to dominate the political scene as a single party government for almost a decade, between the years 1983-1991. It is therefore necessary to have a look at the political developments of the period. The electoral success of ANAP owes both to the particularities of the after coup political conditions and to Özal's political brilliance for

[6] On the other hand, Aydın and Taşkın (2016, pp. 415-421) argue that September 12 was a restoration project of the right-wing Kemalism at the expense of its previously current left-wing version. Most Kemalists in their turn today blame the September 12 junta government for sabotaging real Kemalism and for paving the way for the rise of Islamist movements through its policy of Turk-Islam synthesis. Though it is not the place to decide upon this argument here, it is interesting to remember that all coups and coup attempts including the last one legitimized themselves on the basis of the restoration of Kemalist principles.

incorporating different electoral tendencies within the framework of the party with the promise to realize the long sought for economic leap (Özen 2011, p. 128). ANAP built its political discourse through the repudiation of previous forms of politics that it identified with all the "evils" of the pre-1980 era, such as terror, anarchy and economic crisis: In this way, a party to continue the status quo established by the coup regime presented itself as progressive and supportive of change (Özen, p. 129). Aydın and Taşkın (1989, pp. 401-424) depict how the coup regime closed previous political parties, banned their leaders from political activity, sentencing some of them to prison and taking many measures for preventing a revanchist backlash, including judicial steps through the much disputed 1982 Constitution. The authors explain that the military desired a two party parliamentary system with a left and a right wing party, and report junta leader Evren's trying to manipulate the popular vote in favor of the latter in a TV speech, an act which probably backfired. Thus, Özal found a convenient environment bereft of a significant alternative for his rise to prominence and this, together with the promise for social change and economic advancement, the repudiation of the ills of the 1970s[7] and the incorporation of different electoral tendencies, carried ANAP to its electoral success in 1983 with 45.14% of votes, acquiring 211 seats in the 400-membered parliament, a clear majority ensuring its single-party government (Özen, pp. 127-131). Özal's maneuvers for benefitting from the pre-coup political tendencies resulted in an eclectic party structure containing within itself politicians from different backgrounds: ANAP was launched as a brand new political party bereft of the negativities of the past merging in its fabric the principles of conservatism, nationalism, liberalism and social democracy (Özen 2011, p. 128, Karabulut 2010, p. 989, Aydın & Taşkın 2016, p. 436) –this last just consisting of a few names for display (Kozanoğlu 1995, p. 32) In fact, in practice, ANAP was an economically liberal and politically conservative party (Karabulut 2010, p. 989). According to Özen (2011, p. 131):

> *Özal and Anavatan Party succeeded to appeal to different social groups with different demands through this populist discourse. To specify, these groups are groups with very different expectations and demands and different political tendencies; like national and transnational big investment groups happy with neoliberal policies, big masses demanding public security and order, groups opposing the coup and supporting ANAP because it is a party outside the two parties supported by the junta, low-income groups with an expectation for economic development, nationalist and conservative groups, and groups demanding change.*

[7]These were anarchy/terror and economic crises according to Özal (Özen 2011).

As Kozanoğlu (1992, pp. 15-17) remarks, before consolidating its electoral basis, ANAP got its main support from the alliance between the Anatolian nouveau-riches and the old financial bourgeoisie rooted in cities. As the author continues, it then appealed to middle and lower middle classes hoping to save their skin within the rationale of the system: Hitting the jackpot may not have been realistic for everybody but saving one's own skin was still a viable option. According to Kozanoğlu these segments considered computer literacy and English proficiency as their passports to a better life and supported Özal as long as he managed to keep their dreams alive. The author continues to state that another segment emerging as the ardent supporters of Özal were those scared away first by the prospect of a return to the previous days of violent clashes and then by the prospect of a future bereft of opportunities for economic prosperity and consumption. However the strategy of Özal was built on his leaving behind first the Republican populism of the fusion of a classless and unprivileged mass and then the rightwing populism of the majority; implying both the single voice of "One Nation" to embrace the project of "Two Nations" (Aydın & Taşkın 2016, pp. 443-444). The organic electoral basis of ANAP was constituted of a chosen segment of middle classes, both religious and laic, rising on the wings of the new economic policies at the expense of a neglected majority forming together the losers of the epoch. (Kozanoğlu 1992, p. 22, Aydın & Taşkın 2016, pp. 443-444).[8] Dividing the nation into two opposing camps as the supporters of the government and the rest strips the neoliberal state from distributing adequate resources to everybody (Aydın & Taşkın 2016, pp. 444-445). Turkey as a middle income country, needed to make sacrifices if she was to remain among the winning nations of the world (Kozanoğlu 1992, p. 22). The same policy of "Two Nations" is applied today with great efficiency, to consolidate the electoral basis of the government.

The government programs of both ANAP governments placed a strong emphasis on the economy, reflecting both Özal's personal faith in economic development's capacity to rectify all social ills through a neoliberal program and the Republican tradition (Özen, p. 136). The young Republic set as its primary aim "development," meaning

[8] According to Aydın and Taşkın (2016, pp.444), the first nation was legitimized through the maltreatment of the second one, which was constituted of old school leftists and the poor in their orbit, together with the Kurds and the Alevites.

Westernization, as the goal towards which all the resources of the country including its citizens should be deployed, with the precept that national independence cannot be sustained without economic freedom, which was dominantly envisaged as industrialization (Eralp 1990, pp. 219-253).

Following this line, the primary aim of ANAP's government programs was the institution of a free market economy in Turkey as the means of economic development through "the downsizing of the state and its turning towards infrastructure investments, increasing export, foreign investment incentives, reducing protectionism, and the liberalization of imports" (Özen, p. 132). Aydın and Taşkın (2016, p. 427) dubs the retransition to the multi-party system as "low intensity democracy," arguing that it was more of a restoration process based on the alliance of military and financial elites together with some of the politicians, more or less facilitated by the coming in power of a civilian leader that could be embraced by the people.

The ANAP government continued the economic policy line of the January 24 1980 Decisions[9] of which the architect was Turgut Özal appointed at the time by Demirel as prime ministry undersecretary (Boratav 2004, pp. 146-148). Özal subsequently held the office of deputy prime minister responsible for the economy during the junta government till his resignation in 1982 due to the infamous bankers' scandal. Boratav (2004, pp. 145-148) pictures the economic situation in 1979 as follows: the masses had to deal with the problems of accessing basic consumption goods in an environment marked by queues and black marketing, organized labor struggled hard against the melting down of wages in the face of rising inflation, and capital circles started to voice their discontent against the fall in surplus value production; in these circumstances, the

[9] Kırelli (2015) enumerates the important points of January 24 Decisions as follows:

1. *32% devaluation and the introduction of daily exchange rate*
2. *Measures towards the downsizing of the state concerning the economy and the limitation in agricultural support purchases*
3. *Elimination of subventions apart from fertilizers, energy and transportation*
4. *Deregulation of foreign trade, promotion of foreign investment, facilitation of profit transfers*
5. *Support to foreign construction services*
6. *Gradual liberalization of imports, exports promoted through tax refund, low interest loans, customs duty exemption for manufacturers concerning imported inputs, and support system differing according to sectors.*

regime change realized with the coup removed the obstacle of labor opposition in the face of the implementation of the January 24 Decisions.

According to Boratav (2004, p. 149), the new economic policies attempted with the 24 January Decisions and implemented after the coup are not very original considering the Latin American after-coup economic experiences. He continues to state that what may be deemed peculiar to Turkey is the pursuance of income policies disfavoring laborwith the aim of curbing the domestic demand, rather than adopting relevant monetary and fiscal policies, qualifying the model as "the counter attack of capital" (Boratav 2004, p. 149). Buğra (1994, p. 266) also states that fairly standardized IMF guidelines in many late-industrializing countries proved to have different socioeconomic outcomes according to their context. For instance, it can be said that Özal's personal faith on the virtues of a free market economy, his discourses emanating from his own understanding of economic liberalism culminating in the dictum "I love he/she who is rich" played an important role in Turkish society's adoption of new values centering on consumption, money, and the new hopes of hitting the jackpot. As all societies, Turkey responded to its transition to neoliberalism in ways that are both peculiar to it and similar to other experiences, as has been discussed and will be discussed further in this chapter.

According to Özen (pp. 136-151) these policies resulted in mixed consequences. There had been a rise in income inequality despite Özal's bid for social justice (Özen 2011, p. 17; Boratav 2004, pp. 163-169), whereas export incentives gave birth to the problem of fictitious export. Boratav (2004, pp. 160-163) shows how export figures rose steadily throughout the 1980s but especially the rise in industrial exports which emanated from a policy of suppressing wages and devaluating the currency rather than increasing labor efficiency. He also demonstrates how the economy grew on the basis of foreign credit due to rising import expenditures as the country's dependency on imports continued. Whereas the promotion of export helped the integration of Turkish firms to the globalized economy after a period of sheltered domestic market (Özen 2011, p. 139), the abundance of consumer goods thanks to new import regulations was positively met by the masses (Boratav 1995). According to Özen, (2011, pp. 140-145) it cannot be said that foreign investment reached its desired levels during the ANAP governments. Özen states that public spending in education and health did not rise significantly, whereas

investments were made on tourism and housing at the expense of manufacture and agriculture together with important investments in communications, energy infrastructure and transportation, these last three being considered the fundamental duty of the state in true liberal spirit.

As stated before, Boratav (2004) interprets the economic transformations of the 1980s as the "counter attack of capital" against a past of strong labor organization in the 1970s. However, as Gürbilek (2001) stated, the 1980s had been lived as a time of new possibilities and new freedoms for the masses, rather than as a period of despair despite their shrinking share in the national income, and the political repression. Apart from the new channels opening for cultural expression (Gürbilek 2001), the masses also found new promises in the new economic configuration, providing them with new tools to cater to their hopes of economic betterment. According to Kozanoğlu (1993, p. 52), the 1980s were the years when everybody became an economy specialist. Perhaps one of the most explicit manifestations of this obsession with the economy carrying over to the 1990s was the educational series *Liberal Ahmet* published in Milliyet in 1990. The series renders the stock market adventures of an ordinary Turkish man and aims to initiate its readers into stock market operations inculcating the hopes of gaining money through purchasing and floating shares with a simplified presentation. The series targets the ordinary citizen without plunging into economic jargon but employs a daily language. The almost naïve presentation of the series is very different from the language of contemporary economy programs, whereby a certain economic knowledge of the audience is assumed.

As in many other third world countries, Turkey's neoliberal experience has been shaped by international organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank, diffusing the neoliberal model from its Western centers to the world (Özen 2011, p. 124). In fact, Turkey has been one of the testing grounds for the Washington Consensus whereby the model was presented to the public as the country's own policy (Şenses, 2016, p. 16). However, this does not prevent us from being aware of the considerable social change that ensued after the 1980s. With the abandonment of the import substituting industrialization model for integration to world markets through liberalization, privatization and deregulation, Turkey adopted transnational tastes and values (Erol et

al. 2016, pp. 3-4), and Turkish society, from a society of scarcity of goods (especially of imported articles) became a consumer society in a few decades. This emphasis on the abundance of goods tackling people's desires to consume more after this experience of scarcity (waiting in lines for simple consumption articles, items such as Nescafe and whisky being only obtained through illegal means (Bali 2002, p. 19), and the ideology of turning the corner, have been important factors in the swift penetration of the neoliberal mentality into Turkish society. The dynamics of the military coup also played an important role in the society's transformation. The level of politization was very high in the 1970s as the society fragmented along political lines culminating in clashes with significant causalities. This situation proved the main legitimation for the military which justified the coup on the basis of establishing law and order. The coup persecuted people from all political walks but the worst blow was dealt to the leftists. They were the members of a generation who "forgot about their own individuality while trying to save the society" (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 118). The 1970s were a time of leftist opposition (Gürbilek 2001, p 8) with significant working class activity, whereby the businessmen's image crystallized in the figure of the "merciless comprador boss" (Bali, 2002, p. 37). What filled the space left blank by the absence of politics in the aftermath of the September 1980 coup determines much the particularities of the Turkish case in its transition to neoliberalism. The 1980s came with the promise of a certain freedom despite its being one of the most oppressive periods in Turkish history (Gürbilek 2001, pp. 8-9):

> *The 80s have been the setting to two different power projects, to two different speech politics, finally to two different cultural strategies. It was both a period of oppression and prohibitions and years whereby a more modern, more founding, more encircling cultural strategy aiming to transform rather than prohibit, to include rather than to destroy, to provoke rather than to repress tried to exist. On the one hand, it was a period of denial, refusal and suppression, on the other hand a period of opportunities and promises whereby people's desire and appetite have been provoked as never before. On the one hand, there was a Turkey whose voice was interrupted, who was silenced, on the other hand a "Speaking Turkey" offering new channels and new frames to speech. The 80s were one of the most severe periods in terms of its institutional, political and humane consequences of late history but at the same time was a period of relief and loosening whereby people got rid of their political responsibilities.*

According to Gürbilek (2001, p. 9), these two cultural strategies coexisted in Turkey in the 1980s as "the glitter of shop windows and political pressures, the dread of war and the cultural rise of the country, torture and calls to individualism, the compulsion to

silence and the lust to speak" stood side by side during a short time period. A similar observation of this "lust to speak" was made by Belge (1997, p. 197) in a 1982 article about the bumper sticker slogans especially articulating male truck drivers' longings for romantic love and sexuality. These seemingly contradictory processes of repression and provocation needed each other for their legitimacy and functioning: what was suppressed by one was then provoked by the other and vice versa (Gürbilek 2001, p. 13). This mechanism set by two seemingly contradictory power projects explains the relative ease of the transformation of the Turkish society from the deeply politicized 1970s into the depoliticized and consumption oriented 1980s. Bali (2002, p. 17) describes the 70s as "misty and pessimistic" and the following two decades as more "dynamic" and "colorful". This change of mood is perhaps the key to understanding the relatively low resistance of Turkish society towards both the political oppression and the sharp cultural transformation it underwent. The exasperation from the political climate of the 1970s with its severe daily causalities due to clashes among different political factions was an important factor in the subsequent depolitization of the society. The following liberal turn filling the shop windows with imported goods (Bali 2002,Gürbilek 2001), the new moral values praising consumption and wealth, a new middle class rising on the wings of the new economic configuration feeding the hopes of their more unfortunate contemporaries to climb or make their children climb the social ladder (Şimşek 2014, Bali 2002, Kozanoğlu 1993) and the newly emerging concept of "private life" with the concomitant liberty in speaking about it (Gürbilek 2011) filled the vacuum left by the absence of the politics of the 1970s. As Kozanoğlu contends (1992, pp. 7-63), the previous utopias for liberty and equality changed place with utopias of unfettered acquisition of wealth, the new ideology of proclaiming all ideologies dead filled the vacuum left by the setback of Republican ideology and de facto prohibitions replaced official ones accusing those questioning the new state of affairs for being conservative and out of date. Kozanoğlu also states that the new elite, seen as the heralder of a new era of democracy, was not less reluctant to impose on the society its own perspective despite its critique of the purported Jacobinism of the Republic. Kozanoğlu remarks therefore that Özal's celebrated credentials for being democrat and civil amounted in fact to a carefully pumped image crafted from a typical right-wing leader.

The 1980s were also a time of cultural explosion whereby cultural demands previously subordinated to other broader political projects found their own ways of expression: Kurds, women and homosexuals had the opportunity to form their own public presence and their own popular language (Gürbilek 2001, pp. 11-102). Gürbilek conceptualizes the process as "the return of the repressed", be that the rise of Islam, the discovery of the Kurdish population, the cultural rise of the country or the explosion in desires and sexuality. According to the author, the tendency to link this cultural explosion to the erosion of the 1970s' socialist movement's legitimacy and its subsequent release of old energies within its body should be countered. These two processes were in fact the simultaneous consequences of the collapse of the modernization promise that Kemalism offered to Turkish society (pp. 15, 104-109). Turkey in the second half of the 1980s explored its own periphery, not only the Kurds but its own provincial side that it had to suppress in order to keep itself true to the modernization promise of the elite culture (pp. 105-106) Provincial means here not only the country outside of the metropolises but all that has been left outside of the representational economy of the nation in the name of modernization (p. 104). Whereas the crowds discovered that they could be articulated to the cultural and economic life of the city and benefit from its potentials of cultural expression and consumption networks without relinquishing their identities, the elite also discovered what it suppressed in itself in the name of modernization as the explosion of speech in the arena of sexuality shows (pp. 104-109). In this way, the 1980s not only came with a promise of freedom[10] to crowds previously excluded from the modernization imagery but also to the cultural elite who, to be able to represent a common modernity, lived within self imposed constraints: the cultural elite had the freedom to act in its own name for the first time, rather than bearing the responsibility of acting in the name of the whole society (p. 106). The 1960s were the years of the burgeoning of a new mass culture, *arabesk* music took its roots in the 1970s but the cultural explosion in Turkey took place in the 1980s, at a time where the rural to urban migration relatively started to lose its momentum (p. 103). However, as Gürbilek states; "the repressed" never returns as it was in the first place, as a pure state of energy

[10] The word "freedom" here does not match exactly the Turkish word "*serbestlik*" used by Gürbilek that has the connotations of ease, unconstraint, and looseness as well as of liberty, which distinguishes "*serbestlik*" from "*özgürlük*" (the exact translation of the word "freedom"). "*Özgürlük*" is based on rights and entails responsibility whereas "*serbestlik*" does not.

waiting to be rediscovered in its demands (p. 11). It takes new shapes according to new conditions and is open to political tactics and provocation (p. 11). In this way, the rebellion of the excluded masses left previously in a state of cultural hunger took a new shape when back: already having consumed its own promises; the only thing offering this cultural explosion a means of expression was the market (p. 107).

The account of Gürbilek (2001) shows that the wholehearted espousal of the new consumer culture by the Turkish society was not solely due to the previous experiences of scarcity: The market also provided the means for the expression of a cultural hunger for the masses excluded from the Kemalism's modernization scheme. The masses not only garnered hopes for climbing the social ladder but also found in the 1980s an environment responding to their demands of individualization: whereas individual desires were more easily articulated, they were most of the time subordinated to the market, as the desire for individualization remained a desire to consume (p. 10). The promise for freedom of the 1980s proved toremain limited to a freedom to consume, in Turkey as throughout the world (p. 110).

Those showcasing this new freedom to consume were a new middle class benefiting the most from the advantages of the new economic configuration of the Özal era. The rise of this new middle class coincided with the discovery of the cities' own peripheries -the previous migrants with rural background- and created a rift between the so called White Turks and Black Turks, which found its expression especially in an elite contempt for the culture of the periphery. (Kozanoğlu 1993, Kozanoğlu 1995, Bali, 2002, Tekelioğlu 2006, Şimşek 2014). Both the rise of this new class and "the cultural rise of the periphery" in the 1980s (Gürbilek 2011) played a role in the constitution of this rift. The cream layer of this new middle class were called Yuppies, meaning young, urban professionals (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 10), a world scale phenomenon finding its local expression in Turkey in the aftermath of 1980 as elsewhere in the world. Yuppies in fact impacted the socio economic scene in Turkey especially during the 1980s as the group embodying the changing dynamics of the new era not because of their numbers which were quantitatively insignificant but because they had been the prominent member of a generation affecting society's "desires, consumption habits, and ideology" (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 9).

Yuppies were a new generation of well educated professionals starting their careers in the beginnings of the 1980s, a generation marked by its ambition and its integration to capitalism in a way that was unusual even for the United States (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 16). Climbing the social ladder is the key mechanism in becoming one of them (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 10). Their class status is not inherited from their families but acquired through education (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 55) which secures their belief in their own personal superiority and their merit of their privileges (Şimşek 2014, p. 66).

Kozanoğlu (1993, pp. 69-73) elucidates the impact of the 1980 coup in three generations having their university education before, during and after the coup: The first having finished university before September 12 believed in themselves and in their capacity to change the system and did not have an experience of humiliation; the coup caught them alone in their fight, whereas some of its members were imprisoned or retired into seclusion, the ones who "left their mark to the 80s' processes of liberalization and 'outward opening'" were the best educated members of this generation, especially those proficient in English (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 69). The ones in university during September 12 who already could not accommodate themselves in the previous configuration which was already saturated, had found themselves humiliated by the coup (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 71). The original Yuppie generation consisting of the ones who entered university in the 1980s, its members were avid in their ambition to move up and indifferent to the projects of changing the world, rather being ready to change themselves to fit in better in the system (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 72).

Yuppies are ambitious young urban professionals having as their ideal professional position the management level of a private company, with top earnings among the salaried (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 80). The tendency to confuse young members of the capitalist class like Güler Sabancı and Leyla Alaton with yuppies should be countered, as yuppie status is acquired through hard work and education and not inherited from family (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 24). Middle and lower class families invested heavily in their children not only in terms of their scholarly education but also through various language, sports and arts courses in the hope of their turning into future yuppies (Kozanoğlu 1993, pp. 14, 155). Today, the frenzy of engaging the child with various courses throughout the week to the point of not leaving him/her a suitable time to play

or time to spend with family is still apparent especially among the upper middle class families. However, the rationale seems to conserve class status across generations, rather than a hope for further upward mobility. For the new middle class of the 2000s is trying to protect the ranks rather than opting for upward mobility: some of its members cling further to its privileges. Some are further precarianized and well aware of the situation, white-collar labor organizations emerge, together with the significant presence of the new middle class within the Gezi Protests (Şimşek 2014, p. 191). Şimşek (2014) illustrates well how the new middle class first emerged, then adopted a cultural strategy of condescension through a humor feeding on cynicism and irony in order to distinguish itself from the lower classes, ridiculing their habitus under the pretense of parodying turkishness, to adopt again a more inclusionary language during the 2000s, employing their previously status quoist humor as a tool of opposition against power. Thus, the new middle class together with its cluster of yuppies did not remain the same from the 1980s throughout the 2000s. Bali (2002, p. 344) states that the new middle classes that rose economically during the 1980s and 1990s are the ones that suffered the most from the economic crisis of 2001, ensuring a less glamorous and more modest life for the time being. Bali contends that these classes will regain their vitality together with economic recovery. However, the subsequent developments seem to contradict this prediction, as Şimşek (2014) had the opportunity to observe and incorporate into his book: As stated before, today's new middle class seems to struggle with its loss of trenches through different strategies of survival ranging from heavy investment in the next generation to organized labor activism. Şimşek (2014, p. 212) makes the half-prediction that capitalism seems to proceed towards a world without middle classes, making a Keynesian middle class scheme unlikely in the future. The new middle class lost ground not only in absolute economic terms, but also in terms of the glamour of the values it represented during the 1980s and 1990s, as consumerism became mainstream and less exciting, and the dreams of upward mobility or hitting the jackpot became more and more unrealistic for the modest folk, though not vanished for good yet.

Kozanoğlu (1993, pp. 9-10) states that the junta government made it impossible for the left to become a plausible alternative for the future, but was also deprived of the vision to propose another perspective that can appeal to new generations. This ideological vacuum was in fact filled by the glamour of the new consumption opportunities, by the

new dreams of social mobility, and by a new system of values praising money and the good life it proffers. Yuppies were the showcase of this new system of values and the proof of its viability. Journalists, especially columnists having an important capacity to influence public opinion in Turkey played a principal role in the dissemination and adoption of these new values. According to Bali (2002, p. 107), there is a special relationship between the journalists and the entrepreneurs that singles out the Turkish bourgeoisie from its Western counterpart. The author with numerous examples shows how the columnists integrated their columns with the businessmen's project of restituting their reputation and the columnists' own personal interest in belonging to the businessmen's entourage together with establishing connections with political figures. Accordingly, there developed a personal relationship between the columnists, the businessmen and the politicians; the former being invited to activities organized by the latter and both benefitting from the exchange: Whereas the columnist became like an honorary member of a powerful community and believed he "governed the world and the country from his own column" (Ege Cansen cited in Bali 2002, p. 255), the businessmen got free promotion for his/her reputation and the politicians found in the journalists allies to propagate the values of the new neoliberal order. Kozanoğlu (1995, pp. 43-56) considers the media as the "brother in arms" of the 80s' power alliance and criticizes their princes for showcasing their political connections. However, apart from being a matter of journalism ethics, the columnists' mannerless writings played a pivot role in the adoption of the new state of affairs by the society. Sabah as "the newspaper of the rising values" in the words of its then editor Zafer Mutlu (Kozanoğlu 1992, p. 113) was an example of this new tradition of journalism. Bali (2002) illustrates through numerous examples how the columnists made the promotion of a new lifestyle, filling the void left by the erosion of old valuesby their eulogies to yuppies and businessmen. Here is an excerpt from a column written by Hadi Uluengin in 1995 and cited by Bali (2002 pp. 105-106), illustrating how journalists ascribed the revolutionary position left vacant by the leftist figure to yuppies:

> *I positioned Turkey's 'yuppie's at the first rank of revolutionaries. I considered them the heraldists of a new bourgeoisie as much liberal in politics and as much libertarian in democracy as they are in economics. I esteemed them as the new members of a class to play a driving power role in the country's dynamics. I thought that the motto 'become rich' is of vital importance for Turkey. Besides, I saw young people choosing ties from Beymen and lady's suit from Vakko with due propriety*

and blending the local with the universal as carrying the day in living with taste. Even though fossils use the word as a swearword, I trusted in Turkey's yuppies.

Uluengin then grounds his opinions by giving examples from the discussions he held with prominent yuppies under special occasions, at the same time making a eulogy of his being a member of their entourage. This short excerpt illustrates much the role of the yuppie figure and its promotion by the columnists in Turkish society's adoption of neoliberal values of consumerism and individualism in the spirit of every man for himself; promising success and justice through competition. In the 1980s and throughout the world, the word yuppie had negative connotations for public opinion as the symbols of greed and the scapegoats of the 87 stock exchange crisis; in Turkey, however, they were viewed as the exemplars of a successful life and admired for their dynamism and diligence (Kozanoğlu 1993, p. 8). The first sentence of Uluengin positioning yuppies at the top rank of revolutionaries is an example of the columnists' ardor for heralding neoliberal values through the yuppie figure. In fact, the yuppies were "the antithesis of the leftist revolutionary in his/her credo in individualism rather than social consciousness, his/her belief in competition rather than in the spirit of sharing and in his/her identification with the system rather than revolting against it" (Kozanoğlu 1993, pp. 7-8). The concept of "competition" here, as made into the new basis of capitalism by German neoliberals (Foucault 2008) is key to understanding the new configuration: it provides a new rationale for grounding a key political value, "social justice" within a neoliberal paradigm, albeit in a transmogrified form. According to this credo, competition ensures that everyone gets his/her due share through hard work, diligence and personal industry, an approach blind to the structural inequalities inherent to the system. The yuppie figure and the new middle class are important therefore in terms of the symbolic contribution they make to the legitimacy of the new order. Therefore Kozanoğlu's (1993, p. 9-10) remark that the junta government prevented the left from becoming an alternative for the future without having another perspective to appeal to new generations should be qualified. The neoliberal policies adopted by subsequent governments, the rise of the new middle class with their cream layer of yuppies, the restitution of the businessmen's image (Bali 2002) and the endeavor of the columnists to propagate new values replaced the leftist communitarian imagination particularly through the legitimizing power of the concept of competition, substituting leftist visions of social justice with a new conception of "fair" competition, grounding

the hopes of a better future not through social but through individual salvation. According to Doğan (2016), the hopes for the future are still garnered through the grid of jumping class, now through the allegiance to the current ruling party.

This prospect of individual salvation resonated well with the rising individualism of the epoch. In fact, the previous two decades characterized by resistance to the system and the apprehension to change it, more or less synchronized with similar trends in the world was to leave its place to a happy integration with the system after 1980, especially in the case of its showcase yuppies, and then in the case of the new middle class. But to share the new times' spirit one needed not to be among the members of the rising classes as hopes of getting a share of the cake was sufficient for some. One of the buttresses of this integration with the system was the exculpation of selfishness to be enjoyed free reign without remorse. Belge (1997, p. 14) dubs the period as the "Me Era" and Kozanoğlu (1992, p. 123) distinguishes between the rise of individualism and that of rugged individualism to state that the period was marked by the latter. The difference may be apprehended through Belge's (1997, p. 48) statement that this was a type of individualization lived at the expense of others, rather than within a shared culture of sensible control and discipline. It may be inferred that in the Turkish case, rugged individualism took hold in a country without a deep-seated culture of individualism, leading to confusion between the two. Belge (1997, p. 97) contends that when a society aims for Westernization, the process is unending as each development in the West will be absorbed by the new generations through a distressful process. In every society this process unfolds differently and has different consequences. The transfer of rugged individualism from the West to Turkey seems therefore to have its own dynamics which, however, is beyond the scope of this study.

This integration of larger masses to the system has been affected by the diffusion of new consumption habits: as Gürbilek (2001) contends, the purported freedom of being selfish was primarily the freedom to engage in unfettered consumption. Consumption and the transition to the consumer society connects thus almost all the themes discussed thus far in this section of Turkey's transition to neoliberalism.

To begin with, one of the rationales behind the adoption of neoliberal policies throughout the world was the dropping rate of profits due to technological developments, decreasing the need for manual labor which brought forth the solution of enlarging the consumer base in order to gain from demand; the logic behind the notion of "democracy for the sake of profit" (Altan 1993, cited in Kozanoğlu 1995, p. 39). New consumption habits were inculcated through the valorization of new lifestyles adopted by the new middle classes and especially by yuppies. These new lifestyles, particularly based on an admiration of the United States, included new leisure activities changing the city life with new pubs and clubs, an augmented importance of apparel, a new emphasis on taste in the consumption of food, cigars and the like, all these celebrated as having a proper gusto for life by the press, and last but not least the differentiation of living and working spaces, the first through the emerging housing estates and the second through the rising *plaza*s[11] along the Zincirlikuyu-Maslak line, in the spirit of mimicking the West (Kozanoğlu 1993).Kozanoğlu (1992, p. 60) reveals how the affluent young with their debit cards, their cars and their financial investments in the stock market were considered to represent the youth in general, without any consideration for the excluded masses. This excluded youth was to play an important role in the rise of the Refah Party with its radical promises for solving the problems of the poor and oppressed during the 1990s (Kozanoğlu 1992, p. 65). Hence, the new middle class and yuppies as key actors in the legitimation of new policies formed themselves through adopting a new lifestyle in the creation of which consumption habits played an important role.

Not so recently, working in *plaza*s was something cool, a mode of being in the world coveted by many. Nowadays it is losing its bliss and is rather perceived as a kind of corporate slavery. Leaving white-collar careers for financially less secure but personally more desirable jobs is not uncommon. For instanceleaving one's career to pursue one's passion became more common. In fact, the rising trend today is turning the offices into living spaces, offering the employees various facilities like indoor sports halls or breathing therapy sessions; a range only limited by the designer's imagination. The only

[11]*Plaza* is a word used in Turkish to designate the then new workplaces established through the relocation of business centers in İstanbul. These are clusters of skyscrapers with security agents and baffle gates. Only those who possess an employee card can enter the building to reach their particular office. There is a strict dress code in the *plaza*s.

purpose of this arrangement however, is raising productivity. Comparing themselves to those working in *plaza*s, these employees are happier and better integrated into the system. In fact, it is about privileging part of the population based on their lifestyle which is a tactic of the system: it worked on *plaza* employees before and now it works on those working in the so called living spaces. The divide and rule strategy of capitalism thus continues to remain effective in renewed guises.

Before a discussion of the literature on consumerism, three pop songs from the 1990s and the 2000s will be analyzed to give a further impression of the cultural climate of these decades.

The 1990s are considered the Golden Age of Turkish pop music and not without a reason. The vitality and reach of pop music at the time were extensive as the songs remained innovative and bold. Gürbilek (2001, p. 102) argues in her 1992 copyrighted book that the hour of the promise of freedom offered by the 1980s was over at the time of the writing of her manuscript. However, it can be argued that the cultural explosion depicted by Gürbilek carried over to the 1990s, especially visible in the Turkish pop music's vitality of these times. The 1992 Tarkan hit "Kıl Oldum Abi" illustrates this point well.

I am pissed off man

In her best bib and tucker
And wearing bad make up
So messy and so ratty
I am pissed off man

In garments of all colors
A real miserable sight
What is more, her suck is gone!
I am pissed off man

I'd wanna run away
Having seen her in the dark
What is the matter with you?
What happened to you?

Get a hold of yourself
Turn round, look at yourself
Are you at war with mirrors?
I am pissed off man

The first thing to notice is the carefree joy of the song: it gives the impression of a little child testing its own boundaries, infringing them a little bit so as to provoke the joy of certain naughtiness without running the risk of being punished: the zenith of this naughtiness is the refrain "I am pissed off man", an expression finding a public presence maybe for the first time in Turkey, in a country where the limits of public expression have been regulated for a very long time. Figure 2.1 below illustrates a funny instance in Tarkan's experience of being pissed off at the protagonist.

Figure 2.1 :Frame from the video clip *Kıl Oldum Abi*

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pB-gSNevlnk

The line "Got a run in her tights too" plays also with the limits of what is proper to be spoken in public, as it is customary in Turkish society to handle such little accidents in appearance -that may be deemed improper- in private, usually through drawing apart the luckless person and murmuring the issue into his/her ear: the improperness is kept a secret and withheld from appearing in public. Tarkan, on the other hand, far from keeping the secret of his protagonist's tights, declares the issue to the whole nation, in the joyful spirit of stretching little social rules. Furthermore, a run in a pair of tights is a women's issue to be settled among women. Tarkan's interference as a man creates further improperness. The naiveté of the video clip adds up to the general ambience of

the song, the clothes of Tarkan and his entourage that are now out of fashion for 2000s' tastes create a certain irony for a song making fun of the appearance of its protagonist: a time when appearance and fashion became paramount but are still in their first steps. Orhan Tekelioğlu (2006, p. 115) in his book *Pop Yazılar* argues that Turkish pop music is a spontaneous east-west synthesis countering the efforts of the Kemalist elite to control the cultural sphere. According to the author, the route this synthesis followed has been from Kanto music to the operettas and then from *arabesk*to Turkish popmusic. Though this is a sound argument, Gürbilek's account shows us the importance of the developments in the cultural milieu during the 1980s, opening ground for new forms of cultural expression: the way the masses found expression to their own cultural demands has never been straightforward, but always charged with the contingencies of Turkish history. Tarkan's song testifies to the promises of this new arena of cultural expression: a certain feel of freedom and individuality, and the satisfaction derived from challenging the previous boundaries. It should be noted that at the time of the hit *Kıl Oldum Abi,* Tarkan received harsh criticism from various camps, some interpreting the lyrics as slang and thus improper, and some questioning the musical quality of the song by a comparison with older forms of Turkish music. It can be viewed from here that the mechanisms of policing the cultural arena were still at work at the beginning of the 1990s. However it can be said that the song by its popularity outlived its critics both in its own time as well as by its posterity, as it is still popular and has become almost a classic.

Whereas Tarkan's infringement of the old social conventions was somewhat unplanned, and gropingly, the ambition of Yonca Evcimik to break taboos was more planned. Though songs referring to sexuality appeared in the 1970s, the pop singers of the 1990s were bolder and more shameless (Dilmener, cited in Çakır 2010). It is perhaps no accident that the emergence of songs referring to sexuality coincides with the sex movies era of the Yeşilçam, similar in spirit in their vulgarity. These "sexploitation" (Arslan 2011) movies addressed the common male audience, its cuckolds chosen among actors poor in appearance like Aydemir Akbaş, facilitating the spectator's identification with the protagonist and its appropriation of his "accomplishments" with normally inaccessible women (Şen, 2015) This male oriented mentality is also present in the 1970s' sex referenced songs: They are made *for* a male audience and are somewhat

disinterested. In the 1990s, however, an individual claim to sexuality appears to be appropriated also by female voices. Evcimik's 1994 hit *Bandıra Bandıra* illustrates this point, Evcimik asserting her own sexuality not only through the lyrics of her songs but also through her garments, mannerism and dances.

The lyrics of the refrain of *Bandıra Bandıra* are as follows:

> *Dip into me eat me by dipping into*
> *Dip into me eat me by dipping into*
> *You cannot have enough of my taste*
> *I got all the gimmicks*
> *Become conscious of me*
> *Don't let your mind be engaged elsewhere*
> *What are you in elsewhere for?*
> *Dip into me eat me by dipping into*
> *You cannot have enough of my taste (Translation mine)*[12]
> *(Evcimik 1994)*

Figure 2.2 :Frame from the video clip Bandıra Bandıra

Source:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7uDYFxXwcg

In Figure 2.2 above, several novelties brought by Evcimik are at play, her provocative garments in their claim to a newly appropriated sexuality and the dancing group behind her, of which Evcimik is the lead dancer in her attempt to bring dance and choreography at the forefront of Turkish pop music.

[12]Bandıra bandıra… Bandıra bandıra ye / Bandıra bandıra ye beni / Hiç doyamazsın tadıma / Bütün numaralar bende / Sen de var benim farkıma / Kalmasın aklın başka yerde / Ne işin var başka yerde / Bandıra bandıra ye beni / Hiç doyamazsın tadıma

Though with bold references to sexuality, Bandıra Bandıra is far from being vulgar and is somewhat still naïve.

The hit pop songs of today are of a different feel, mostly displaying an unfounded self-confidence amounting almost to an arrogance, in a world where self-marketing is key to success. Hande Yener's 2016 hit *Mor* is an obvious example. The lyrics of the song are as follows in their English translation:

> *Red…*
>
> *You say: "There is something strange, I cannot name it"*
> *Some sort of lack that is spoiling your enjoyment*
> *Her coffee in the morning, her dinner in the evening, her make-up, her dress*
> *Let's let her struggle, she's got hard work but dubious*
>
> *Nope, even you search the world there is no other me*
> *Nope, if you say one must be modest*
> *It is just over, no offence*
> *And you, don't mind it*
>
> *What is it; you seem unhappy?*
> *Didn't it turn out the way you imagined?*
> *But the color red fitted well your face*
> *Couldn't the newcomer replace me?*
>
> *Red, red, red…*[13]
> *(Yener 2016)*

Hande Yener was introduced to Sezen Aksu by Hülya Avşar whom she met in a shop where she was working as a salesclerk and she performed as a vocalist for her for two years (Hande Yener n.d.) Sezen Aksu is known to make new stars rise through her support and connections. In these terms, Aksu somewhat used to guide the Turkish pop music for decades, introducing new talent to the music market. Yener's debut as an independent artist dates back to 2000, and she continues to be at the peak of her popularity. She attests of having been influenced by Madonna and is well known for her uncommon wear and hair styles, dubbed the Queen of Turkish pop music (Hande Yener n.d.).

[13] Mor…/ Var bir gariplik diyorsun koyamadığın adını / Bir eksiklik kaçıran ağzının tadını / Sabahına kahveyi, akşama yemeğini, makyajı elbisesi / Çabalayadursun işi zor ama şaibeli // Yok arasan da dünyayı başka bir ben yok / Mütevazi olmak lazım diyorsan yok / Bitti taze kusura bakma / Kafaya takma sen de // Noldu pek bir keyfin yok / Düşlediğin gibi olmadı mı? / Yakıştı ama sana mor renk çok / Gelen yerimi doldurmadı mı? / Mor, mor, mor…

Yener is famous for her stage shows clearly inspired by those of Madonna. For instance, in an anonymous article by Müzik on Air (2015) her concert of July 31 2015 in Harbiye is described as follows: The concert featured a team of 200 people and its rehearsals took 2 months. Yener donned 7 different costumes specially designed by the famous Turkish designer Hakan Akkaya as shown below in Figure 2.3. She descended to the scene on giant white wings as shown in figure 2.3, and donned another giant skirt during the show. One of the special surprises of the concert was the gladiator fight show of the world-known Stunttwins brothers; in fact, the audience was exposed to a cascade of surprises. The name of the online article reporting the show is also suggestive: "A show making world stars jealous of Hande Yener"

Figure 2.3 :Shot from the Harbiye 2015 concert of Hande Yener

Source: http://muzikonair.com/hande-yenerden-dunya-starlarini-kiskandiran-show/

Yener is also credited for taking part in several social responsibility projects. The incorporation of sign language into one of the songs in the above-mentioned concert is an example (Anon. 2015). However, nowadays Yener is mostly mentioned in the media

owing to her dispute with actress-singer Seren Serengil over Yener's ranking first in Telifmetre[14] (Anon. 2017c).

According to Milliyet, Serengil declared her incredulity towards Yener's success, who in response posted a topless picture of her on Instagram, who in turn implied that Yener was a drug addict; then Serengil posted a suggestive pose of Yener when the latter posted a declaration by Serengil of having been arrested in a drug operation when 15 years old.

If *Kıl Oldum Abi*, *Bandıra Bandıra* and *Mor*are compared, it can be said that there is a difference concerning the self-confidence of the performers. Yes, Tarkan plays with the limits of what is sayable in public, but there is still some timidity in this venture. Though he plays with the code and aims to transcend it, he knows he is not immune to the public assaults and that he is accountable and responsible for his behavior. Knowing that Tarkan sings Turkish classical music on special occasions and uses somewhat naughty lyrics but always remaining within limits, it can be said that Tarkan pleases everybody, balancing the naughty boy with the well-behaved one. Evcimik, on the other hand, does not challenge the code for the sheer pleasure of noncompliance as Tarkan does. She has a point. Her being able to express her own sexuality is important. Even today, aged 53, Evcimik has not lost much from her appearance and brings up the topic of sexuality in her interviews emphasizing its naturalness (Anon. 2017d).

Mor, on the other hand, attests to a self-confidence lived at the expense of others. The difference between individualism and rugged individualism becomes therefore apparent here. In the quarrelling exchange with Seren Serengil, we see that the line of challenging the norms has already been surpassed, but this is not a purposeful challenging of the norms as a political stance: in fact, fame carries one above social rules. Not binding by the norms therefore is not a manifestation of a sensible challenge to change society but becomes a demonstration of the challenger's exceptional status: his/her being above society's rules. Furthermore, celebrities are credited for their special position regarding social norms, as if their immunity emanating from their fame

[14]Telifmetre is a web portal keeping track of songs as they are broadcast on radio and television channels on a 7/24 basis. The songs, radio and TV channels followed by Telifmetre are limited to those having purchased the service (Yılmaz, 2014).

stemmed from the boldness of their caracter. Thus Yener does not refrain from engaging in an underbelly quarrel with a rival without the fear of losing face and in fact probably uses the occasion as advertising material. Turkish context is very much in line with the world in these terms, though there are still limits to what is acceptable.

The self-confidence in *Mor* amounts to arrogance as the lyrics declare modesty dead. Yener's scolding her ex-lover with a declaration her uniqueness resonates well in a society torn between eulogies to confidence and a salient culture of self-effacing, confusing many on the meaning of self-esteem. The pattern of scolding the ex with condescension is not unique to this song, as examples like *Bangır Bangır* of Gülşen or *Sıfır Tolerans* by Hadise shows. The confusion over the self-esteem of Turkish people seems to have expressed itself through the scolding of ex-lovers. In a parallel manner, many comments in online environments, such as Youtube, reflect a similar confusion between self-esteem and license; as disrespectful attitudes legitimize themselves on the freedom of expression. This is a new-found self-confidence through belittling or disrespect, one of the last children of rampant individualism.

As stated before, this study stands on two pillars emanating from the same origin, namely intimacy in neoliberal Turkey. The first pillar consists of the case study of Men's Health Turkey's contents on sexuality and relationships, a men's magazine on wellbeing, nutrition and fitness that addresses primarily to middle to upper middle class men. The second pillar is a case study on the Esra Erol marriage show, which addresses to relatively lower segments of society. The impact of neoliberalism on sexuality is therefore scrutinized through the case of the middle to upper middle classes whereas the impact of neoliberalism on family is observed through the case of lower classes.

There are two main developments each associated with these two pillars in the above picture of neoliberal Turkey. The first is the substitution of social justice with that of competition. In this vein, sexuality especially for middle to upper middle class (men)[15] has become a field of competition whereby accumulating sexual experience both in terms of quantity and variety became a matter of status. True, some men's boasting about their sexual adventures is not something particular to the neoliberal era but new

[15] Acquiring status through one's sexual exploits affected also some women but to a much lesser extent as the prevalent norm is still sexual purity for women and sexual enterprise for men.

discourses on sexuality and new platforms such as smartphone applications or websites designed to meet new people mostly for the purpose of sexual encounter changed the outlook of sexual intimacy for the good.

The second is the rise of the periphery as discussed by Gürbilek (2001). *The Esra Erol Show* is a reality show, and the subject matter of Reality Shows is for the most part ordinary people, who correspond in Turkey's case to the very periphery mentioned thus far. Therefore, the reproduction of the family institution takes place in the neoliberal texture of a reality show.

However, this division of labor should not be taken to represent a clear cut reflection of the reality split into two neat parts. The changes in sexuality may filter down to lower classes and strategies adopted by the periphery for becoming famous through the opportunities of, for instance, reality shows may also be adopted by upper classes. The methodological side to this division of labor should therefore be born in mind.

The transformation of sexuality into a field of competition is related to commodification and consumerism having taken a new shape with the advent of neoliberalism, which will be addressed below.

2.3 COMMODIFICATION and CONSUMERISM under NEOLIBERALISM

"Worries about commodification are as old as the market itself, but these worries appear to have grown with the increasingly consumeristic character of contemporary society and the remarkable social changes of the last ten years," states Edward Song in an article written in 2003 (p. 109). As the market's logic stretches to ever new domains, we witness that any imaginable thing can turn into a commodity now. Though Marx did not invent the term "commodification," his analyses of the commodity formed the basis of the subsequent study of commodification, showing again how the problem of commodification is coextensive with the history of capitalism (2003).However, commodification and consumerism seem to have taken a new turn with the advent of neoliberalism, both in terms of intensification and qualitative change.

David Harvey (2007) dubs the process as "the commodification of everything" and lays out the neoliberal logic promoting it: in fact, the neoliberal presumption that markets are the best way for allocating resources thanks to their mechanisms of signals means accepting that everything can be treated as a commodity, including processes, things and social relations (p. 165). Yet, Harvey mostly addresses the commodification processes when there is a question of monetary exchange, when the item of commodification is actually for sale. However, the process of commodification under neoliberalism can be understood in much broader terms, as the market logic of exchange and competition need not necessarily include monetary exchange in order to function. A reference to Lukács would be convenient for proceeding.

Written almost a century ago, in 1923, Georg Lukács' arguments developed through a close reading of the chapter on commodity fetishism in *DasKapital* in his book,*History and Class Consciousness* sound like as if pronounced today, like prophesizing the advent of neoliberalism:

> *The transformation of the commodity relation into a thing of 'ghostly objectivity' cannot therefore content itself with the reduction of all objects for the gratification of human needs to commodities. It stamps its imprint upon the whole consciousness of man; his qualities and abilities are no longer an organic part of his personality, they are things which he can "own" or "dispose of" like the various objects of the external world. And there is no natural form in which human relations can be cast, no way in which man can bring his physical and psychic "qualities" into play without their being subjected increasingly to this reifying process (1971, p. 100).*

Reification, literally meaning 'thingification,' "refers to the transformation of human properties, relations, processes, actions, concepts, etc. into things … with a life of their own" (Vandenberghe, ¶ 2). Lukács developed upon the Marxist problematic of fetishization, whereby social relations between persons appear as relations between things, and drawing also on Weber and Hegel, viewed reification as a "'universal structuring principle' which 'penetrates society in all its aspects,' including human subjectivity itself" (Vandenberghe, Burris p. 12).

It is true that under neoliberalism, human subjectivity itself becomes commodified in all its various aspects. The self in its entirety is in fact commodified as addressed by Joseph E. Davis (2003). The author proposes two possible definitions of self-commodification, the first concerning the appropriations of the traits of commodities to build an identity,

and the second being personal branding, a practice of manipulating our personal resources to craft an image of ourselves for economic gain, hence another name for understanding oneself as an enterprise. Market relations become therefore the model for organizing personal lives and relations.

Hence, a limited definition of commodification as the transformation into an object of monetary exchange is therefore insufficient. Davis states that "to commodify something is to relate to it as an object that can be bought and sold, or as Marx would say, as an object that has 'exchange value' in a market" (p. 48). Here will however be introduced an objection to the first part of this definition on the basis that "exchange value in the market" need not necessarily mean monetary value. The commodification of sex is a case in point. By commodification of sexuality is not meant the selling and buying of sexual favors within a specific market. Rather it is pointed out that sex has acquired commodity-like properties, has become a thing, a thing that can be exchanged in a market, that can be accumulated, and on which one can legitimately apply the distinctions of use and exchange value. It may be said that the motivation to increase one's exchange value in the social market has become as much of a legitimate motive as the satisfaction of sexual or romantic wants in the experience of sexuality. The probability of boasting on the sheer number of partners or on the eccentricity of the experience one lived; in a word sexuality's becoming fad pushes sexuality from its privacy forward to the public sphere. Of course, sexuality has long been regulated, meaning that it always had a public side but now it is through the actions of the individuals and not through those of the state or any other regulating authority that sexuality becomes situated within the public domain: the proper site of competition.

Commodification of course goes hands in hand with consumerism, which is Capitalism's fuel according to Andrea Migone (2007) states that capitalism is "a 'growth only model,'" and that even the maintenance of the status quo is negatively connoted as "stagnation" (p. 182). Accordingly, both Fordism and Post-Fordism, the first coinciding with the Keynesian phase and the second with the neoliberal era discussed above relied on consumerism to maintain the capitalist system.

Therefore, according to Migone, we witnessed a passage from consumerism to hedonistic consumption with neoliberalism. There is an emphasis on the unequal distribution of consumption power under hedonistic consumerism but the concept is not well-defined, apart from the definition of Colin Campbell who invented the term. Accordingly, hedonistic consumption "is based on the psychological process of daydreaming. After biological desires are fulfilled, consumers must consistently reinvent new desires to keep consuming," which produces a "cycle of dream, desire, acquisition, and disillusionment" and therefore the need for ever new products to consume (p. 183). Apart from the explanations of consumption through its power to confer status, which will be introduced below, Migone's analysis drawing on psychological factors gives a clue about how consumption works at the level of desire. Therefore, humans are not cool-headed calculators with rationalized decisions to consume in order to upgrade their status. Consumption may be a process of desire, temporary satisfaction as well as disillusionment.

There is another term in Migone, self-referencing consumption, which has also been a feature of Fordism, but which intensified with post-Fordism. Victor Lebow's (1955, p. 7) words from his 1955 paper are illuminating:

> *Our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfactions, our ego satisfactions, in consumption. The measure of social status, of social acceptance, of prestige, is now to be found in our consumptive patterns. The very meaning and significance of our lives today expressed in consumptive terms. The greater the pressures upon the individual to conform to safe and accepted social standards, the more does he tend to express his aspirations and his individuality in terms of what he wears, drives, eats, his home, his car, his pattern of food serving, his hobbies.*

The instructions of Lebow back in 1955 seem to have become reality today, in a society where all seek their spiritual and ego satisfactions as well as social acceptance through the goods they consume. Consumption became the way through which individuals build their identities by appropriating the attributes of the commodities they consume, as Davis (2003) states and the matrix through which they relate to others. The transformation of advertisement is a case in point. Advertisement strategies before were based on emphasizing the utility of the consumption items in order to convince the consumer. They are now produced according to subtle psychological mechanisms,

whereby the adoption of a certain product is associated with specific personality traits which the consumer would desire to endorse. Both belonging and identity are now predicated on consumption patterns, which explains the endless push for consumerism and today's hedonistic consumption patterns. When experienced as consumption, sexuality also becomes a means of expressing the individuality of the consumer together with other consumption items enumerated by Lebow. However, in the case of sexuality, as in the case of proper consumer items such as food and cars, consumption, in the last analysis, will only create identity through a dazzling diversity of consumption choices. The porn industry's habit of classifying sexuality into ever new fabrications such as "one tit porn" videos mimic the supermarket's supply of different products for different tastes all over the shelves, and the experience of sexuality becomes more and more like the experience of consumption.

Capitalism's reliance on consumerism may be easy to understand but its appeal to its consumers is another question. Trevor Norris' article "Consuming Signs, Consuming the *Polis*: Hannah Arendt and Jean Baudrillard on Consumer Society and the Eclipse of the Real", provides an answer by showing how today human relations have become increasingly mediated by objects. Accordingly, "the act of consumption [has become] our primary mode of insertion into the world and experience of participation in something beyond ourselves" (¶ 3), as "we internalize the act of purchasing and translate this experience onto all other human activities and aspects of our social existence" (¶ 3). This ideologically-based consumerism therefore becomes a mode of participation and self-expression and belonging, under the erosion of traditional communal institutions such as family, nation and religion. Consumerism therefore provides a sense of meaning, of direction in the atomic world of modernity. It can be said furthermore that consumption is one of the primary means through which one's insertion to the social hierarchy, hence to the modern society, is realized. Veblen and Baudrillard provide different frameworks to understand this point.

According to Veblen, as societies evolved from peaceful communities into adopting warlike habits, a leisure class emerged on the twofold condition of a) a predatory habit of life for the community (subsistence through war or hunting), and b) the guarantee of a community's subsistence making possible the exemption of some of its members from

routine labor. The institution of the leisure class emerged therefore from an early discrimination of two types of employment, one deemed worthy and the other unworthy: respectively exploit and industrial labor providing the necessities of life.

According to Veblen, the leisure class' prime motivations are status, distinction, reputability and honor; acquired through the means of conspicuous leisure and conspicuous consumption. Conspicuous leisure is the manifestation of the leisure class' exemption from productive work, essential for producing the necessities of life. Conspicuous consumption is the consumption of more than what is necessary, and is a manifestation of the leisure class' ability to spend conspicuously without producing. Both conspicuous consumption and conspicuous leisure bestow honor and status to their actors. According to Veblen, in modern times, conspicuous consumption has become more important in bestowing reputability than conspicuous leisure.

Through Ayata's article on the use of *salon* in 1980s Turkey among middle class urban families living in apartments, one can see the impact of time on conspicuous consumtion. "*Salon*" in the Turkish context is the biggest room in the flat, reserved for the special use such as the hosting of specific guests, whereas *oturma odası* is part of the inner house where daily activities by all members of the family are conducted and close visitors are accepted. *Salon* and *oturmaodası* host different guests. "The usual principle is receiving the stranger to *salon,* and those deemed close, intimate… to the inner house (Ayata, p. 6). Also, the male guest is confined to thes*alon*. The inner house is a predominantly female and intimate sphere. In its main component, *oturmaodası*, the furniture is worn out and over-used, the principle is comfort rather than display. *Salon*, on the other hand emerges as the display window of the house with its conspicuous furniture and furnishings, remaining unused except for the reception of specific guests.

Salon emerges as the place of the symbolic consumption of the family. Investment in *salon* furniture and furnishings is a form of conspicuous consumption in order to mark the place of the family in wider society. To take care of this investment is the role of the housewife. It is her duty to persuade her husband to buy new items and furniture for *salon*. Families, lest falling behind in the status competition, may take financial risks such as buying furniture on credit or in installments. As it is the housewife's duty to

persuade the husband to invest in *salon*, *salon* is also viewed as an indicator of a husband's devotion to his wife by the extended family. To sum up, "*salon* is the showcase of man's professional success and of woman's status in and outside the house" (Ayata, 1988, p. 19).

One can observe important differences between today and the late 1980s. The prime difference is the individualization of conspicuous consumption. Ayata's study presents us a world where the unit of consumption is the family. At the end, men and women's statuses are derivative of their families' status, as the family is also the unit of the status competition. A similar picture emerges from Okur's (2007) study on *Hayat* magazine, as the inculcation of consumerism to middle classes is affected through familial roles. Today however, conspicuous consumption is much more individualized. Also, there is a shift concerning the showcases of conspicuous consumption, from physical spaces to cyber environments such as Facebook and Instagram. People individually post from their individual accounts what they individually do, eat, spend, buy and so on. The unit of competition is the individual.

In fact consumption's conferring status is not new but the compartmentalization of consumption items marking class differentials gave way to a somewhat different picture with the advent of neoliberalism: as this latter was entrenched, more and more lower classes joined the race for status through consumption from which they were previously exempt for good or bad. For instance, Sancar (2014, p. 105), citing Akşit (2010), states that the women's magazines in the early 20th century Ottoman Empire played an important role in initiating Ottoman women to modern consumption habits through advertisements about cosmetics and fashion. Considering the low literacy rate in the Ottoman Empire, and that education among women was a scarce resource, it can be inferred that the target population of these new consumption habits were women from the upper strata. A few decades later in 1950s, in the aftermath of scarcity days marked by wars, the rise of mass production and consumption also affected Turkey. In her study in Hayat Magazine published between 1956 and 1978, Okur (2007) shows how the periodical took on the mission of educating its middle class readers into the manners of national and international gentry by enticing the former to emulate the latter's habits of conspicuous consumption. In Turkey, those working for minimum wage or even those

from the ranks of the precariat are well-known for their use of the most expensive smartphones in the market if one leaves aside luxury products specially designed for high-profile customers. Reserving a disproportionate amount of the budget to luxury items to acquire status is not unique to Turkey and is one of the ways through which class distinctions seem to blur. The other is in fact the trickling down of consumption habits down through the classes and their kind of democratization. For instance, going to Starbucks was something cooler when it first got its franchises in Turkey, but it becomes more and more of an ordinary experience shared by a larger community. This process of democratization is never straightforward and does not tend towards the elimination of class differences: some of the habits and consumer items cannot get democratized, the democratization usually occurs through a process of cheapening down which diminishes its ability to confer status, and the upper strata always finds new ways of upholding its privilege through the invention of new consumption habits. In this way, class differences are blurred but never transcended; the walls separating them having become maybe thicker, but imperceptible as if made from glass. Almost everybody can consume now except from an underclass almost totally cast out from the system, and almost everybody is now implicated in the race for distinction.

Under this study, it is argued that today one can talk about a conspicuous consumption of sex, which shares the fate of other consumption items as it went through commodification. It is a known fact that sexual conquest of women by heterosexual men is long established as a token of repute and boasting. The Vicomte de Valmont in the novel and the movie Liasons Dangeureuse who sacrifices the only love he found in life for his profound reputation as a vicious seducer is an example from fiction. However today, we are not talking about conquest and seduction but about sheer consumption of sex. In the conquest and seduction scheme, the scenario of seduction takes place in a milieu of social relationships. This means that the play of seduction takes its value through the identity of the seduced woman including her social milieu.[16] In today's dating websites or applications however, although the users might have

[16] A similar argument is discussed by Caro Baroja (1965, p. 110) concerning Don Juan: The character evokes such fascination because in a country prizing both prestige and female sexual honor to theextreme, Don Juan's conquests were all the more fascinating. The motive is similar for Vicomte de Valmont, he chooses his prey on the basis of her reputation for an immutable chastity. The degree of difficulty of the conquest matched therefore the value of the triumph. Facile triumphs are more sought for today.

criteria in selecting the women they approach, quantity matters first. These dating websites and applications matchmade many loving couples, but they are also heavily used to for the purpose of sexual matchup in the spirit of consumption. Veblen argues that as the end in material accumulation is to rank higher among the community, there is no end to pecuniary accumulation. The same is true with sex, which became quantifiable and able to be accumulated through commodification.

As said, consumerism is today an ideology interpellating subjects qua individuals, an individuating ideology. According to Baudrillard (1981, 1996, 1998), consumption is a phenomenon specific to the capitalist era, and the buying, possession, enjoyment and spending of objects and material goods from time immemorial not amounting to consumption; till the emergence of a cultural system of signs organizing objects and goods into an arrangement of significations, placing their possessors hierarchically within the economic order. It is a system of status and differentiation as in the case of Veblen, but a more complicated one as Baudrillard makes a semiotics of consumerism. According to Baudrillard, therefore, "consumption means an activity consisting of the systematic manipulation of signs" (1996, p. 200) as "individuals define themselves through their objects" (1996, p. 195). In the consumer society, all other means of acquiring rank gradually leave their place to the code of status of consumerism. According to Baudrillard, to become an object of consumption, an object must become a sign, acquiring its meaning from its relationship with its fellow sign-objects, to be consumed in its difference. Accordingly, consumption has nothing to do with the satisfaction of needs or the reality principle but with the endless multiplication of sign-objects.

One can argue that sex or women have become signs, opening up all possible analogies with sign-objects. Baudrillard argues at one point that "the whole philosophy of idealized consumption is based on the replacement of live, conflictual human relationships by a 'personalized' relationship to objects" (1996, p. 187). Transformation of sex and women into sign-objects pertains to the invasion of the remaining fortresses of human interaction by the ideology of consumerism, thanks to the neoliberal assault on the private sphere. The activity of sex becomes a privileged sign among other signs, hierarchically inserting its "possessors" within the economic system, as sex has now

become something that can be accumulated and possessed like regular objects. This is also seen in the exaltation of bodies symbolic for their beauty and sexual appeal, which, though granted social advantage throughout centuries, seem to enjoy now the pinnacle of their prestige as their appearance manifests their advantage in the sexual competition.

2.4 A BRIEF OUTLINE of the HISTORY of SEXUALITY in TURKEY

Material on the history of sexuality is either scarce or hard-to-get; this section thus provides a preliminary sketch of the evolution of sexuality in Turkey from the country's foundation to this day –including a brief glance at the Ottoman Empire- mostly through discussing the cultural productions and trends of the times as relevant to sexuality and man-woman relationships. The general outline gives the impression that sexual trends in Turkey reflected sexual currents in the world –read the West- to a certain extent, with its own peculiarities. The history of sexuality in Turkey is therefore a history of a dialogue with the West, to be presented below.

Bardakçı (1992) in his book,*Osmanlı'da Seks: Sarayda Gece Dersleri*, unearths Ottoman sexual texts from the archives and argues that there was much sexual liberty at the time. Though it might be argued that there surely was a liberty in speaking about sex, and that sexuality in classical Ottoman times was far from being organized around heterosexist normativity, the presented texts do not satisfactorily paint a picture of sexual liberty for all, and transgressions of sexual norms are dealt with according to class and gender differentials. Men seem to benefit both from marriage with up to four women –though a minority practice-, sex with female slaves and from a pederasty institutionalized mainly around Turkish baths where boys provided sexual services at an officially fixed price. The following lines are from Kabusname written in Farsi in 1082 and translated into Ottoman during the 15th century:

> *…Turn towards women when it is summer and towards boys when it is winter for a healthy body. Yet boys' flesh is hot, two hot together during the summer spoils the body. As to women's flesh, it is cold. Two cold together during the winter desiccates the body…*

According to Dellakname translated by Bardakçı, (gang) raping boys from humble backgrounds became almost an institutionalized way of providing baths with required labor as these boys could no more practice another trade and needed institutionalized

protection. Other sources attest to the presence of lesbian relationships among elite women, in an example between the wife of a high Ottoman official and her gypsy mistress, the fate of the three differing according to their class and gender status: the wife is sent to Bursa to remain under supervision, the husband is exiled and the gypsy dancer is executed in seclusion. From the adventures of another official's wife in the 16th century, it can be inferred that elite women benefited from the privileges of differential treatment in cases of adultery, as only the ones from common folk such as male lovers or connection providing servants got punished, this usually through execution. Female prostitution though widespread was illegal, women caught in the act usually were sent to exile or incarcerated. The end of adultery for a Muslim woman with a non-muslim man was death, but the text only states that the punishment of adultery between (Muslim) men and women is set in the court according to sharia. Therefore, it cannot be inferred how lenient was the Empire concerning illegal sexuality among common folk. On the other hand, bahnames addressing both the sultans and the commons provided information on heterosexual intercourse and gave instructions on different sexual positions as well as practical information for optimizing pleasure. The gross nature of many early Nasreddin Hodja anecdotes opens a window to the lower estates' sexuality unrestricted at least in its verbal expression. Therefore, it might be premature to conclude that Ottomans were sexually freer, but the principles of the regulation of sexuality were much more different. According to Hür (2013), the transition to heterosexist normativity dates back to the Tanzimat Era marked by westernization and the normalization of man-woman relationships: the period is described by the official historian Ahmet Cevdet Pasha in Maruzat as the rise of interest towards women to the detriment of boys, almost putting an end to male homosexuality, together with new methods facilitating female to male encounters. Ahmet Cevdet Pasha narrates the developments as if narrating a change of fashion but here is an important transition from a pre-modern gender regime to a modern one for better or for worse with its complicated dynamics. By the birth of the Republic, heterosexual normativity was well established.

The status of women changed considerably after the establishment of the Republic, which became a privileged symbol of the regime. These changes in fact had their roots in the 19th century Ottoman Empire, as from the Tanzimat on women's status came to

be problematized first by male intellectuals aspiring for a different social life and then by Ottoman elite women who more and more became active in the press to voice their claims for equality (Sancar 2014). There have been some experiments for instituting a new family law whereas new educational opportunities though limited were made available to urban women who then adopted professions in fields like teaching or nursing. As Sancar (2014) demonstrates, both rural and urban women were active participants in the National Struggle as they contributed heavily to war efforts shouldering the burden at home front together with warring men in trenches.

Many feminists reassessed the Kemalist reforms concerning women that they termed state feminism and brought significant criticism qualifying the regime's claim for having established women's emancipation. Accordingly, the granting of civil rights and political rights to women between 1926 and 1934 did not guarantee them equal participation to public life as full citizens, as women's primary sphere remained the family (Sancar 2014). Whereas Berktay (2004, p.55) states that the new state remained patriarchal albeit in a different way, Durakbaşa (1998, p.25) argues that their new careers did not guarantee Republican women full control over their own lives.

According to Berktay (2004), the Republican elite both genuinely cared for and instrumentalized women's emancipation which was seen as a symbol of modernization and secularism. As the seclusion of women symbolized sharia for the Ottoman Empire, gender equality was to be the symbol of the New Republic (p. 18). Accordingly, as the new women internalized her role within the new regime and deemed feminist goals accomplished, an independent feminist movement had to wait for the 1980s to emerge.

Durakbaşa (1998, p.52) discusses the accounts of early Republican female scientists who state unanimously that they never faced gender discrimination those days. The author cites Ferhunde Özbay who in a panel discussion attributed these claims to the pervasiveness of patriarchy making us view the world from its lenses. As Durakbaşa shows, the Republican ideology did not discriminate against women and men on the basis of their intellectual and vocational capacities, and encouraged women to join the ranks of the professionals and to socialize with men. It can be hypothesized that Republican men praised their daughters more than their female peers and supported

their intellectual and vocational pursuits in a spirit of protection and affection, a pattern replicated both in Atatürk's real relationship with his adopted daughters and in his being "the whole nation's symbolic father" (Durakbaşa 1998, p.44). It seems therefore that the Republican men acted in the spirit of emancipating women without relinquishing their privileges.[17]

According to Helvacıoğlu (2006) and İlkkaracan (2008), the new woman of the Republic was constructed as asexual for the sake of exorcizing the concerns over her accession to the public sphere. For Kandiyoti (1998, p. 46), Adıvar's novels reveal that sacrificing her sexuality and femaleness is the tacit condition for women's access to the public sphere. Durakbaşa (1998, p.44) states that women learned to disguise their sexuality as they navigated within the public sphere.

This last criticism seems rather unbalanced. The equation of female asexuality for the sake of women's access to the public sphere is problematic. The expression of sexuality is regulated by all societies and can be rather argued that there has been a passage from a regulation through physical segregation into a regulation through decorum irrespective of gender.[18] Female chastity was of major importance within the context of nation building struggle against imperialism: it marked the nation's distinctive identity vis-à-vis the West functioning both as the enemy and the model (Sancar 2014). The 1926 Civil Code reflected this spirit, to be discussed below. Rather, sexuality was now confined to the institution of monogamous heterosexual marriage, the nuclear family as the smallest unit forming the nation.

Not surprisingly, there is a striking difference between the Ottoman texts presented by Bardakçı and the texts that were in circulation during the Early Republic referring to sexuality. There might be a shift from *ars erotica* to *scientia sexualis*, or in other words what happens is the medicalization of sexuality. Foucault (1978, pp. 67-68) describes this medicalization that happened in late 19th century Europe as follows:

[17] All these are not supposed to dismiss Republican reforms which brought considerably significant improvements. Maybe the main problem was men's neutralization of the nascent feminist movement as the Early Republic was averse to alternative sources of political power. As a result, reforms were realized as a granting of rights from men to women.

[18] The attire of women in the photographs from the period, reflecting a European elegance supports rather this hypothesis.

> *[T]he sexual domain was no longer accounted for simply by the notions of error or sin, excess or transgression, but was placed under the rule of the normal and the pathological (which, for that matter, were the transposition of the former categories); a characteristic sexual morbidity was defined for the first time; sex appeared as an extremely unstable pathological field.*

For the Christian tradition, flesh was the source of all evils and the Church only tolerated sexuality for the sake of reproduction. According to Foucault (1978, p. 47), it is through the therapeutization of the Christian tradition of confession that discourses on sexuality forming the basis of *scientia sexualis* emerged in the West. A similar rupture possibly happened in Turkey: sexuality during the Early Republic was to be conceptualized following the discourses of the nascent science of sexology –scientia sexualis-, be that through translated work or domestic production.

Therefore, during the first decades of the Republic, sexuality is no more problematized in terms of optimizing pleasure –the occupation of classical texts- but as Sarıtaş (2012, p. 74) shows in her study of the magazine *Seksoloji: Cinsel Bilgiler Mecmuası* (*Sexology: Sexual Information Magazine*)[19] published in Turkey between 1949-1954, it has rather turned into a site of intervention for the state and the public with the aim of protecting the middle class urban family from the threat of degeneration. As Sarıtaş demonstrates, there was a conscious attempt to regulate sexuality through science, namely through sexology that emerged in 19th century Europe, building on the dichotomies of normal/abnormal or healthy/perverse: Sexual education was essential to protect the family from the threats of degeneration and barbarism, ensuring the nurturing of healthy generations for the future of the nation.

According to Sarıtaş (2012, p. 36) the following topics were problematized throughout the magazine: the nature of sexual desire, prostitution, molestation, rape, STDs and homosexuality. A common thread is the uneven treatment of men and women. Accordingly, sexual desire is the preserve of men whereas for women it is considered perverse, prostitution is a necessary evil to protect the family and the public order, molestation is a threat to civil life but women share half the responsibility, rape is viewed as a rare pathology and a result of male physiology rather than as a question of

[19]A large number of writings in Seksoloji consist of translations from American and European sources, the remaining being written mostly by doctors, legal experts and intellectuals; the magazine's discourse taking shape around the concepts of family, nation and civilization.

power, whereas homosexuality is considered a perversity from which children should be protected. Sarıtaş also relates that practices such as zoophilia, sadism, necrophilia are addressed as strange and foreign incidents and that sexology adopted a pronatalist policy, a topic to be addressed below within its general framework.

Figure 2.4 :**Human Life Series Published by Hadise Yayınevi**

Source: "Çizim Kapak Kitap Müzayedesi" 2017. Retrieved from https://www.peramezat.com/index.php?islem=muzayede-urunler&link=cizim-kapak-kitap-muzayedesi&z_id=555&sira=lot_a&sayfa=1 and https://www.peramezat.com/index.php?islem=muzayede-urunler&link=cizim-kapak-kitap-muzayedesi&z_id=555&sira=lot_a&sayfa=2

According to Yazıcı Yakın (2012, pp. 87-90), publications targeting a female audience and fed by the then popular science of sexology mushroomed in Turkey between 1930-1960, and produced an eclectic discourse articulating themes related to religion,

etiquette and sexual health, penetrating the quotidian life. These publications purport to guide a woman throughout the different stages of her life, which according to Yazıcı Yakın amounts in fact to her internalization of men's demands. The author argues that purportedly objective science here is at the service of controlling and regulating the female body and the institution of marriage. Accordingly, a woman's lifetime is supposed to conform to specific scientific and moral norms; as hysterical crises, infidelity, premarital sex, not having children or pursuing too much sexual pleasure become incidences spoiling the scenario drawn for women. Some of the publications illustrated in Yakın's article are books from a series published by Hadise Yayınevi in 1956, named *Human Life Series* and composed from the following books shown in figure 2.4 above.

The titles are as follows: i) *How can I tell my daughter! Everything a damsel must now.* ii) *I can't tell anybody! Everything a married woman must know.* iii) *How can I tell my son! Everything a young man must know*. iv) *Everything a widowed woman must know.* v) *Everything an engaged girl must know*. vi) *What should be known in the first step of marriage: The wedding night…*,vii) *Why do women cheat?*,viii) *Oh those women!*,ix)*Danger of a mistress formarried women?*,x) *Everything an adolescent girl must know.* xi) *Everything a married man must know.* xii) *Everything an adolescent boy must know.*

As can be observed from these titles, the discourse of sexology aimed to guide the citizens through the different stages of their lives. Women were given a privileged role in the maintenance of the family institution and were therefore the primary targets of this discourse. The series published by Hadise Yayınevi features three books exclusively addressing men (Everything a young man must know; Everything a married man must know; Everything an adolescent boy must know) and another relating to both sexes (What should be known in the first step of marriage – Wedding night). It is possible that women were not the only targets of the sexology discourse, but men also took somewhat a lesser share of its disciplining procedures.

The main problematic according to Yazıcı Yakın (2012) is the inculcation of the principles of the "art of femininity" to women and to teach them the profession of being

the perfect wife, which in fact amounts to shaping oneself according to the demands and needs of one's husband; among them frugality in sexual desire –an excess in desire for women is considered genetic- ; adaptation to the husbands' personal interests; keeping the husband well-fed, clean, healthy, and sexually satisfied as well as preventing the naturally polygamous man from having a roving eye through the careful revealing of one's sexuality bit by bit, to preserve a certain feel of mystery.

This discourse of drawing the contours of the perfect wife is not a phenomenon peculiar to Turkey. For instance, the 1950s in the United States were a time of the reestablishment of middle class gender roles as men coming from trenches were expected to take their jobs back and send women home who replaced them during war.[20] As the media disseminated images of domesticity requiring women to be ideal wives, home keepers and mothers; women contributed to the waging of the Cold War through the upkeep of the family and consumerism –contributing to the realization of the American way of life- (Getchell n. d.). The Turkish case is possibly shaped by the anxieties of the abrupt transition from an Islamic empire into a nation state, necessitating the construction of a new society from almost scratch. New men and women of the Republic who were to be its founders, were given their roles through discourses articulated to international trends, such as the sexological one. Nuclear family as the unit forming the nation was of peculiar importance: the role of women was to participate in nation building through the building of the family as Sancar argues (2014).

The emergence of disciplinary power and biopower from the 17th century on in the West marks, according to Foucault (1978, pp. 131-143) the point where "the ancient right to ***take*** life or ***let*** live was replaced by a power to ***foster*** life or ***disallow*** it to the point of death." The classical privilege of the sovereign power –its right over life and death- was now replaced by discipline and biopolitics, two forms of power acting upon life.

[20] Despite the comeback of the male breadwinner ideal, many women were unwilling to relinquish their professional lives, so one-third of the labor force was constituted of women during peacetime(Getchell n. d.).

The concept of biopower developed by Foucault (1978, pp. 139-143) is considered to be a society's "threshold of modernity" by the philosopher (Kristensen 2013, p. 24). According to Foucault (1978, p. 139), whereas disciplines targeted the body as a machine, aiming to optimize its usefulness, biopower was concerned with:

> *…the species body, the body imbued with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary. Their supervision was effected through an entire series of interventions and regulatory controls: a biopolitics of the population.*

Thus discipline targeted the individual body to increase its utility whereas biopolitics concerned itself with the regulation of populations –species body- be that through policies of birth control or through the struggle against endemics. And "sex was a means of access both to the life of the body and the life of the species," (Foucault, 1978, p. 131), hence the salience of biopolitics in matters related to sex.

In Turkish history, policies targeting the population date back to the Ottoman Empire. For instance, from 1780 on the Ottoman Empire pursued first piecemeal than more systematic anti-abortion policies as part of a pronatalist stance (Demirci & Somel 2008). The first decades of the Republic were also marked by considerable demographic concerns in a country depleted by numerous wars and out migration. A glance over the secondary literature reveals that one of the preoccupations of the new Republic was with sexually transmitted diseases –syphillis in particular- and the regulation of prostitution which was seen as the source of their contagion (Evered & Evered 2017; Arpacı 2014; Evered & Evered 2013). The fledgling Republic fought with endemics to cut down death rates and prohibited the import of contraceptives and illegalized abortion while promoting early marriage and childbirth (Benezra 2014, pp. 43-44, Oktay 2014, pp. 38-39). This pronatalist policy was only reversed in the early 1960s to be replaced by antinatalist measures (Benezra 2014 p. 42; Oktay 2014). Before proceeding with the 1960s, a discussion of the biopolitical measures adopted thus far will be presented.

The new Republic was confronted with a variety of problems when it took charge of a population depleted both in quality and quantity. As Evered & Evered contends (2017, pp. 51-), it had to fight against "resource shortages, illiteracy, … geography," and

traditional beliefs and practices for implementing a universal health scheme. Evered & Evered studied the medical atlas published –as 1000 copies- by the Ministry of Health in 1926 to be presented in museums all over the country with the twin aims of standardizing medical care and instructing the population of their public health duties. As illustrated by the authors, *Sıhhi Müze Atlası* aimed to inculcate through its discourse and through its exemplary images the medical and moral consequences of not complying with the exigencies of modern medicine, the desired replacement for the prevailing traditional views and practices when confronted with STDs. As the authors demonstrated, to ensure the effectiveness of this discourse, the compiler(s) of the atlas made use of fearful stories illustrated through images as well as of exaggerated facts such as the accounting of gonorrhea for half of the country's infertility cases. What is also emphasized as shown by Evered & Evered, is that STDs be they gonorrhea, chancroid or syphilis are curable and treatable, and that upon suspicion one should immediately consult an "expert physician" –and not a traditional healer for instance-. Below in Figure 2.5 is shown one of the exemplary images drawn from the atlas, one which is disturbing enough but not among the most dreadful ones present.

Figure 2.5 :4 month old infant affected by syphilis

Source: Sıhhî Müze Atlası, p. 32

In fact, the transmission of syphilis from the contaminated father -who mingled with prostitutes- to the "mothers of the nation" and to their innocent children -or stillborn

births- is one of the dominant narratives in the framing of syphilis at the time (Evered & Evered 2017, pp. 56-57; Arpacı 2016, p. 75)

According to Arpacı (2016, pp. 59-70), the purported reason for the fuss created around syphilis is a perception about the enormous toll it takes on the population, first quantitatively and then qualitatively. Quantitatively, syphilis is associated with tuberculosis and cancer, the two vital fronts of struggle of the new nation state However, statistical accounts offered by Arpacı show that the number of deaths caused by syphilis during the 1930s and 1940s were rather strikingly insignificant compared to many diseases framed or not framed as "social disasters". The author explains this construction of syphilis as a "national disaster" necessitating a firm struggle despite contrary evidence to its permeation by biopolitical and moral concerns of the young Republic, aiming to regulate the population for its well-being and shape and control it according to moral norms.

Following Arpacı (2016, pp. 72-77), syphilis was qualitatively associated with prostitution, alcohol, madness and consequently with moral degeneration and loss of status. Prostitution was framed as the source of the illness (Evered & Evered 2017; Arpacı 2016; Evered & Evered 2013) together with licentious women, laying the burden of the malady on the shoulders of women. Prostitutes were almost framed as foreign sources of evil and excluded from the imagination of the nation. The possibility of congenital transmission of the illness and its association with madness together with the deformations it caused kept alive the eugenic concerns related to syphilis (Arpacı 2016, pp. 70-71). Hulusi Behçet (1935, p. 11; cited in Arpacı 2016, p. 72) framed the solution as follows: "A person who will manage his sexuality through the natural way will protect himself, his family his child, and finally the society he is a part and the nation he loves." The solution for countering the threat of syphilis was therefore confining sexuality to the heterosexual nuclear family, which was the "natural way" of "managing" it (Arpacı 2016, pp. 72-78). Furthermore, this solution's addressees are men following Behçet's language, framing sexuality as their preserve and denying women any sexual agency.

The fervency of the struggle against syphilis in particular and STDs in general show us the importance of sexuality for projecting the nation. They seem to emanate from a desire to imagine the nation as a space bereft of impurities such as those caused by syphilis. The nation is envisioned as a constellation of clean family homes and elements like prostitutes or syphilitics are excluded from its imagination (Arpacı 2016, p. 72). Sexuality, therefore, far from being unimportant, is among the constitutive elements of the nation state, this quest for national purity resonating well with the ideal of a merged mass without classes and privileges.

Evered & Evered (2013, pp. 843-844) take a closer look at the management of prostitution during the early Republic. According to the official account, as the authors explain, prostitution was viewed as being almost absent in the country before WWI to become a persistent problem after it due to the ravages of war. Evered & Evered state that prostitution was perceived to be principally a rural problem, as the traditions of *oturak* and *avrat oynatmak*[21] could not be regulated and were somewhat "secret." As shown by the authors, these traditions were seen as the sources of endemics like syphilis and contributed to the perception of a contrast between the city and the countryside, this difference perceived through the grid of a civilizational measure.

After discussing some previous legislation regulating prostitution, Evered & Evered (2013, p. 844-849) present the 1933 legislation which formed the basis of subsequent law making on the subject to this day: The Regulation for the Struggle against Prostitution and Venereal Diseases Spread by Prostitution (Resmi Gazete 1933). As related by the authors, the process had not been straightforward, as the Ministries of Health and of the Interior struggled over the prohibitive and regulative approaches, the issue to be resolved in favor of the Ministry of Health which espoused a regulatory approach. Referring to prostitutes as "public women" and elevating their accessibility to legal status as the authors relate to, the law established state authority on matters such as who could be a prostitute, by whom and where a brothel could be opened, who could visit a brothel as well as making it a requirement for the public registration of sex

[21] According to two of the first medical geographies of the Republic (published even before its proclamation), *oturak* and *avrat oynatma* were traditional male gatherings for collective amusement whereby women danced and procured sexual services for especially young men (Nazmi 1922, p. 28; Hıfzı Nuri 1922, p. 41; both cited in Evered & Evered 2013, p. 844). The traditions have probably continued to this day in diverging forms.

workers and their being under regular examinations for venereal diseases among others.[22] The authors finish their discussion by stating that the women with whom these regulations were most concerned did not have the opportunity to raise their voice during these legislations. However, given the fact that prostitutes were seen as almost foreign elements to the nation, and taken into consideration for their role in spreading the STDs rather than as fellow nationals, their being included in the debates at that time was unlikely. In the end, theirs was deemed a dire sacrifice for the well-being of the mothers of the nation (Sarıtaş 2012, p. 62).

Though legislation about prostitution has remained in effect without major changes to this day, the transformations the country underwent brought also changes concerning sexuality. As related by Oktay (2014, pp. 31-41), already from the 1950s on the success in the fight for reducing death rates, mechanization in agriculture –in fact one of the main purposes of pronatalist policy was the cultivation of redundant fields, -rural to urban migration resulting in haphazard urbanization and the relative decrease in the importance of manpower in comparison with armaments for wars making it inconvenient to the pronalist policies. As shown by the author, this was a world-wide trend, as manpower lost its relative importance vis-à-vis other factors and from 1963 on anti-natalist policies took precedence, accompanied by a discourse of probable disaster should not the growth rate be taken under control. Oktay relates that with these in mind, a general directorate for family planning was established in 1965, and the same year the 557 numbered law on family planning was accepted: preserving the ban on abortion, the law specifies the means of family planning as the use of contraceptive methods and repeals the provisions of the previous 1936 dated law banning the import, sale and use of contraceptives.

According to Akşit (2010, p. 188), the main reason behind these measures was the development targets of the State Planning Organization (*Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı*). This view is supported by the 1966 dated Hayat Magazine's discourse on family planning (Hayat 1966, pp. 8-11). After discussing the possible results of an unrestrained growth rate, the author of the article argues that both underdeveloped and developed

[22] The law defined prostitutes as women who procured sexual services to multiple men for the sake of profit or out of habit (Resmi Gazete 1933), this last phrase attesting again to the dichotomous mentality of imagining women as either chaste wives and mothers or as prostitutes (Evered & Evered 2017, p. 63).

countries needed to invest in industry for their welfare but this required surplus resources which today are spent to feed the oversized population in underdeveloped countries, hence the urgency of family planning (Hayat 1966, p. 8).

The common people according to Akşit (2010, p. 189) forming the main targets of the family planning policy were considered at best an ignorant mass in need of education oblivious to contraceptive methods and averse to the small family norm. The above mentioned article in *Hayat Magazine* (1966, p. 10) uses however a rather neutral approach in the presentation of people applying to family planning clinics, as in the following case of a working class couple:

> *"I have got 5 children," said the main, "the oldest is 18 and the youngest is 2 years old. It is hard to cater for 5 children. Two of them go to school. My monthly income is around 200-300 liras. Luckily we have a squatter house so that we don't pay rent. I don't want kids anymore. They said that medicine for it exists, so we came here. Before we used folk remedy, we almost lost the woman."*
> *His wife had a miscarriage 40 days ago. She used mallow on the advice of the neighbors, when her bleeding increased she was saved by being hospitalized. And now she came for family planning treatment.*

This excerpt employs the tone of a neutral presentation of the facts. Poverty is presented as the main rationale for family planning whereas the use of traditional remedies is subtly denounced without a manifest judgment on those who practiced it. Perhaps most significantly, the excerpt shows how low class women were kept outside of the decision making processes about family planning, in a matter which concerns their body as well as their life. As child care is framed as an economic matter and as the responsibility of the father –"*I* don't want kids anymore"-, the lot of women is to bear silently the results of the decisions taken by her husband.

Hayat, from its inception in 1956, had been for more than two decades "*the* popular magazine" of the country, reaching both the rural and the urban population and owing its large readership and influence possibly to its print quality (Okur 2007, pp. 10-11). According to Okur, the magazine had the purpose of educating its readers into European consumption habits, attesting to opportunities of social mobility through conspicuous consumption at the time, as the 1950s marked the beginning of a consumerism shaped by the Fordist trends of mass consumption. According to Pınarcı (2013), who studied the magazine's issues between 1956-1960, the publication marked the beginning of the

commodification of women's bodies and their use in the inculcation of consumerism. According to Pınarcı, the magazine became a "tool for encouraging the emulation of Western lifestyles" (p. 290). Though insufficient for a complete analysis, one gets additional perspectives from two issues of the magazine from 1961 and 1966 respectively. It seems that the issues adopted a Kemalist line of the equality of sexes, presenting women as respectable ladies of society. For instance the article discussing Queen Farah's visit to France is framed so as to imply the equality of western and westernized nations like Iran in which women enjoyed social and professional life like their male counterparts. A photograph of Farah from the article is illustrated below in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.6:Shah Reza Pahlavi and Queen Farah heading to the levee by de Gaulle

Source: Hayat (1961, p. 6)

In the caption under the photograph appear the following sentences: "Farah was wearing a fabulous dress made of silk chiffon with its corsage adorned with precious gems. She donned an ermine coat and shoes made of sateen." (Hayat 1961, p. 6) The subject of the article is the dresses presented to the Queen as part of the special fashion show organized for the Queen and what the Queen herself wore. Throughout the issues, international women's clothing fashion appears as a recurring subject. There is therefore another aspect to Okur's and Pınarcı's perspectives about the inculcation of consumerism. Considering the importance of apparel for the Republic, it can be said

that the magazine constructs a topos of equality with the West through the acquisition of Western consumption habits in female clothing among others. This is similar to what happens among different classes in a single society, as the emulation of upper class consumption habits is adopted for the sake of social mobility. Here, it is adopted for the sake of equality with other civilized nations of the world, hence in true Kemalist spirit, culminating in a strange mixture. Another article presents in a cheerful way the new custom of training and employing female referees for soccer matches, implying that women could pursue any career. The fotonovelas in the issues, though being translations and depicting foreign women seem to suggest some recognition of female sexuality. It can be hypothesized that after the transition to democracy, the magazine seems assured of Turkey's place among civilized nations, the days of acute trauma for belated modernization left behind. However, it should be underlined that the free women depicted by Hayat and forming a particular imagination of the nation are from the upper strata, as women from lower classes could only have incidental and marginal representations as in the above case of the worker's wife whose voice was never heard.

The period of sexploitation movies between 1974-1980 had its precursors in the 1960s according to Demirci (2004, p. 32). The reasons behind this "sex influx" in cinema are multifarious and the trend in line with international developments; as sexploitation movies were themselves adaptations of Western trash movies, especially of Italian films of the era (Yaren 2017).

Figure 2.7 :Posters of 5 Tavuk 1 Horoz and Homo Eroticus

Source: Sinematek retrieved from http://sinematek.tv/bes-tavuk-bir-horoz-1974/ and IMDb retrieved from http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0067212/

As Demirci (2004, p. 34) relates, these latter were popular in the first years of the era, especially the series enacted by Italian actor Lando Buzzancha depicting the erotic adventures of a provincial guy and whose Turkish version had been created in the person of Sermet Serdengeçti. Above is the poster of the movie *5 Tavuk 1 Horoz* (5 Hens and a Rooster) considered to be the initiator of the era, an adaptation of Italian-made Homo Eroticus with Lando Buzzancha; with male lead Sermet Serdengeçti.

Yaren (2017, pp. 1371-1372) counts among the internal and external reasons of "sex influx" in cinema as the global economic crisis affecting Turkey at its worst, the withdrawal of previous audiences from cinema for the combined reasons of insecurity and instability caused by political clashes and of the spread of television worsened by ill-considered policies of taxation and raw film import, making it film theater ownership unprofitable and inducing the producers to adopt "European strategies of resorting to exploitation and sex films."

These sexploitation movies somewhat taught about sexuality to a generation that did not have any other means to acquire sexual information (Demirci 2004,p. 29) As the audience changed from established families into migrant male youths to cater to new expectations, the big theaters fell into disuse and the small ones' upkeep was neglected (Yaren 2017, pp. 1361-1366). The trend both created its own stars and made use of more or less established names who professed to have been involved for economic reasons (Dündar 2018). For instance the above mentioned *5 Tavuk 1 Horoz* features Münir Özkul and Zeki Alasya as supporting actors –two established figures of Turkish cinema-. Attesting to the patriarchal double-standard in Turkey, the majority of these women had to bear the stigma of their gallant years and to bid farewell to cinema, whereas male leads continued their career acting as if nothing happened in between. The gimmick of those years was the insertion of pornographic footage named "block-sex" (Yaren 2017, p. 1371) within the frames during the projection (Dündar 2018, Demirci 2004). As the movies were subject to censorship, police raids were evaded by using two separate projectors for the main film and the block-sex, and brand new films were sometimes created by theater owners out of old film rolls and called "dönme" to be marketed with new posters (Yaren 2017, p. 1371). After the initial period dominated by sex-comedies, which though erotic did not contain any real intercourse, the first

pornographic film to be shot was *Öyle Bir Kadın Ki* (Such a Woman) by Naki Yurter inaugurating this time an era of pornographic production, to be met with strict policing (Demirci 2004, pp. 38-46). This era of sexploitation movies came to an end with the 1980 coup.

Sexploitation movies were not the sole fissures on the surface of the previous heteronormative morality. Zeki Müren, who from 1960s on began to adopt a subversive effeminate style with coiffed hair, maquillage and colorful garments, embraced an even more extravagant appearance with mini and maxi skirts and platform heel shoes from 1970 on (Hawkins 2016, p. 9). Below in Figure 2.8 is seen Müren's costume he named *Uzaydan Gelen Prens* (The Prince Coming from Space).

Figure 2.8:Zeki Müren in his Costume Uzaydan Gelen Prens

Source:https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/yazarlar/2017/02/19/bowieden-once-zeki-muren-vardi/

As related by Hawkins, Müren skillfully eschewed the stigma of homosexuality –an open secret- and of cross-dressing and won the hearts of the public from all walks of life. Hawkins states that Müren managed this by straddling the various dichotomies cutting through Turkish society, bridging the rural/urban and Islamist/secularist divides. His exceptional talent and the largesse awarded to artists by the public were additional factors as reported by the author. Accordingly, Müren combined in his persona the

characters of the "patriot," and the "great gentleman" as well as religiosity, avoiding eating and drinking during performances. Hawkins argues that Müren, including in his repertoire songs ranging from Ottomon court music to *arabesk* transcended class differences. The author states that a similar effect was created through his films which depict young Zeki in the clutches of women and that the television made his flamboyant image accessible to children.

Despite his effeminate image, Zeki Müren took great care to be regarded as both masculine and heterosexual, the media presenting him as a playboy (Hawkins 2016, p. 6). Never referred to as "gay," Müren's homosexuality was turned "into a libidinous investment that is not publicly acceptable" (Arslan 2011, p. 194), probably contributing to his fame. Hawkins (2016) argues that the artist played with gender norms without turning himself into a sexual object and by adopting the appearance of a middle-aged woman. His reaction to the erotic scenes in Bülent Ersoy's movie shot in Germany and smuggled to Turkey in 1986 (1986; Zengin) suggest that Müren maneuvered his gender and sexual identity according to strict principles customized by him to his person yet utterly binding. At the expense of a flash forward, a look at the headings of the news item that appeared in Tan on March 11, 1986 relates the following comments of our Sun of Art about the movie:

> *I believe in destiny. This is a bad destiny. Seeing this movie, a man will be ashamed of his manhood, and a woman of her womanhood. I used to respect Bülent Ersoy's voice and the power of her art. Which normal person will put him/herself in this position? I swear, I don't understand.*

When mentioning his belief in destiny, Müren seems to refer to Ersoy's choice of turning an erotic movie, but he probably implies her sex reassignment surgery, suggesting his disapproval of Ersoy's disrespect towards faith. Müren blaims Ersoy for juggling gender categories and codes transsexualism as an anomaly. He also implies that powerful art might be an excuse for marginal behavior but within certain limits. It seems therefore that Müren had self-imposed limits despite his unprecedented courage. His art provided a venue and an excuse for his gender blurring behavior whereas his homosexuality was never publicly acknowledged. Both Müren and Ersoy had to negotiate in their own way with heterosexist normativity, and Ersoy will be discussed later. But all in all, Zeki Müren represented the return of the "repressed queerness" for

the good, suggesting a fissure in the old morality that dominated the first half of the Republic's life, all at the same time building an audiotopia of imagining the nation as a unified community (Hawkins 2016, pp. 5-7).

The 1980s are an important turning point in terms of the sexual regime in Turkey. As discussed by Öncü (2002, p. 173), as of before, sexuality was exclusively associated with marriage, and sex for leisure and pleasure was confined to specific localities of ill repute. The author relates that with the integration of Istanbul into the networks of global consumerism, an influx of images turned sexuality into a public spectacle to be consumed first as images and then as services and products devoted to the "grooming and perfecting bodily sexual selves, ranging from an enormous variety of health-beauty-diet-fitness products and centers, all the way to clinics" trickling down to low income populations in their cheaper versions. It seems therefore that sexual liberalization in Turkey did not happen with a gradual transformation à la Giddens (1992) but through an abrupt transition via the country's integration to global consumerism. It is from the 1980s on that sexual activity became a marker of status especially among middle classes (Çeler 2011;Kozanoğlu 1992, p. 107). In fact, Turkey was oblivious to 1960s sexual revolution apart from the changes in fashion. The young men form the leftist movement of the 1970s called their female comrades *bacı*, a word for sister in Turkish, erasing any possible romantic involvement between these latter and their self-appointed guards of honor. The 1980s came like a watershed as can be observed from the publications of the period, attesting to a much more substantial freedom of the press when compared to today. For instance, the first erotic magazine of the country, *Erkekçe*, started to be published in 1980 (Anon 2014) whereas the feminist publication *Kadınca,* which first came out in 1978 brought sexuality to the fore in a very bold way (Koçali 2003). Both magazines published naked photos of women and men respectively, without being subject to censorship. Politics repressed, there was an unforeseen freedom in talking about sexuality, private life being discovered with an ardent appetite (Gürbilek 2001). However, this freedom came at the expense of the articulation of sexuality to the logic of consumerism, turning it into a matter of lifestyle. Sexual activity becoming the litmus paper of class status,*Erkekçe, Kadınca*, and *Nokta* discussed by Çeler (2011) all addressed a middle to upper income readership, whereas the last two concretized the rural/urban divide in their issues (Çeler 2011, p. 74).

Nokta, a magazine of the transition period, began its publishing life as a tabloid magazine, to be transformed into a weekly political journal including items on sexuality, both targeting a social-democrat readership and marking the new living conditions of the period. Two primary axes determined the items on sexuality: firstly, ignorance about sexuality and the need for education and secondly, the ways to animate one's sexual life. Fantasy and pleasure emerged as the two keywords of the period. (Çeler, 2011). The following quotation from Nokta (1988, cited in Çeler 2011) summarizes the new tendencies:

> *In the age of sexuality's severing its ties with reproduction, to be transformed into a sphere of pleasure, fantasy's role in enlivening and enriching the sexual life is on the rise. […] What is arousing in sexual fantasies is not sex but factors extraneous to sex. Desires like status, fame, money, success, domination, to be dominated, oppression, to be oppressed, submission, adoration, and to be adored form the real arousing components of fantasies.*

Çeler (2011) states that articles stressing the rise of sexuality as the prime component of a lifestyle based on pleasure were common in Nokta magazine. Status, money and success formed the primary components of this new quest for pleasure and fantasy, the new symbols of a new lifestyle. Sexual life becomes a new symbol for the status of urban middle classes.

Nokta heralded the birth of a new culture of body, based on a pleasure derived from being found desirable (Çeler, 2011). An article in the magazine refers to aerobic and fitness practices of women and men, welcoming the rise of male body as a new object of gaze (Nokta, 1988, cited in Çeler 2011), reminding one of Öncü's point about the "grooming and perfecting [of] bodily sexual selves" (Öncü 2002, p. 173). Rural sexuality however is marginalized with derogatory and ironic undertones, coding molestation, sexual harassment and rape as the results of sexual deprivation personified in people from rural or urban slum backgrounds (2011). Lack of status and their second class position depict their relation to sexuality (2011). It has been discussed in the previous section how especially in Istanbul the divide between old urbanites and those from rural origin turned into an open conflict occurring around the derogatory designations of *maganda*, *zonta* and *entel*. For the first time in the history of the Republic people were classified and dichotomized along the axis of their sexuality, superposing the dichotomies of bigot/modern, rural/urban and uncouth/refined (in

sexuality). However *modern* here is no more supposed to be the ideal of a unified nation, but an adjective associated with class status. Westernization has since Tanzimat been a marker of distinction, though within an economy of moderation, its excess becoming grounds for ridicule. Gürel (2009, p. 7) for instance discusses how the use of western furniture was adopted from the 19th century to the 1960s as a "strategy of distinction" in Turkey. In fact, the use of imported products in Turkey have always been considered an indicator of taste and richness, Western brands like Marlboro turning into symbols loaded with meaning and becoming deeply established in Turkish culture. However, it was for the first time that the word *çağdaş* (the Turkish word for modern) became an adjective that is not associated with the whole nation but used as a laudatory epithet for some of its members. October 1981 issue of the magazine *Kadınca*, a women's lifestyle magazine which introduced feminism to Turkish public - published between 1978-1992 and managed by Duygu Asena (Koçali 2003) - uses for instance the epithet "modern" to discriminate between men who help their wives at home and those who don't, and thus those who embrace the feminist principles championed by Kadınca and those who are stuck in their traditional bigotry (Anon. 1981, p. 46). Though laudable in its attempt to degender house chores, the rationale behind the endeavor seems a bit twisted. The anonymous (1981, p. 46) article entitled "Modern man, Bigoted man" after presenting two types of men who both help their wives asserts that:

> *The man of our times prefers by his side a sophisticated, clever, and beautiful "life partner" instead of a shabby and neglected "housemaid" worn down by house chores. "The narrow-minded, mixed-up" man, slowly leaves its place to "smart" man who does not consider helping his wife in home as a matter of honor… But as we said… slowly.*

The distinction between the modern and not-so-modern man, in this article from 1981, is still somewhat ideational, as these labels are not attached to concrete categories of people yet. However the elitism of *Kadınca* can be read from its choice of words making the sharing of chores a matter of class distinction and of lifestyle rather than equality. Throughout its issues, *Kadınca* oscillates between aptly denouncing patriarchy and espousing a kind of gender-antagonist feminism as a matter of upscale lifestyle with the cursor inclined towards this latter. In the several issues examined for this study (October 1981, May 1984, October 1985, July 1988, August 1988, June 1991, January 1992), there is only one article addressing the problems of low income women which

focuses on the mismanagement of the then unique women's shelter. The tone is patronizing not towards the sheltered women (to give *Kadınca* its due credit) but towards Şişli Mayor Fatma Girik and the shelter's managers. Apart from that, *Kadınca* performs its feminism mostly through the discussion of sexual subjects previously deemed taboo from a women's perspective (*What matters in sex is quality and not quantity* (August 1988), *Sex beautifies* (August 1988), *Man's role in sexual satisfaction* (October 1981), *The Psychology of orgasm* (January 1992), *Wedding night anxiety in man* (July 1988), *How did the French learn about hymen reconstruction*? (May 1984) etc.), and through carrying out a kind of rivalry with men whereby degendering gendered activities is understood as pitting wits against men. For instance, the magazine, rather than problematizing the commercialization of female nudity, chose to publish photographs of naked men, so as to square accounts. –This, however should not be understood as if *Kadınca* adopted a policy of publishing naked men which is not the case.- The 1985 Başar Sabuncu movie *Çıplak Vatandaş* (*The Naked Citizen*) telling the story of a low-income citizen turned-celebrity after his naked protest of his dire economic conditions; turned *Kadınca*'s tendency into an original PR campaign: the naked citizen in the movie and Şener Şen in real life posed naked for the magazine, the issue appearing both in real life and in the filmic narrative. The cover of the specific issue can be seen below in figure 2.9., together with another issue featuring a male cover girl.

Figure 2.9:October 1985 (Left) and July 1988 (Right) issues of Kadınca

Source: Personal archive

As the first erotic magazine of the country, *Erkekçe* didn't need an excuse for the printing of nude photos of beautiful women. The magazine was to be followed by a burst of foreign as well as local publications, competing for a share in this newly emerged market throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Along an axis of soft-core erotism to hard-core pornography, magazines such as Playboy, Penthouse, Hustler, Playmen; Bravo etc. played an important role in educating a generation of adolescent men into sexuality, just like the sexploitation movies a while ago. Erkekçe however may perhaps be considered a sex-oriented lifestyle magazine filled more with writing then with images –though images of topless women in erotic poses sometimes fully naked but hiding their genitals should have been its main attraction-. The fact that more than half of the pages are from detail paper –the first part is of colored glossy paper- might have had an effect on that. For instance, topics covered in May 1983 issue range from shoplifting to Orwell's 1984, together with reviews of recent music albums and newly published books, as well as funny jokes and bridge or backgammon lessons. Surprisingly, *Erkekçe* seems more balanced than Kadınca in its treatment of sexuality and man-woman relationships. For instance in the article "The Mystery Called Man" espouses an approach of equality through difference, claiming that men and women should work on understanding each other for a mutual life in harmony (Anon 1983, p. 95-97). The following excerpt from the article may illustrate the tone of the periodical:

> *To begin with, men are discomfortable seeing their ascendency gradually dissolving. They know that the slave-master relationship they were engaged in with women is irrecoverably collapsing. What is worse, they cannot understand the reason of these changes. What they see and know is that women are not as willing as they used to be to stitch tears, change diapers or cook and clean the house. Even that they want men to contribute, to share these traditionally female activities…*

Not surprisingly, the majority of the articles published in *Erkekçe* is about or connected to sexuality. For instance, in the sample issue, topics like male homosexuality, lesbianism, incest, fetishism, trial marriage, open marriage, polygamy, polyandry, group marriage, etc. as well as stoning to death for adultery and the legal consequences of a sexual relationship with one's sister-in-law are presented with a rather professional and detached tone. To specify the example: The author of the article about fetishism insists on the importance of not treating it as a perversion but draws on the explanations of Freud, Epstein and Winnicott –though with some critiques-, and still deeming fetishism an anomaly, offers the solution that fetishism needs no interference unless it proves to

be harmful in some way (which for most of the time is not the case). What makes it possible for *Erkekçe* to adopt a somewhat value-free style is the treatment of the subjects in an abstract way, without making any reference to real life situations in the Turkish context. For instance, male homosexuality[23], lesbianism, and incest are discussed within the context of Casanova's life, whereas fetishism is reviewed with foreign examples; stoning to death is something historical, the legal language concerning relationships with sisters-in-law makes it a distant possibility, etc. Such issues do not appear in the reader's column either. What is concretely treated is heterosexual sex, especially with the aim of educating its male readers who neglect female orgasm in the ignorance of equating sex with penetration. The response given to a reader who complainedabout the magazine's and its readers' excessive interest in sex to the point of obsession explains well the magazine's editorial policy: The answer states that sex is a subject of education as a part of life, which *Erkekçe* tries to give in the light of science (Anon. 1981, p. 115-117). Accordingly, the subject being like a forced-closed pressure cooker, its producing much steam once opened is normal. The author finishes by stating that the abysmal ignorance (*karacahillik*) in sexual matters needs being addressed, as the obsession will turn into a healthy interest once sexuality becomes a part of daily life and not shunned as something sinful or shameful.

All in all, *Erkekçe* manages to catch a balanced style in its topics related to sexuality. Its value-free position addressing topics such as homosexuality –though treated in abstraction- and its commitment to educate its readership into sexuality –in a society where even talking about sex in public was something short of a revolution- though somewhat from above is praiseworthy. The same is true for *Kadınca*, its drawbacks apart, which conceded the subject of female sexuality its due importance and played a role in introducing feminism to Turkey. The 80s and 90s were in fact a time of liberalization in terms of sexuality. The trend was visible not only in magazines but also in TV shows during the 90s, after private channels started broadcasting, as erotic programs such as *Yasemin Evcim'le Gece Cimnastiği* (*Night Gymnastics with Yasemin Evcim*) –a young woman supposedly doing aerobics through erotic poses- or Tutti

[23]For instance, in a reader's letter the 15 year old adolescent, complaining about his obsession with oral sex, mentions having engaged in homosexual relationship once, after which he developed a hatred for gay men to the point of using violence against them. The response tackles the other issues raised by the inquirer and does not mention at all the issue of homosexuality (Anon. 1981, p. 115).

Furutti –a foreign game show with topless hostesses- or foreign erotic movies were shown after midnight. However, it might be said that the liberty was rather for the heterosexuals, as might be deduced from what Bülent Ersoy had been through especially after her surgery. Bülent Ersoy, just before the September 12 coup, opened her newly emerging breasts to the public's request and then she was arrested and imprisoned for a brief period; after sex-reassignment surgery in London, she was banned from the scenes like other trans artists, till 1988 when she also received her female id card (Alkaya 2015). Ersoy had to negotiate with the system and perform the mainstream identity of a nationalist, Muslim woman, to the point of embracing homophobia and rejecting the trans community, suggesting pseudoscientific arguments to prove that she is and has always been a woman, preferring to save herself, rather than denouncing heterosexist normativity (Altınay 2008, pp 214-227).[24] An incident recounted by Altınay shows the precarity of her position as well as demonstrating the maneuverings she has to engage in to maintain her position:

In one instance in television within the context of the South-eastern conflict, Ersoy made a statement declaring that if it were possible and she had a son, she would never send him to military service, trying to adopt a mother's identity; a move which had unexpected consequences. She was embraced by the Kurdish political movement and ridiculed by a member of parliament from the ruling party for "having his things cut". Ersoy held quickly a press conference, affirmed her loyalty to the Republic, espoused an almost militarist discourse and declared she had no affiliation with any group. Hence Ersoy can enjoy the position of the Diva of Turkish music only as far as she carefully manages the performance of her identity (Altınay 2008, pp. 222-223).

The first two decades of the second millennium are perhaps too close and too complex to summarize in a few pages and are awaiting another study. A recognizable pattern has yet to emerge. Here will be briefly discussed some of the conflicting trends. For instance, pornography and erotica have been sent underground, as obscenity is now outlawed, but are nevertheless much more accessible than before, thanks to internet via

[24] The case of Rüzgar Erkoçlar, a transman known by the public as the actress Nil Erkoçlar, who recently had surgery and married his girlfriend is interesting in its almost enthusiastic reception by the press, which may be due to an improvement in mindsets as well as to the fact of male to female transition's being much more stigmatized.

tricking the measures taken to prevent access to forbidden sites. Though conservatism is on the rise, also stirred up by the government, having casual sex is much easier than before and much more common, thanks to the dating sites like *OkCupid* and applications like *Tinder*. A girl with a mini short can be subject to violence but there is also a wide circulation of visual material commodifying both the male and female body, censored but unsystematically. There is a growing LGBTIQ activism, but also rising violence against women as well as sexual harassment of children etc.

There is also a more or less stable policy of the government for turning Turkish society into a more conservative one: it is as if the public figures raise clouded issues in order to evaluate public reaction. Among these controversies, can be counted the three children policy, the mixed accommodations debate over their being nests for terrorism and prostitution, an anchorwoman's dismissal by her channel after her décolleté was criticized by the then government's spokesperson, the debate over women's chastity and the impropriety of women's laughing in public (Cindoğlu & Ünal 2017) as well as the debate on abortion and its comparison to mass massacre. The sudden disappearance of these issues after having created a fuss is interesting. From this picture the following hypotheses might be suggested: There is an interview with a public figure in August 1988 Kadınca, Ali Genç, an immigrant who seemingly pledged himself to public decency. He states that he is not against alcohol, but according to him one should not drink in public, otherwise he probably deserves being beaten (Özdilek & Gülgün 1988, p. 76) The government might have adopted a similar policy concerning sexuality: one is free to do as he/she wishes as long as he/she does not do it in public and claim it as a right.

Throughout this section, it has been observed that sex was rather regulated by society during the Ottoman Empire, then by the state and experts during the early Republic, and then by the market after the inception of neoliberalism. The Tanzimat Era and the period between 1960-1980 have been transition periods between these chunks. It is, however, too early to make a general statement about the 2000s, but they will be addressed in two case studies in the following, with the hope of providing a glimpse of the intimate life of the era.

3. DATA AND METHOD

3.1 ON THE GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

This thesis is conducted through a discourse analysis of different media, namely a men's lifestyle magazine and a marriage show. There are two main axes constituting the study, corresponding with two case studies: the first on the fitness/lifestyle magazine *Men's Health Turkey*, concerning the casualization of sexuality for middle to upper middle class heterosexual men, and the second on *the Esra Erol Show* concerning how relatively lower class individuals negotiate the exposure of their intimacy to public scrutiny on reality shows. Accordingly, both developments amount to a reconfiguration of the public and private spheres, as intimacy previously confined to the private sphere becomes a public asset through its exposure which can be mobilized by its holders for various aims. In the case of reality shows, the exposure is direct and easily cognizable, whereas casualized sexuality functions in more subtle ways, as although a man may not live his sexuality in front of other people, it is very probable for him to imagine and evaluate his sexual activities against an imaginary public, which may become a real public as sexuality is today something much discussed among friends.

As stated before, the journey of this thesis began with observations from dating websites and applications. It has been observed that internet-mediated sexual practices were situated within the culture of neoliberalism, owing its roots to the transformations initiated by the Özal government in the 1980s as throughout the world. Whereas the military cleansed the political arena facilitating the implementation of neoliberal policies, the society underwent a remarkable transformation. As has been stated in the Theory Chapter, Öncü (2002, p. 173) tracks the *sexual liberation*of Turkey to her integration into the networks of global consumerism, coinciding with and indeed being a consequence of the transformation of the country under neoliberal policies. Therefore, *sexual liberation*in Turkey is not the result of a political struggle for sexual emancipation, but is part and parcel of the nascent neoliberal culture, hailing individuals to new subject positions concomitant and indispensable for its project. As can be observed from the discussion ofyuppies and of the new middle class in the Theory Chapter, the neoliberal project first reached the upper strata to filter down to lower

classes through particularly consumption and lifestyle habits. Today, people from all walks of life are implicated in the neoliberal modes of subjectivation. The cultural rise of the periphery discussed in the previous chapter coincided with the advent of neoliberalism in Turkey. In particular, the privatization of radio and television broadcasting in the early 1990s[25] provided new arenas of expression for it. According to Soydan (2015), for instance, it is through the privatization of radio and television that *arabesk* –which for decades was banned from public broadcasting – was gentrified, leaving its sub-culture status to become mainstream. The analysis is parallel to Tekelioğlu's (2006, p. 115) argument about pop music, which accordingly is a spontaneous east-west popular synthesis. For a long time music was the primary way of cultural expression of the periphery. Now there are multiple channels, including music, cinema and more directly social media and reality shows, these two latter providing arenas for the performance of intimacy in a public setting. Whereas*theEsra Erol Show* presents itself as a decent place where decent people decently look for spouses, the structure of the show rewards poshlost in behavior, making the participants gear themselves towards these kinds of performances.

This thesis is therefore organized along two main blocks according to the case studies involved. The chapter on *Men's Health Turkey*explores how a lifestyle magazine hails its readers to upper middle class neoliberal subjectivities, whereas the chapter on *theEsra Erol Show* is devoted to exploring a matrimonial show's hailing its participants and its audience to lower middle class neoliberal subjectivities. This distinction is based on the qualitative characteristics of the media and not on an audience study. Therefore, the study does not purport to claim that *Men's Health* is only read by upper middle classes or that *the Esra Erol Show* is never consumed by other segments of society. Rather, these media, through different strategies adapted to their own purposes, make available for their audiences neoliberal but stratified subject positions, on which is based the organization of this study. Neoliberalism both reproduces and blurs class

[25]As reported by Özlü Çevik (2014), the first private television channel to broadcast in Turkey was founded as Star 1 in Lichtenstein in 1989 by Turgut Özal's son Ahmet Özal and businessman Cem Uzan. Accordingly, private television broadcasting was a constitutional crime in Turkey. Özlü Çevik relates how the situation created much public debate as well as controversy to the eventual liberalization of broadcasting in1993 both for television channels and radio channels which proliferated during the same time. Accordingly, with the establishment of RTÜK (Supreme Board of Radio and Television), the final regulation was made on the subject.

distinctions through the globalization of similar consumption and lifestyle practices. What is important is the constitutive aspect of these practices of the class identity of its practitioners. What is discussed in this work is the presence of two ideal types, that are called in the study as "the conspicuous consumption of sexe and "the public performance of poshlost"; which are espoused by different classes as a constitutive component of their class identity. Both classes therefore may adopt similar practices, but they are ideologically positioning themselves according to these two poles, as in the case of an upper middle class man living his conspicuous consumption of sex as a lifestyle, his lifestyle as an identity, and his identity as a marker of social status, hence the rationale for including more than one case study in the work. The fact that these case studies are different kinds of media, namely a men's lifestyle magazine, and a reality show requires also a justification. It will therefore be referred to Althusser in order to proceed.

Althusser's (2014) concern in his essay,*Ideological State Apparatuses,* written in 1969 was to understand how capitalist relations of production reproduced themselves. The existence of Repressive State Apparatus like the army and prison system was insufficient to explain the behavior of the individuals. Althusser (pp. 190-191) therefore argued that capitalism also functioned by creating subjects that become its instruments and bearers, by interpellating individuals to subject positions through discourses, the notorious example being the policeman's hailing someone on the street, and this latter turning round 180 degrees and becoming a subject. Ideology for Althusser (1971) "is a distorted recognition of the real social relations"; and there is no escape from becoming the subjects of ideology as we always accept the subject positions to which we are interpellated (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002, p. 15).

According to Simons (2015), Althusser like Foucault conceives of power not merely in its repressive qualities, and acknowledges its productive aspects. Furthermore, ideology is materialized in concrete institutions setting into motion concrete individuals. Althusser (2014, p. 156) states:

> *Ideology does not exist in the 'world of ideas' conceived as a 'spiritual world'. Ideology exists in institutions and the practices specific to them. …. Ideology therefore exists, by way of ideological apparatuses and their practices, precisely in the practices of… individuals.*

Speaking of ideology, there should be made a caveat for this thesis that draws a great deal on Foucault. Foucault is an avid opponent of the Marxist notion of ideology, which presupposes a duality between truth and ideology which is its false representation. For Foucault however, there is no truer truth outside discourse. Foucault (2003, p. 10) makes the following objection to Marxist claims of scientificity in *The Society Must Be Defended*:

> *When I see you trying to prove that Marxism is a science, to tell the truth, I do not really see you trying to demonstrate once and for all that Marxism has a rational structure and that its propositions are therefore the products of verification procedures. I see you, first and foremost, doing something different. I see you connecting to Marxist discourse, and I see you assigning to those who speak that discourse the power-effects that the West has, ever since the Middle Ages, ascribed to a science and reserved for those who speak a scientific discourse.*

Hence the notion of ideology according to Foucault serves to imbue Marxism with the power-effects that scientific discourse ascribed itself during Western history.

This thesis is not an attempt to resolve this confrontation between Marxism and Foucault. But drawing on both Althusser and Foucault, it should state its position vis-à-vis the debate. Here, there will be no attempt to decide upon whether neoliberalism draws upon an ideology that is a distorted version of reality or whether neoliberal discourses should be understood as producing truth. In either case, what is important for the present work is neoliberalism's capacity to produce neoliberal subjectivities indispensable for the reproduction of the neoliberal system.The purpose of the study is therefore to understand how different discourses are disseminated by different media, producing different subject positions though under the same neoliberal umbrella. This is because the neoliberal discourse is dispersed and powerful, and is realizing itself within different domains, such as the reality shows, dating sites, social media and lifestyle magazines to cite but a few. The problem is therefore to delineate how power is productive of subjectivities by acting on minds and bodies through discourses, and materializing in the practices of these subjects in different fields, hence the choice of two different case studies.

It has been stated above that according to Althusser, there is no escape from becoming the subjects of ideology because individuals always accept the subject positions to which they are interpellated. Foucault on the other hand adamantly defends that power

would always meet resistance without, however, offering a theoretical elaboration. Indeed, Foucault is right when stating that power always meets resistance and that the process of subjectification is always contested. Stuart Hall's (1973) encoding/decoding model of communication offers a solution to the problem of theoretically elaborating the possibility of resistance. As a theoretician of media, Hall is also helpful for understanding how *the Esra Erol Show* and *Men's Health Turkey* function as media.

According to Hall (2004, p. 117), the sender/message/receiver model of mass communication is inadequate to understand the communication process sincea message is not directly transferred to the recipient. A message, first and foremost, is "a sign-vehicle of a specific kind organized … through the operation of codes, within the syntagmatic chains of a discourse" (Hall 1973, p. 1). Hall (1973, 2004) therefore proposes the encoding/decoding model of communication, which presupposes the packaging of the message during the production process and its being unpacked during consumption; however these moments are never determinate. The decoded message is never univocal as Hall (1973, p. 9) states:

> *As the signifying element, among other elements, in a discourse, it remains polysemic. Indeed, the way it is structured in its combination with other elements serves to delimit its meanings within that specified field, and effects a 'closure', so that a preferred meaning is suggested.*

As what is being encoded and what is being decoded not being completely identical, the ideal of 'perfectly transparent communication' is unattainable since what can be best achieved is 'systematically distorted communication' (Hall 2004, p. 125).

Within this scheme, the receiver may adopt different positions: the hegemonic, the negotiated and the oppositional. The hegemonic position appears when the receiver operates within the scheme of the preferred meaning. The oppositional position happens when the receiver decodes the message in a contrary way according to a different referential framework, as in the case of a worker decoding "national interest" in a news item as "class interest." The negotiated position is the intermediary position between these two poles (Hall 2004, pp. 125-127).

With these in view, it is argued that the messages disseminated by the media analyzed here operate in a similar manner, and that there are ways to espouse, negotiate or resist

the discourses disseminated by them. Having said this, it should be born in mind that the study is not a study of reception, and that its main focus is on the *preferred meaning* of the messages disseminated by *Men's Health* and *theEsra Erol Show*. By analyzing therefore, the preferred meanings disseminated by these media, it is not implied that their receiver straightforwardly adopts the hegemonic position hence that individuals do always accept the subject positions to which they are interpellated, as Althusser suggested.

Throughout this thesis, it is argued that intimacy is mobilized as a resource in diverse fields to acquire different forms of capital, namely sexual capital or celebrity capital in order to be converted into other goods, such as economic, social or symbolic capital. These notions of sexual and celebrity capital will be discussed shortly afterwards. This notion of capital obviously draws on Bourdieu, to which the reader will be introduced shortly here for a brief reminder. Not all of his concepts but only the relevant ones will be discussed here, namely the concepts of habitus, capital and fields.

Bourdieu's (1988, pp. 780-781; 1989, pp. 14-15) theory is an endeavor to exceed the main antonomy dividing social science fields into objectivism, and subjectivism. Accordingly, the objectivist position is built on the "Durkheimian precept and 'treat social facts as things'" considering the social scientist the sole agent capable of understanding the totality of the social reality, compared to the partial view of the lay person. This Bourdieu calls an "epistemocratic vision". The other pole of the antinomy, subjectivism on the other hand builds its theory through "a meta-discourse" of the accounts of individual agents, equating social reality with the individual representations of its agents. According to Bourdieu, this antinomy is a false meaning that the perceived opposition between structures and perceptions is erroneous, a view that must be countered by relational thinking. Accordingly, there is a dialectical relationship between the objectivist and subjectivist moments. Bourdieu aims to grasp this dialectic with the concept of *habitus*. According to Bourdieu (1989, p. 18):

> *One may even explain in sociological terms what appears to be a universal property of human experience, namely, the fact that the familiar world tends to be "taken for granted," perceived as natural. If the social world tends to be perceived as evident and to be grasped, to use Husserl's (1983) expression, in a doxic modality, this is because the disposition of agents, their habitus, that is the mental structures through which they apprehend the social world, are essentially the*

> *product of the internalization of the structures of that world. As perceptive dispositions tend to be adjusted to position, agents, even the most disadvantaged ones, tend to perceive the world as natural and accept it as much more readily than one might imagine…*

According to Bourdieu exist (1989, p. 14) in social reality objective structures which may constrain the actions of individual agents. Habitus "is the mental structures through which" individual agents "apprehend the social world" that "are essentially the product of the internalization of the structures of that world." Because of their internalization of these objective social structures, individual agents, apprehend the social world in a doxic modality, hence in a "taken for granted" manner. Habitus is what generates specific behavior according to circumstances without being the product of a specific rule, but of a particular "feel of the game" of the agents (Bourdieu, 1986a, p. 40-42). Wacquant (2011, pp. 318-319), explains habitus as "the way society becomesdeposited in persons in the form of lastingdispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel, and act indeterminate ways" guiding agents' responses in their respective milieus. Accordingly, though each individual possess a unique habitus depending on his/her unique trajectory in life, individuals sharing similar social conditions have similar dispositions and hence it is possible of talking about habitus of different classes.

Bourdieu (1989, p. 16) compares the social space to a geometric space divided into regions in which individual positions are determined according to the agent's resources that may be used to acquire social goods that are at stake in the competitive social game. These resources are named by Bourdieu as *capital*. Bourdieu (1987, p. 4) in one instance defines capital as "properties capable of conferring strength, power and consequently profit on their holder" and in another instance states that capital is "accumulated labor" (1986b, p. 15) that may appear in embodied or materialized form. Individuals take up their positions in the social space according to the volume and composition of their capital and the closer individuals stand in this social space, the more they have common properties (Bourdieu 1989, p. 17). There are three basic types of capital discussed by Bourdieu: economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. Economic capital is the obvious category, cultural capital can be found in an embodied state (such as knowledge), in institutionalized form (such as university qualifications) or

in objective form (such as books or paintings) whereas social capital denotes the amount and quality of the social connections one has (Bourdieu, 1986b).

The regions dividing the social space in which possessors of capital compete are called fields by the sociologist. “In analytic terms a field may be defined as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions” (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 97). The artistic field, the political field, the field of cultural production are among the fields analyzed by Bourdieu. Bourdieu likens the notion of field to the game, and states that the functioning and relative value of any form of capital is dependent on the existence of a field in which it is put into use (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 98).

It can be said that today different fields and different forms of capital emerged. Those will be discussed as sexual capital and celebrity capital in the following chapter. Now will be presented the procedures through which the data for the study was collected and analyzed.

3.2 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS as METHOD

As stated before, this thesis relies on discourse analysis as its method. Whereas discourse analysis can be conducted under many different branches, this study draws on a Foucauldian approach. However the main premises of Critical Discourse Analysis are also held in view, which itself has been influenced by the Foucauldian theory. Therefore, a discussion will follow with an overview of Critical Discourse Analysis then return to Foucault.

3.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Locke (2004) begins his discussion of CDA with Fairclough (1995, p. 132) who describes CDA’s aims as:

> *to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power.*

According to Locke (pp. 1-2) CDA postulates that:

Social order is socially constructed and historically contingent, therefore it is possible to change the social order.

The reproduction of the social order owes less to the individuals' wills than to the circulation of discourses.

Power in society is inextricably bound with discursive formations privileging groups of people over others.

Subjectivity is if not totally partially constructed by discourse.

Locke states Critical Discourse Analysis' premises within the linguistic turn, which as a term became established in 1967 (Blackwell Reference Online). With the linguistic turn, the assumption of the transparency of language of describing a "world out there" came into question, to leave its place to an understanding of language being constitutive of the latter. Within this context, Critical Discourse Analysis views its project as a political intervention of revealing the complicity of discourses with power (Locke 2004, p. 2). Similarly, the aim of this thesis is to reveal the importance of media discourses in maintaining neoliberal power relations.

3.2.2 Discourse Analysis and Foucault

Though discourse with its related related terms forms part of the whole Foucauldian œuvre, it is in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* that Foucault (2002) makes a systematic theorization of the concept. The book is dense and arduous, as Foucault makes rather a complicated presentation of his theoretical framework, positioning himself in opposition to the tradition of the history of ideas. According to Foucault, thenotions of authorship, œuvre, influence or genius etc., are all erroneous in positing the individual mind as the source of specific formulations, as these enunciations are rather instantiations of anonymously formed discourses; the subject of a statement performing an "author function" rather than what is uttered, written etc. being the production of his/her conscious or unconscious intention.

Discourse is defined in the *Archaeology of Knowledge* as "the general domain of all statements" or"as an individualizable group of statements" or again"as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements" (Foucault 2002, p. 90). According to Sara Mills, (2003, p. 53),the first description designates all utterances and statements that are made with an effect, whereas the last one refers to the field of possibility of the enunciation of certain utterances and statements rather than others."[T]he termdiscourse canbe defined as the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation; … [like]clinical discourse, economic discourse, the discourse of natural history, psychiatric discourse" (Foucault 2002, p. 121).

In these definitions, there are two concepts employed by Foucault that need clarification. The first is *statement* and the second is *system of formation*, which refers to the concept of *discursive formation*. A statement, according to Foucault (2002, pp. 90-98), is the "atom", "the elementary unit" of discourse. As Foucault states, it is not the same thing with either the sentence or the proposition neither the speech act, it cannot be therefore evaluated with the same criteria.

A discursive formation is composed of statements coming together according to definite criteria of formulation. According to Foucault (2002, pp. 41-42), a discursive formation arises when firstly, if a system of dispersion can be discerned among a number of statements and secondly, if a regularity is found "between [its] objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices." The discursive formations around the subject of Foucault's general enquiry are human sciences that according to him emerged in the 19th century. Foucault (2002, p. 131) states that:

> *We shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation … [discourse] is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined. Discourse in this sense is not an ideal, timeless form that also possesses a history … it is, from beginning to end, historical –a fragment of history, a unity and discontinuity in history itself…*

Therefore, discourses are historically contingent unities. The question to ask is "according to which criteria certain statements can be made at a certain point in history and geography?" According to Foucault (2002), the rules governing those criteria are historically contingent and do not follow the logic of evolution or transcendence but that of discontinuity.

Mills (2003, pp. 53-54) states that Foucault is interested in the implicit rules shaping the field of possibility of the emergence of particular statements rather than on individual statements. Accordingly, these rules also regulate the distribution and circulation of particular statements. Mills states that discourse is not simply a coherent whole of statements but exists thanks to a complex set of practices endorsing their circulation, demarcating their boundaries and hindering the circulation of other discourses. The appropriation, circulation and operation of discourses are therefore instances where power is deployed.

Foucault understands discourse as structuring our perception of reality, and holds that there is no prediscursive position outside discourse from which one can take a vantage point:a non-discursive domain exists but our understanding of this non-discursive domain of physical objects and bodies etc. is always mediated by discourse (Mills 2003, pp. 55-56; Hall 2010, p. 73)

Foucauldian discourse analysis takes its departure point from the Foucauldian postulate that knowledge is power. Power, according to Foucault, does not operate on the social body in a hegemonic or monolithic way but in a "capillary" fashion, actualizing itself on various instances of power relations "in which individuals are the localized carriers or sites of power, not its 'points of application'" (Caldwell, p. 131). Similarly, neoliberal discourses as the subject of this study, operate in a capillary fashion, to constitute neoliberal subjectivities as their prime effect.

3.2.3 Sample and Data

As stated before, two cases are involved in this study. In the first place, Men's Health Turkey's content related to sexuality and relationships between the years 2015-2017 are analyzed through discourse study to show how the magazine promotes the formation of neoliberal sexual selves through its discourse. Men's Health Turkey among other lifestyle magazines is chosen because its adoption of neoliberal discourses and its promotion of a neoliberal ideal self is deliberately straightforward. However, this need not mean that its discourse is transparent of its own power dynamics and thus still remains an important object of analysis.

Excerpts from the issues are selected for subsequent analysis and translated by the author, while they are also interpreted within the general framework of the magazine as a lifestyle magazine focusing on health, fitness and well-being. Content on relationships and sex does not receive extensive coverage in terms of page numbers but is pervasive throughout the issues and almost always appears as headlines on the cover page. It forms therefore an important component of the magazine's discourse on lifestyle. The content is somewhat repetitive; therefore, not all the content but most relevant excerpts have been selected for analysis.

A sample of*the Esra Erol Show* between the dates December 23, 2015 and January 06, 2016 has been viewed for study, with extensive note taking in the process. Segments that are most relevant to the study have been reviewed and transcripted, then translated and integrated into the text for discourse analysis, in its relation to the theoretical framework of the study. Among marriage shows, *the Esra Erol Show* is chosen because since its first airing in 2007, it is one of the most popular and well-established marriage shows in Turkey (Akınerdem 2015). However at the time of the writing of this thesis, in 2017, the show had to change its format into screening dramatic life stories that would touch the audience after the statuary decree number 690 which came into force in April 29, 2017 putting in place punitive sanctions against broadcasts acting as matchmakers between people (Anon. 2017b).

4. FINDINGS

4.1 THE ANALYSIS of MEN'S HEALTH TURKEY

4.1.1 Some General Remarks on Men's Health Turkey

> *Men's Health magazine, with a global print and digital readership of 60 million across 41 editions in 65 countries, is the biggest men's magazine brand in the world. Men's Health is the go-to source for the latest information and expert advice for a healthy and active lifestyle. (Men's Health, n. d.)*
>
> *Published 10 times a year in the U.S. by Rodale Inc., Men's Health is the world's best-selling men's magazine, providing readers with up-to-the-minute information on health, fitness, fashion, nutrition, relationships, travel, technology, and finance. (Men's Health, n. d.)*

Such is the description of the US based *Men's Health* magazine published by Rodale Inc. in the company's website "www.rodale.com" presenting its brands. Also the affiliated website, MensHealth.com is described as "a daily destination for users seeking expert advice and articles on fitness, nutrition, relationships, sex, career, and lifestyle, plus training tips, videos, and the motivation to help men live their best life" (Menshealth.com, n. d.). Therefore, the magazine positions itself as a lifestyle guide and a source of expert information merging the two functions "to help men live their best life."

Men's Health US was launched in 1987 (Men's Health –Arrival of the fittest, 2009). The first issue of Men's Health Turkey appeared in October 2007 and the edition follows its US origin in style and content. Therefore the critics and analyses directed at *Men's Health US* equally apply to Men's Health Turkey which will be briefly addressed in this analysis. Then will be discussed Foucault's two last volumes of*the History of Sexuality* in terms of his emphasis on the technologies of the self before engaging in an analysis of *Men's Health Turkey*'s content related to sexuality and relationships between the years 201 and 2017 to show how the magazine promotes the formation of neoliberal sexual selves through its discourse.

Men's Health has been accused of its focus on the perfect body, enticing men into eating disorders and compulsive exercising (Hombach 2012). *The New York Times* attributed the magazine's success to its adoption of women's magazines' strategy of

"catering to men's anxieties about their bodies and sexual performance" (Kinetz 2006). Whereas David Zinczenko, the magazine's editor-in-chief explains its success by arguing that they redefined health as a concept "to be inclusive of everything that could improve a man's life. Great sex.Great food.Endorphin-boosting exercise.Looking and feeling your best. We turned health into a concept every guy would want to embrace, starting with the healthy guy on the cover". Christopher Hanson in*the Columbia Journalism Review* argued that *Men's Health* "deals overwhelmingly with self-care and, in fact, exaggerates the possibilities for autonomous personal transformation" by pointing to risk factors affecting health that are beyond individual control (Hanson 2007, pp. 15-17).

Figure 4.1: Men's Health US 02/16 & Men's Health Turkey 12/16

Source:https://www.amazon.com/Mens-Health-Magazine-February-2016/dp/B01A96W01Q/ref=pd_bxgy_14_img_2?_encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=B01A96W01Q&pd_rd_r=11QPZVK9ZFXCRDGXRPN4&pd_rd_w=rYZbz&pd_rd_wg=EDWaS&psc=1&refRID=11QPZVK9ZFXCRDGXRPN4 (Men's Health US) and personal archive (Men's Health Turkey)

On the other hand, Rubio-Hernandéz (2010) argues that the magazine's "representations of masculinity… promote a culture of consumption" (p. 57), and citing Belinda Wheaton that "the male body project underlined by *Men's Health* sees the body as a 'passport for the good life'" (p. 59). The rise of consumption as defining masculinity is cited among the reasons of the success of the magazine. Accordingly, today, perfection of the body is seen as a "social obligation," and is an individual responsibility, a last resort where one can accomplish control considering external insecurities (p. 65). A fit

body is therefore the showcase of one' "self-discipline, effort, and commitment" (p. 65). *Men's Health* represents a specific profile of men: "a young middle-class man, physically well-built, and sexually attractive" (p. 67).

To sum up, Men's Health magazine is criticized for promoting an unattainable perfect male body ideal as a source of male anxiety over one's body, sexuality and health; and as a site of masculine identification based on consumption habits. All these being important, the criticism may go beyond the effect of the magazine on individual subjects as affecting their lives to endorse a structural perspective. In a previous study, it was argued that the survival of capitalism in its different stages is also predicated on the forms of subjectivity it endorses and calls into (Yıldız, 2013). Men's Health, especially with its language endorsing the imperative mode, interpellates its readership of young male professionals to neoliberal subject positions, which is projected as a lifestyle. And sexuality, though not covered extensively throughout the issues but always present, forms the nexus point of the discursive strategies adopted by the magazine. Masked in a health discourse, the magazine promotes the "grooming and perfecting [of] bodily sexual selves" through diet, fitness, beauty and health products, cosmetic, and dietary supplements (Öncü, 2002, p. 173). Neoliberal subjectivity therefore builds upon the ideal of the perfection of the body as a site of investment, to be exhibited in the social market. This is the perfect enactment of the notion of human capital as explored by Foucault (2008) and discussed above. The reader of *Men's Health* is interpellated as an "entrepreneur of himself" to invest in himself, not this time through education or professional training for improving his income but on his own body to improve its market value. According to Gary S. Becker, any activity can be considered as an investment on human capital, like consumption which will produce consumer satisfaction, and this activity is referred to as "productive consumption" (Dilts, 2011). In the case of *Men's Health,* the investor produces his own body.

It has been stated that according to Baudrillard (1996), "consumption means an activity consisting of the systematic manipulation of signs," which is aimed at status and differentiation (p. 200). The "perfected bodily sexual selves" are both the site of neoliberal subjectivity expressed in the notion of homo oeconomicus and signs in a Baudrillardian sense as they are deployed in a specific market and take part in a

semiotic structure, placing their possessors differentially in a hierarchical social market. The fusion of the two in individual selves may produce eminently governable bodies, as the semiotic system of capitalism produces incentives for the endorsement of the subjectivities it promotes through rendering them meaningful.

The masculinity adopted by Men's Health is also a hegemonic neoliberal masculinity, finding its support in the discourse of lifestyle. Connell (2005) defines hegemonic masculinity "as the pattern of practice … that allowed men's dominance over women to continue" (p. 832). It might only be enacted by a certain minority of men, but this does not change the fact that it is normative, defining the "most honored way of being a man" (p. 832), and making it a requirement for other men to position themselves in relation to it. Hegemonic masculinity can be distinguished from other masculinities, especially of subordinated and complicit ones, the latter reaping the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a hegemonic version of masculinity but through their compliance with it. Hegemony is a concept adopted from Gramsci, meaning that not only violence and force but mostly culture, institutions and persuasion feed into its sustenance.

Connell underlines the fact that gender relations are subject to historical change: hegemonic masculinities are constituted within specific historical contingencies and therefore are subject to transformation, meaning that there can be room for less oppressive masculinities to become hegemonic in the future (2005).

According to Wetherell and Edley (cited in Connell 2005), hegemonic masculinities are subject positions in discourse to be adopted or distanced from strategically according to circumstances. Connell contradicts this position by arguing that nondiscursive practices such as violence, wage labor, sexuality, child care and domestic labor are also constitutive of gender relations. Gender relations have both discursive and nondiscursive dimensions, and Wetherell and Edley are right to argue that hegemonic masculinities are subject positions within discourse. But it should be kept in mind that it might not be that easy to switch one's subject positionback and forth within discourse for this also has implications for one's identity which is not that liquid.

In another article, R. W. Connell and Julian Wood explore a nascent hegemonic masculinity among Australian managers that they term "transnational business

masculinity" (2005). It is possible to observe in their findings the infiltration of neoliberal values since these managers "treat their life as an enterprise and self-consciously manage their bodies and emotions as well as finances" (2005, p. 347). Connell(2005) in her book*Masculinities* warns the reader that he/she should never forget the fact that global processes such as colonization are gendered.

Truly, neoliberalism seems gender-neutral at first glance its blueprint for molding every human relationship in the image of the market seeming to treat equally any gender that might be. But it seems that neoliberal ideology also creates gender inequality. It can be said that a new hegemonic masculinity among upper middle class men is on the rise, adopting endless consumption of sexuality and aversion to commitment in romantic relationships as a way of life. This norm might not be enacted by the majority but it affects it, and changes the way human beings communicate with each other.

Similarly, Men's Health presents the lifestyle it espouses as a reasonable choice among alternatives whereas it is a hegemonic discourse devalorizing other alternate modes of being masculine. The proper male body emerges therefore as the fit, sexy, young, attractive, muscular, fashionable body which is attentive to its nutrition habits. The presentation of this particular lifestyle as a choice is telling as it is a cornerstone of neoliberal thinking: "For the neo-liberals (and many classical liberals before them), freedom is expressed precisely through choice (and in fact, might be radically coincident with choice). The antitheses of freedom … are slavery and servitude" as they point to an inability to choose one's "daily activities" (Dilts, 2011, p. 143). Through choosing among daily activities, the individual invests in its human capital be that through education, consumption, or bodily grooming to get an income, consumer satisfaction or a perfect body. The hegemonic masculinity promoted by Men's Health as a lifestyle choice is therefore neoliberal.

4.1.2 Analyses of Excerpts from *Men's Health Turkey*

Men's Health's discourse constructs sex as both the means and the end of a great life. The morality of *Men's Health* entices its readers to more sex, to more enjoyable sex, and to variety in sex over and over again in its content about sexuality and relationships.

Sex emerges as the linchpin of the moral constitution of the subject for the exemplary life is constituted through sexuality in its excess, enjoyment and variety. The magazine targets heterosexual males though there is no denial of LGBTI individuals. Heterosexual men are thus constructed as hunters pursuing women, always motivated by a sex drive, and women as passive participants whom the men should persuade to obtain sex. And the way to persuasion is through following the tactics of Men's Health. There is therefore an implicit misogyny in the magazine. The magazine stereotypes both women and men, and adopts a twofold linguistic strategy: the presentation of (scientific) facts and the use of the imperative, interpellating its readers to specific subject positions. The following is an analysis of excerpts taken from the issues between the years 2015 and 2017.

> *More sex in two seconds*
> *Impressing women is easier than you believe. Really! Nurture your relationship and sex life with simple gestures.*
> *2-second tip: Hold the door open for a stranger.*
> *Why it works: Women are impressed by men who act gently. It is found in a research that they recognize altruism as an indicator of a good spouse.*
> *2-second tip: Kiss her in most unexpected moments.*
> *Why it works: Communication expert Dr. Sean Horan states that "One of our most basic needs is to receive and to show affection." This means that you both cater for her and your need. (Men's Health Turkey, November 2016, p. 40)*

Deciphering this excerpt, one sees that one of the man's prime purposes in life is to get sex as much as possible. However, women are not always willing or ready for reciprocating men's advances. Therefore, women need to be tempered through gestures offered as templates by Men's Health functioning as a guide and tactics source for great sex. Men are therefore constructed as active and women as passive agents. However this activity/passivity does not stem from the characteristics of the sexual act as in ancient Greece and determined according to the act of penetration, but specified along the axis of the seducer/seduced. Among the other tips not translated here, are included raising the morale of a woman with compliments, giving her little presents and leaning her against one's chest while whispering in her ear. Everything therefore, from altruism to gentleness, from affection to nicety is instrumentalized in the quest for sex. Being gentle and considerate is not valued per se but in their instrumentality in seducing women. And seducing women, while maybe a seemingly difficult endeavor, is in fact so easy to be accomplished in 2 seconds. Women are therefore constructed as naïve dupes whose

nature and functioning can be deciphered easily by Men's Health. The readers only need to follow its advice. As stated above, the language used by the excerpt is constituted by the presentation of (scientific) facts and imperatives. While therefore the magazine backs its claims with science, it both uses unspecific language as in the case of "it is found in a research," and referenced content like "Dr. Sean Horan states that", and endorses a claim to scientificity.

> *Increase the Dose of Excitement*
>
> *Now take a pause and think about your best sex experience ever. … Let us guess, it was not in the bedroom. You were not even in the house. Most likely your best experiences stirring your blood while remembering them happened in exciting, exotic, dangerous places or if you are lucky in a place including all three.*
> *…*
> *Use the method called by sociologists and scientists "the stimulation transfer" to make your first date (or your 10th anniversary) unforgettable. (Men's Health Turkey, November 2016, p. 74-75).*

Throughout this excerpt's source text are offered to men tips for activities that are conducive to "unforgettable sex." Exciting activities to be followed by sex such as rafting, karaoke or sky diving are advised. The memorableness of the sex derives not from the woman involved nor from the texture of the relationship but is tied to external factors stimulating the excitement. The personality or the actuality of the woman therefore becomes trivial in a scenario where again men prepare women for an unforgettable sex experience. This experience is more in the nature of a mise-en-scène designed and implemented by men rather than being a mutual sharing of the couple.

The "stimulation transfer" method referred to in the excerpt, works when a man associate an exogenous excitement source with the woman he is with: the brain perceives the source as the woman. The magazine therefore advices its readers to use the technique and to create exciting moments in order to dupe their brain into having the experience of their partner's having impressed them. The actuality, personality, compatibility of the woman virtually disappears: any woman is good for unforgettable sex, as long as the man prepares a good scenario and implements it. The same technique can also be used to impress women, through planning exciting meetings for the next date, as women will similarly confuse the source of the excitement: another tip for Men's Health readers seeking great sex.

What Women Want?
If you are lost seeking the response to this universal question, listen to this study they tell us honestly what they want from us.
Career is a must
Your career is one of the most important criteria for women. 8 in 10 women members want to be with a man who has a career. Furthermore almost all prize his financial situation.
Don't be the mamma's boy
If you are past 30 and living with your family, you are not even an alternative for many women. Especially men living with their family after they are 35 fail in the beginning. They are flexible in case you live with a housemate.
Weight doesn't matter
... We don't mind this entry much for no women can say no to a fit man in good shape, and this is what we want. ...
Now it's time to pay up
.... 9 in 10 women consider it a good indicator when men pay for the meal on the first date for the furtherance of the relationship. ... (Men's Health Turkey, May 2015, p. 76).

In this excerpt is enacted an ideal of neoliberal masculinity. The ideal man is therefore the young white collar with a good career and a good financial situation, living preferably alone and if not with a housemate, a gym-goer to conserve his fitness and good shape and generous in his spending about women. Men's Health both targets readers embodying this subject position and entices them to transform themselves to conform to its precepts. This ideal masculinity emerges therefore as a signpost for Men's Health readers who seek to transform themselves following the formulae presented by the magazine. And this transformation is again oriented towards impressing women, who are stereotyped as desiring the model endorsed by Men's Health.

Men's Health treats the self as an open project, resonating well with Gidden's concept of the reflexive project of the self. To quote again, the self "is a project carried on amid a profusion of reflexive resources: therapy and self-help manuals of all kinds, television programs and magazine articles" (Giddens, 1991, p. 30). Men's Health therefore takes on the role of expert on fitness, nutrition, fashion, sex and relationships to provide its readers with resources to transform themselves to approach the neoliberal masculine ideal, manifesting itself in the topless models on its cover and pages. The body emerges as both the site of application of various techniques based on expert advice in nutrition, fitness, fashion and sex and through its visibility, the showcase of the success of these techniques. What is of key importance here is the conception of the body as an ever

flexible entity. Flexibility (as in production and in labor markets) is a trait prized by neoliberal economics. Whatis.com defines a flexible workforce as follows:

> *A flexible workforce is one that grows in number to meet needs at any given time and falls back to a baseline number when the increased size is no longer necessary. That capacity is enabled by keeping the number of full-time employees to a minimum and hiring temporary, part-time, freelance and contract workers when required to meet demands. (Flexible workforce, 2016).*

Accordingly, it is labor that needs to adjust itself in an ever flexible way to the requirements of the capital. Vagaries of the economy should therefore be addressed with individual solutions. Similarly, Men's Health treats the individual body as an ever flexible site of the solution of the troubles of the neoliberal men. The ideal is attainable through listening to its advice.

> *New Sex Rules*
> *The rules have changed*
> *You are a lucky man*
> *What you believe that "cannot ever be suggested" loom in her fantasies*
> *92 per cent of* Men's Health *men agree that their girlfriend would refuse a threesome. And luckily, they are all wrong.*
> *60 per cent of women are interested in other women.*
> *In a research published in* the Journal of Sex, *it has been found that half of the women fantasize about other women, and that 45 per cent of them has kissed another woman.*
> *The author of the research Dr. Eve states that women's sexual preferences may vary. The best way to take advantage of this is obvious: open communication. (Men's Health Turkey, July 2016, pp. 72-74).*

It is observed in the excerpt that sexuality emerges as a field subject to trends changing through time. Through "the new sex rules," Men's Health provides its readers with the information on the latest fashion in sex. As Jean Baudrillard (1998, p. 101) writes of fashion when introducing his concept of "cultural recycling," the term refers to the practice of remaining up to date in terms of skills in a professional environment:

> *In fact, the term `recycling' prompts a number of thoughts: it inevitably brings to mind the `cycle' of fashion: in that field, too, everyone must be `with-it' and must `recycle themselves' -- their clothes, their belongings, their cars -- on a yearly, monthly or seasonal basis. If they do not, they are not true citizens of the consumer society. Now, it is clear that there is no continual progress in these fields: fashion is arbitrary, transient, cyclical, and adds nothing to the intrinsic qualities of the individual. It does, however, impose thorough going constraints, and the sanction it wields is that of social success or banishment.*

Men's Health readers must recycle therefore their sexuality to remain up to date and the good news is that the new trends are just tailored to their wishes, (as specified by the

magazine) be that a threesome, outdoor sex, bondage, sex toys or shooting their own amateur porn. The fact that Men's Health associates fashion and sex attests to the commodification of sexuality: sex becomes a consumer item recycled through trends, designating the "true citizens of consumer society" and wielding "social success or banishment."

The text supposedly presents women's wishes but they matter only as far as they are conducive to that of men's. Women's desire therefore is not important per se but offered at the service of men. Men's desire and wishes are primary; those of the women are derivative. Men are constructed as a constant source of various sexual desires which are to be fulfilled by the now willing women. To say the least, the example of a threesome is contradictory because desiring women does not imply that one would be ready to accept a threesome, which is a whole different matter.

> *A Guide from a Liar to Twisting the Facts*
> *5/ Even Animals Lie*
> *"Have you seen male birds display their feathers in order to convince the female bird to mate? This is definitely a form of lying. In the end, they return to normal after they finish the job" (Men's Health Turkey, May 2016, p. 56).*

Again, everything is rendered at the service of sex: it is implicated that even lying is a legitimate way to obtain sex, as it is even observed in the animal kingdom. In the following lines of the text it is stated that "liars eventually get caught" and introduced an ambiguity about the rationality of lying. However as what matters is to "finish the job," once the lie has accomplished its task, to get caught becomes a secondary consideration. Sex here emerges as an end in itself again dissociated from the woman involved, a Machiavellian position adopted, considering any means good to achieve sex, including lying.

> *Why Women Cheat*
> *...married women we interviewed to prepare this news showed us that a woman in an emotional void can cheat without consideration. Dr. Kirsten Mark conducting research on sexuality states: "Women just cheat out of different reasons than us. And they manage to do that more in secrecy than us." This means that they are smart enough not to share their personal information in a cheating website (Men's Health Turkey, May 2016, p. 97).*

In what follows are categorized reasons that lead women to cheat: mid-life crisis, motivation for revenge, the urge to fill the void inside and unmet expectations in bed.

Sex is now instrumentalized to serve various purposes: women therefore may engage in sex to struggle with their mid-life crisis confirming through sex that they are still desirable, use sex as a tool for revenge against inconsiderate husbands who treat them like a child in financial matters or fall into the arms of the prince charming to fill the void they feel inside. To deal with these possibilities are given Men's Health readers tactics such as giving compliments and sharing a good time together. Again, these tactics, similar to its counterparts directed to achieve great sex, are not targeted to build together a sound relationship based on mutual sharing but to prevent women from having a roving eye.

Women again are stereotyped: they are all liable to cheating but for different reasons than men and they are more skillful cheaters: the lack or the fakeness of women profiles in a cheating website therefore do not attest to a lack of women cheaters but to their prudence. Conversely, men are stereotyped as lousy cheaters mindless enough "to share their personal information on a cheating website." Cheating reasons are categorized like sex and women are as stated above.

Women's cheating is therefore constructed as an easy pitfall they might step in out of an emotional void. It is not indicative of a serious problem in the relationship but a liability of women that can be cured by adopting the strategies advised by Men's Health. The magazine skips over the peculiarities of different relationships but gives advice supposed to work on any woman under categorized situations: a woman might easily cheat but it is easier to prevent this prospect.

> *Is She a Worthwhile Investment?*
>
> *1. Calculate the worth of your love*
> *There are some affinities between buying and selling stocks and managing a relationship, for example sales strategy. When an investor is emotionally attached to an asset (or to a girlfriend), they tend to keep that longer than necessary. As for bad investors, they prematurely sell out something valuable. Does it sound familiar? Shrewd brokers use the stop loss method.*
> *1. Should I venture into a new investment?*
> *Is everything even in terms of time, finances and emotions in your relationship? Let's calculate financial expenditure first. Do you think you spend more than your share when you go out to eat or when on vacation?… After, consider it in terms of emotional investment and time: Happy times you had together, connections you established with her family and friends while spending time together; all these are investments accumulated in your bank (Men's Health Turkey, May 2016, pp. 100, 102).*

The excerpt is an excellent example of the treatment of relationships as investments rather than as bonds of mutual commitment as discussed by Bauman in Liquid Love (2003). Whereas the relationship becomes an investment to be managed according to methods derived from the stock market, women become assets to be kept or sold out according to their worth, to be assessed thanks to the tests provided by Men's Health. Time, finances and emotions are the three items to be considered to weigh the relationship where emotional attachment becomes a liability one needs to beware of. When the magazine asks whether everything is even in these three items, the relationship becomes an exchange of the market type between the male and female partner exchanging time, money and emotions rather than complementing each other. Men and women involved in a relationship become therefore abstract rational actors managing their investments, rather than actual human beings in their diversity.

It has been stated above that everybody becomes an entrepreneur of him/herself according to the neoliberal credo as elaborated by Foucault (2008). The notion of a relationship as investment fits perfectly to that of the human being as an enterprise: the very fabric of life is therefore put at the disposal of the market logic.

> *8 Ways to Match Faster*
> *If your love life is entrusted to online dating applications, you are going to find the most comprehensive and guaranteed guide to find her.*
> *Put crowded photos*
> *Group photos showing you having fun with your friends will make you desirable. If in these photos there is a woman smiling at you or touching you your social status will rise.*
> *Clean your criminal record*
> *… Your Instagram photos will show whether or not you have a dynamic social life. (Have you posted photos of meals in most hip restaurants?). (Men's Health Turkey, September 2016, pp. 107-109).*

Here again it is possible to witness the spreading of the market logic to various spheres of life. This time we are confronted with a dating market whereby *Men's Health*'s tips raise one's exchange value through careful management of one's profile, especially through the management of the photographs one uses to present himself. Group photos, a woman in the picture touching the protagonist or pictures from most hip restaurants will therefore raise one's status and hence his exchange value in the dating market. The fabric of life, one's experiences are therefore instrumentalized to attract potential mates. According to Yıldız (2013, p. 2):

> *…individuals display and commodify themselves in order to enter into circulation in various social markets, [such as social media, reality shows and the job market] and this, for attaining the maximum amount of visibility. Through self-display, we submit our very person to commodification.*

It is observed therefore that self-display, meaning the instrumentalization of the very fabric of one's life to acquire a certain value of attention in the social market is now targeted at getting potential mates in the dating market. However, *Men's Health*'s treating of relationships as a dating market does not amount to a discursive strategy of the magazine but points to a reality in the realm of online dating. Online dating platforms are organized with the logic of the market whereby individuals establish relationships in the model of shopping. Different profiles submitted to the tastes of users mimic the experience of the supermarket, or better the mall, with the cherished principle of endless choices. Dating as market features therefore the commodification of its participants again and again.

> *The Frugal One Wins*
> *We have bad news for men who throw money around to impress women. According to research conducted by Michigan University,* ***women find men who save money more attractive.*** *It has been observed that men who state that they would save the large part of money if they hit the jackpot in their online dating profile were found 36 per cent more desirable than men who stated that they would spend it all. Dr. Scott Rick states that, "Whereas saving attests to willpower, prodigality is perceived as an indicator of inconsiderate behaviors like aggressiveness and cheating." (Men's Health Turkey, June 2015, p. 32)*

Again, like everything, men's personality is instrumentalized and put at the service of impressing women. The world of heterosexual relationships is not, therefore, one of companionship whereby a man and a woman get to know each other to recognize whether or not they complement each other, but one of men manipulating their behavior to impress women whose brain processes various signals sent by men. Every behavior such as frugality orthriftlessness is coded to elicit a certain response in women. To be understood by a woman is not what really matters but what matters, are the signals one sends in this world of codes and signals. The personality of the woman is again erased, as all women process the signals emitted by men in the same manner: saving attests to willpower and prodigality indicates aggressiveness and cheating. *Men's Health* therefore claims to have solved the enigmatic problem of understanding the woman's brain.

Sexuality/ Leave Your Trace in One Night
Competition among Women
Make the same yourself. Create a competitive environment. Psychologist Wendy Walsh from Cal State University explains its reason stating that "It would be a mistake to underrate female competition. Women would like to be with the man with the highest social status in the environment."
Stranger at the Opera
Make the same yourself. Let her guide you. Dr. Gunsaullus states that "Although power and authority are attractive attributes, self-confidence is too. And a man who trusts himself to let the woman take control is very sexy." ... What is more, you will provide her with the confidence she covertly needs to be with you. (Men's Health Turkey, June 2015, pp. 87, 89)

Here, one is confronted with more stereotyping of women, adapted to men's needs. Women therefore are not addressed in their individuality but treated uniformly as desiring similar attributes in similar men. Accordingly, all women, as a scientific fact, find desirable the men in the highest status. The emphasis on competition is important in its affinity with neoliberal credo. Furthermore, the excerpt is thoroughly misogynist in its implications. In the text not included in the excerpt, the female narrator recounts her meeting with a stranger for going to the opera. As she had the tickets and organized the event, she declares that she felt in power in her sexy outfit. However, in the following, as quoted in the excerpt, we see that this sense of control and superiority can only be bestowed by the man. Accordingly, a woman's sense of power and control can only be given to her by men and is therefore derivative of that of the males. The same goes for the first part of the excerpt, emphasizing female competition: it is again derivative, as females tend to derive their status from that of the males, through being their women. The excerpt finishes by stating that women need to feel secure in the relationship, as if a certain sense of confidence is not a mutual need for both women and men. Women therefore emerge as the most desired but secondary actors in a world dominated by men.

Listen to your instincts
About half of the women stated that they tried at least for once having their hands or feet tied up during sex. Thus, hearing statements such as "being gained control over", "toughness", "being dominated" when we asked them what they liked in bed did not surprise us. Dr. Fisher states that the series Fifty Shades of Grey brings to the forefront something women love and want from centuries on and states "I named this the iguana syndrome." Iguana? The story is as follows: The female iguana lies on the ground face down, raises her bottom up and surrenders to the male. The mating does not occur if both of them do not play their own role perfectly. It is a must that the female completely surrenders. Dr. Fisher explains this phenomenon as following: "I think that domination and submission, and we can call this surrender, is a basic strategy most of humanity has applied from the beginning of the history. The woman completely surrenders, and the man dominates the woman to impress

her." And we order you to try it. You are going to find advice from BDSM instructor Simone Justice below in the section "Bondage Lesson." (Men's Health Turkey, March 2017, p. 105).

Here again, one encounters several tropes common to Men's Health. The magazine through backing its claims by references to the animal kingdom, and through ahistoricism adopts pop-Darwinism without mentioning evolution. Previously it has been discussed that the roles assigned to man and woman were that of the hunter and chase respectively. This point was taken for granted in the excerpts discussed above and not even subject to exploration. According to the pop-Darwinist discourse men who were hunters and women who were gatherers evolved according to these Stone Age rolesto bring about the currentgender differences. In an article by Gabrielle Pickle, repeating once again that "Men are hunters. Women are responders," the explanation of this "fact" is as follows: "Matchmaker Steve Ward assumes it has to do with evolution. Men are hunters because somewhere deep down inside is a remnant of their ancestors – the prehistoric cavemen" (Pickle, n.d., pp. 13, 17). Here this logic based on evolution is used to assign men and women the roles of domination and submission respectively. It is not discussed anywhere that bondage can be a mutual game with changing roles and that man can also desire being dominated. The roles are fixed. By referring to instincts and to the animal kingdom and naming the supposed willingness of women for bondage as a syndrome, Men's Health naturalizes its purported sexual division of roles. It is therefore a natural drive of women to submit and that of men to dominate. Therefore *Men's Health*'s discourse is essentialist, portraying sexual habits as unchanging throughout time. This portrayal clashes with another discursive strategy of the magazine pursuing changing trends in sexuality as discussed above. Furthermore, the role division of submitted/woman dominating/man do not appear as a sex game to fuel desire but as another manifestation of humanity's strategy of domination/submission. Therefore, the discourse of *Men's Health* is again wholeheartedly sexist.

4.1.3 Foucault's History of Sexuality and Men's Health Turkey

Foucault (1978), in the first volume of his "History of Sexuality," stands against what he calls the repressive hypothesis that puts a break between the 17th and the 19th centuries with the argument that a sexuality enjoyed much more freely before was

repressed, confined to the married couple and delegated to silence with the advent of the Victorian period. He argues that Western history from the 18th century onward witnessed a radical deployment of sexuality and a proliferation of discourses functioning on bodies, to deduct and establish the truth about sex, among which are demography, biology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, ethics, pedagogy, and political criticism. Sex therefore became an object of analysis and concern, about which the hidden truth could be reached through the mechanism of confession inherited from the Middle Ages. Foucault states that the break is more about a transition from one conception of power to another. The characteristic power of the suzerain over life and death, a privilege of seizure "of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself," gave way to the prominence of bio-power, a power "working to incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize and organize the forces under it", operating on bodies and on populations, with the function of administering life (p. 136).

The "deployment of sexuality" and the application of its techniques first took place within the economically and politically privileged classes, as "a question of maximizing life" (p. 123). "The primary concern was not the repression of the sex of the classes to be exploited, but rather the body, vigor, longevity, progeniture, and descent of the classes that 'ruled'" (p. 123). Whereas the aristocracy claimed a special characteristic to its body through its blood, the blood of the bourgeoisie became its sex. The working classes have rather been the latecomers in the history of the deployment of sexuality (1978).

The body, in its vigor and longevity, is still a great concern among today's upper-middle classes, although not exactly the same but in similar forms. We are more and more enticed to treat our bodies like manageable assets in a marketplace, bombarded by images of fashionable bodies by the media, under discourses of weight-giving and body building. The conduct of the body and its dressing has always been a matter of status but it seems that today the neoliberal discourses operate deep in our skin, enticing us virtually to take shape according to its precepts. As has been the case with the bourgeoisie of the Victorian period, it seems that today maintaining class status is possible through one's conduct of conduct, through one's own operations on his/her

own body. Today this conduct of conduct is called to take shape within the market vocabulary of competition. Sexuality does not escape this market logic, of which Men's Health Turkey's discourse is a manifestation.

Foucault's two last volumes of *The History of Sexuality* are relevant to our discussion in a twofold way: First, the new concepts of the "techniques of the self", "arts of existence" or "care of the self" resonate well with the self-care discourse espoused by Men's Health. Secondly, the discussion of sexuality in ancient Greek and the Greco-Roman period provides a signpost for comparison with a "past [which] is a foreign country" to show the contingencies of the present.

Foucault's two last volumes of *The History of Sexuality, The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self* have been discussed as a reorientation of his thought as giving more room to individual agency (Downing, 2008). Alexandre Macmillan (2011) traces the outline of Foucault's previous work as explaining the birth of modernity through the objectivation and domination practices having its roots in the 17th and 18th centuries. Disciplines and biopolitics, "an exhaustive control of the human body, and a regulation of populations" form the basis of "the emergence of a normalizing technology of life," distributing subjects along the axis normal versus pathological (p. 4). Foucault's concern therefore was focused on the apparatuses of power-knowledge shaping modern life. As said before, the two last volumes of *The History of Sexuality* represent a reconfiguration in Foucault's work, although not a detour. The new concepts of the "techniques of the self" or "arts of existence" are defined in *The Use of Pleasure* as "those reflective and voluntary practices by which men not only set themselves rules of conduct, but seek to transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being, and to make their life into an oeuvre that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria" (Foucault, 1990, pp. 10-11). Foucault (cited in Downing 2008, p. 97) explains in an interview in 1984:

> *I would say that if I am now interested in how the subject constitutes himself in an active fashion, by the practices of self, these practices are nevertheless not something invented by the individual himself. They are models that he finds in his culture and are proposed, suggested, imposed upon him by his culture, his society, and his cultural group. (Foucault, cited in Downing, 2008, p. 97).*

In the second volume of *The History of Sexuality*, *The Use of Pleasure*, Foucault (1990) states that the term sexuality made its appearance in the beginning of the nineteenth century and that it was perceived as a constant more or less and variously repressed through different periods of history, a hypothesis which he refutes. He therefore makes a "genealogy of desiring man" in ancient Greece to decipher the "techniques of the self", available at the period, as related to sexuality (p. 12). Foucault is keen to draw attention to the discontinuity of Christian and pagan sexual austerity, as in the first case we are confronted with a system of codes defining prohibitions and freedoms emanating from one source and applying to everybody whereas pagan sexual morality was supplementary, selective in its target and emanating from different religious and philosophical sources varying accordingly. Foucault states that morals aim at the ethical formation of the subject by him/herself with "'modes of subjectivation' and 'practices of the self' that support them" (p. 28). Accordingly, any morality incorporates codes of conduct defining prohibitions and freedoms and "modes of subjectivation," the second being dominant in antique morality, ethical self-formation of the subject treating him/herself as the object of this formation forming its gist.

Foucault (1990) states that the primary principle in relation to sexuality in ancient Greece was moderation.The sexual act was therefore not considered as something bad in itself, but rather as something natural but inferior in nature as it was proper to both men and animals. Sexuality was associated with an excessive force nature implanted in it in order to ensure procreation, which guaranteed the survival of the cities and generations. This ethics of moderation targeted free adult men, through a principle of dividing the self into a good and a bad part, the first needing to master the second. Therefore, the relationship of the self with the self was that of domination, considered as being from the same nature as mastering one's household or holding political function in the city hence ruling others. The sexual act was perceived as something happening between two actors, one active and the other passive, passivity and immoderation being the two types of immoral behavior. Effeminacy stemmed from these two immoralities, rather than being associated with homosexuality. Sexuality was organized according to the principles of need, timeliness and status. The principle of need required the actualization of sex in time of need to turn the body into its prior status; timeliness established precepts to determine the opportune times for the sexual

act, as for the status, the more the individual was higher in rank in the city, the more his ethical self-formation regarding moderation became important. Excess in sex was similar to excess in eating and drinking, all subject to the principle of moderation in ancient Greece, and all these amounted to freedom, not being the slave of one's own pleasures being its first condition.

Sexuality in ancient Greece was problematized in four domains: concerning the body, the wife, the boys and the truth with *dietetics, economics, erotics* and *philosophy* developed respectively to address these domains. According to the ancient Greek *dietetics*, the body needed to be taken care of for the harmony of the soul. Sex was a violent act weakening men through the emission of the sperm and putting at risk the various parts of the organism as well as linked to death. Writings in *economics* reveal that the relationship of the couple was not one of "mutual fidelity" but was organized according to the principle of moderation stemming from different sources: whereas the man could enjoy the sexual company of other men and women, he was responsible to himself with regard to avoiding excess. The women's position was derivative, her moderation stemming from her subordinate position. According to the *erotics*, the love of boys was not considered immoral in ancient Greece but nevertheless a matter of concern, understood as a different manifestation of the love for beautiful human beings. A boy needed to be lesser in status and age than his lover and neither should yield too hastily nor refuse all advances in order to protect his honor. The discussion of truth developed in relation to the love of boys, establishing a relationship between "true love" and the truth (Foucault 1990).

In the third volume of *The History of Sexuality*, *The Care of the Self*, Foucault (1990) continues his "genealogy of the desiring man" this time in the Greco-Roman period. Although the principle of the rule of oneself over oneself remains, there is a shift as "the care of the self" becomes a requirement for all irrespective of status and that it involves a continuous inspection of the self by oneself not in order to chase guilt and sin but in order to better one's soul. Marriage becomes more prominent, transforming from a "dynastic, political, and economic" organization that upper classes were engaged in order to ensure inheritance to their descendants into an institution whereby man and woman are bound together in companionship through mutual affective ties. The decline

of the city states, and their becoming intermediaries for imperial rule, makes the ethical self-formation of the subject more problematic. The love of boys relatively declines but discussions comparing it with conjugal life continue. In both cases, carnal pleasures were disfavored against the virtues sex brings, such as friendship, understanding and love.

The principle of moderation discussed by Foucault seems in stark contrast to the principle of excess embraced by Men's Health. However, it is noticeable that in both cases sexuality in some form is a determiner of the social status of a man, in ancient Greece through moderation and in neoliberal Turkey through excess. What however seems more worrying is the incorporation of the techniques of the self, which might be a basis for resistance, into the neoliberal toolkit as lifestyle. Therefore, in Men's Health's discourses, the self-formation of the subject through acting upon him/herself remains, but its ethical aspects disappear or are transmogrified into something not breeding resistance but conformity to the system. The transformation of intimacy under neoliberalism is therefore the breeding of intimacies favorable to the neoliberal system, which in this case is built upon the principle of competition through sex. Below other important thinkers commenting on the transformation of intimacy in the last decades will be introduced.

4.1.4 Theories on the Transformation of Intimacy

"Casualization of sex" introduced in the first chapter is a term partly borrowed from Britanny Griebling (2012), from her PhD dissertation about consensual non-monogamy in the United States. She draws the term herself from the literature on work, as the "casualization of intimacy". Work today is done under more uncertain conditions, with longer work hours, more job insecurity and lower wages, hence the casualization of work, and from there the casualization of intimacy. The author states that "consensually non-monogamous relationships [are] a distinctive product of the neoliberal moment in the US," in a media environment where "no-strings attached sex with numerous partners [is presented] as one of the most desirable experience in life" (p. 1). Consensual non-monogamy which entails engaging in secondary or more sexual or

romantic relationships while in a primary relationship presents the central dilemma of intimacy"as a struggle between commitment and freedom" (p.2).

After using postmodernism as a paradigm for late modernity, Bauman prefers to use the attribute "liquid" to refer to the period in question in his later work (Heapy, 2007). His thoughts about liquid modernity are thoroughly developed in his books Liquid Modernity and Liquid Love.

In Liquid Modernity, Bauman argues that modernity has come to a distinctive stage he calls 'liquid' in contrast to the heavy period before, using the metaphors of liquids and solids referring to their distinctive capacity to elude taking shape and to remain in shape, respectively. Modernity has always been a process of liquefaction, a period where "all that is solid melts into air" (Berman, 1982), but Bauman states that early modernity liquefied previous institutions in order to re-embed individuals into new solids, as classes replaced estates. The latter were born into whereas membership in the former was acquired and tested through daily conduct. Thus, early modernity disembedded in order to re-embed, whereas today there are no more beds to receive the free floating individuals (2000).

Bauman's prime concerns in liquid modernity among others are the displacement of the citizen by the individual, the receding of Politics ("with capital P") in favor of life-politics and the occupation of the public sphere by the private. Whereas heavy modernity suffered from too much public power with its concomitant dangers of oppression, liquid modernity is suffering from too little public power as authorities remain more and more helpless in the face of the ever-mobile global elite, threatening states with flights of capital. The mottos of the day are "No more salvation by society," and "There is no such thing as society" as declared by Peter Drucker and Margaret Thatcher respectively (Bauman, 2000, p. 30). The burden of dealing with the problems produced by the system is put on the shoulders of individuals: "how one lives becomes *a biographical solution to systemic contradictions*" (Beck, cited in Bauman 2000, p. 34). Counsellors offer their services to customers who look for examples rather than authorities in order to shape their lives, chat shows contribute to the invasion of the public sphere by the private. As Bauman (2000, p. 72) puts it:

> *-the way individual people define individually their individual problems and try to tackle them deploying individual skills and resources is the sole remaining 'public issue' and the sole object of 'public interest'.*

A return to Politics with capital P is therefore required, but remains difficult to achieve.

Bauman states that in liquid modernity we live in a consumer society, whereby every action is turned into compulsive shopping. Firstly; desire, characterized by a psychic economy of comparison, distinction and envy displaced need as the motivation for shopping; whereas now wish displaces desire and to remain in the race becomes the only purpose for running. The standard of health of heavy modernity has been replaced by that of fitness, a flexible, subjective and elusive attribute that cannot be measured thus ever expandable. Furthermore, we came to see ours and other peoples' lives as works of art we call 'identity,' which we acquire through 'shopping around' among possible alternatives, and we experience as "the freedom to be different" (p. 84). Treating every life decision as a matter of consumer choice has become the definition of freedom in our consumer society (Bauman 2000).

Bauman expresses the distinction between heavy and light modernity also as the distinction between heavy and light capitalism. The prime expression of the heavy capitalism was the Fordist factory, whereby labor and capital were tied to each other, both immobile, and where techniques of surveillance on the model of the Panopticon were employed. Light capitalism is mobile and cherishes transience and has set itself free from labor, but labor remains still immobile. Long term security is absent in a world of structural unemployment, obsessed with downsizing and competitiveness. Instant gratification as the new norm of the new situation where long-term plans became impossible, "precarious economic and social conditions train men and women … to perceive the world as a container full of disposable objects, objects for one-off use; the whole world – including other human beings" (p. 162). The institution of cohabitation, compared to marriage, which can be terminated at further notice, reflects this turn of events. As Bauman puts it: "[T]he present-day commitments stand in the way of the next-day opportunities, the lighter and more superficial they are, the less is the likely damage" (p. 163). Bonds become consumer items and are not meant to be worked out anymore but entered into or broken according to the criteria of (consumer) satisfaction.

In “Liquid Love,” Bauman further develops his arguments about relationships in a liquid modern world. They emerge as arenas where individuals ever seek for satisfaction whereas the rules of the game become more and more ambivalent. The contemporary ‘counselling boom’ feeds on this situation, as the counsellors more and more orient their audience away from commitment, advertising new modes of relating on the basis of connecting and networking. Entry to and exit from these new types of relationships should be easy at any time, as “commitment, and particularly long-term commitment, is the trap that the endeavor ‘to relate’ should avoid more than any other danger” as one should “keep all doors open at any time” (p. x). Bauman mentions the commentary of a twenty-eight-year old man on the rising popularity of computer dating: “you can always press “delete”” (p. xii). When expectations for quality are not met, one compensates with quantity and rapidity of change, and networks replace partnerships. A relationship becomes not different from a consumer item. According to Bauman (2000, p. 12):

> *Like other consumer goods, partnership is for consumption on-the-spot (it does not require additional training or prolonged preparation) and for one-off use ‘without prejudice’. First and foremost, it is eminently disposable.*

Bauman relates that the expert’s discourse treats and urges people to treat relationships like investments. One should remain alert as if following the stock market for the right time to buy or sell his/her stocks in order to engage in or disengage from a relationship. The primacy is for the least investment possible, strong emotions let alone “love at first sight” are highly undesirable for they would make one vulnerable to fluctuations in the future once things start to go wrong. Dependency should be dreaded like the plague. Breaking up with less possible damage is an art that we are expected to acquire giving an ear to the counsels of experts, one of whose favorite kind of relationships emerges as the semi-detached couple, who prefer to keep their house, their bank accounts and their circle of friends separate and only meet when both parties deem it convenient. ‘No strings attached’ becomes the motto of the times (Bauman 2003).

Sex has become the example of ‘pure relationship’ par excellence: “the isolation of sex from other realms of life … progressed further before; [it] has become the prevailing target/ideal model of human partnership” (Bauman 2003, p. 45). The fate of today’s *homo sexualis* is bound by that of *homo consumens*, whose motive is not the endless

accumulation of goods but the use and disposal of them at a maximum turnover, hence the same with human beings treated as consumer objects. However, anxiety from *homo sexualis*' life has not been eliminated: first of all, what might bring a sexual act for the future is uncertain and secondly, he/she is always questioning if he/she is missing a hidden chance of happiness with someone else at every point in time (Bauman 2003).

Bauman likens internet dating to shopping, where the causalities that might emanate from establishing real bonds can be mostly avoided; as pressing the delete button or not replying to an e-mail is the easiest thing on earth: "Termination on demand – instantaneous, without mess, no counting losses or regrets – is the major advantage of internet dating" (p. 65). Internet dating meets the "standards of rational choice perfectly," compared to the complicated world of mutual commitments (p. 65). However, to blame technology for this turn of events would be useless, as much contributed to the coming of this state of events. The advent of *homo oeconomicus* and *homo consumens* who shop in order to cure their ills, among which is loneliness is significant in that respect. They form not a community with bonds but an aggregate of individuals who shop around in isolation. They are "men and women without social bonds. They are the ideal residents of the market economy and the types that make the GNP watchers happy" through their consumption (p. 69). And they shape their relationships based on their consumer and rational choice experience.

It seems therefore that the market maxims of rational choice and self-interest have transformed the domain of love in a striking matter, and that the market invaded the previous domains of human solidarity (Bauman 2003). Bauman's examinations are striking in the way it overlaps with the analysis of *Men's Health Turkey* in this work. It can be said that *Men's Health Turkey* provides one of the identities that can be "shopped around" which in fact is a privileged identity. The motive of use and disposal at a maximum turnover is the perfect definition of the way *Men's Health Turkey* treats sex. However, although he makes a comparison between heavy and light modernity, Bauman does not put his analysis in a historical perspective, which will be one of the objectives of this work: to put the recent developments in the historical perspective of Turkey.

In “The Transformation of Intimacy”, Giddens tracks important developments that changed the domain of intimacy from the eighteenth century on and argues that recent transformations paved the way for the democratization of the intimate life. Accordingly, sexuality in late modernity has become a matter of life-style choice, a possession to be cultivated by each one according to his/her needs and preferences, and not a natural condition readily accepted (Giddens 1992).

The important concepts developed by the author marking the late modern era are the plastic sexuality, the pure relationship, and the confluent love. The reflexive project of the self, fully developed in the author’s book “Modernity and Self-Identity” should also be considered to understand Giddens’ position. In Giddens’ (1991, p. 30) words:

> *The self today is for everyone a reflexive project - a more or less continuous interrogation of past, present and future. It is a project carried on amid a profusion of reflexive resources: therapy and self-help manuals of all kinds, television programmes and magazine articles.*

Under reflexive modernity, the erosion of tradition changes the status of modern identity from being a given into something that is actively and consciously constituted, through self-narratives and through what Giddens terms as the “colonization of the future”. Life-style choices are key for the reflexive project of the self.

Plastic sexuality is sexuality untied to reproduction, having its roots in the 18th century, when the pre-modern principle of large family size gave way to the principle of limited family size. The modern methods of contraception, both a prerequisite and a result of this limiting, together with new technologies of reproduction, further separated the domains of sexuality and reproduction contributing to the development of plastic sexuality. According to Giddens, “The creation of plastic sexuality, severed from its age-oldintegration with reproduction, kinship and the generations,was the precondition of the sexual revolution of the past several decades” (p. 27). Sexuality became thus fully autonomous (Giddens 1992).

Late modern confluent love developed after the modern institution of romantic love which itself is the successor of pre-modern marriages. Pre-modern marriages were based on economic motives as from the 19th century on, marriage ties came to be formed more and more on the basis of romantic love, rather than on the basis of

economic considerations. The notions of romantic love first emerged in bourgeois spheres, to spread to the other echelons of the society afterwards. Marriage became “a joint emotional enterprise,” becoming even more important than childcare. The transformation of “home” set it as a place distinct from the work environment, a place of emotional support “at least in principle” (p. 26). Giddens relates the emergence of romantic love to a threefold of influences emanating from the 19th century and affecting women: “One was the creation of the home …. Asecond was the changing relations between parents andchildren; a third was what some have termed the 'inventionof motherhood” (p. 42). Romantic love introduced the question of intimacy into marriage, as the couple started to prefigure their life trajectory considering their mutual emotions, in a setting where each other were considered to make the lacking other whole. In these terms, romantic love had an egalitarian intent in principle, but this does not mean de facto equality between man and woman. Confluent love according to Giddens fairs better in that respect (Giddens, 1992). Confluent love is love developed in pure relationships, and it might be better to have a look at the concept.

A pure relationship is entered for its own sake and remained into as long as both parties deem it satisfactory enough for their own benefit (Giddens, 1992). Giddens again discusses pure relationship in his book Modernity and Self-identity and states that “in the context of pure relationship, trust can be mobilized only by a process of mutual disclosure,” and not on the basis of external criteria such as that of “kinship, social duty or traditional obligation” (1991, p. 6). Sexuality before was the connection between love and marriage but more and more it becomes the connecting point between love and the pure relationship. According to Giddens, commitment is necessary for the lasting of the relationship but the risk of hurt is also high if enough consideration is not given (Giddens 1992).

Confluent love, in the circumstances of pure relationship, differs from romantic love in terms of its not bracketing off ars erotica but its making of it a key for a successful relationship. Confluent love also is not exclusively heterosexual, as in the case of the romantic love institution. It is not exclusively monogamous either, as the pure relationship can be conducted as long as both parties deem it beneficial for them (Giddens 1992).

Giddens argues that these institutions of late modernity are more egalitarian institutions and through life-politics, this strain of egalitarianism can spread towards other realms of the society. Pure relationship, confluent love and plastic sexuality are parts of a mold whereby the late modern reflexive constitution of the self would lead to equalitarian relationships on the basis of equal emotional give and take. The equality in question is both between men and women and both a pluralism concerning sexualities and identities previously deemed as perversion. Giddens links the decline of perversion discourse regarding homosexuality as a result of the socialization of nature, a process whereby thanks to modernity, domains previously deemed as natural came under the influence of social forces. Reproduction is a case in point (Giddens 1992).

However, there are still differences between men and women concerning emotional equality. Accordingly, men are laggards in the late developments pioneered by women, and Giddens ascribes them a masked dependency towards women, which they are reluctant to reveal lest exposing their secret vulnerability. Both men and women need each other in intimate life, but it seems that the work weighs upon women. However, Giddens traces this state of affairs to the differential separation of men and women from the all-powerful mother figure in childhood, following the invention of motherhood, without sufficiently questioning the ideologies of patriarchy and masculinity which oppress men together with women (Giddens 1992). These ideologies define proper manhood as emotional invulnerability and superiority over women in many terms, whereas failing in these terms amounts to failing as a man. Therefore, searching the cause of modern men's uneasiness with intimacy in discourses and ideologies defining proper manhood is much more fitting than making a psychoanalysis of him.

Bauman is very critical of the institution of pure relationship and does not give credence to Giddens' predictions about its capacity for democratization first in the domain of intimate life and then in other domains of the society through life-politics. It has been stated above that Bauman is very critical of life-politics which he considers a symptom of the invasion of the public sphere by the private and the main culprit of the demise of Politics with a capital P. Bauman does not argue against Giddens' point about the prominence of the pure relationship today, but against its positive implications. According to Bauman, pure relationship exemplifies par excellence the modern flight

from commitment, and the unwillingness to invest in one's partner for the fear of dependency (Bauman 2003).

The picture painted by Giddens is one of a gradual emancipation of women to bring forth a new domain of more egalitarian intimacy. However, the developments that Giddens tracks do not happen in a power-free environment but take shape in and shape a consumerist and capitalist world still market by patriarchy. The changes brought by the self-assertion of women in the public sphere, the development of plastic sexuality and the "sexual revolution", brought with it new forms of gender inequality. Some of them are discussed by Giddens, like the unequal share of emotional work by men and women. Pure relationship therefore is not egalitarian even in Giddens' terms. The new institutions of plastic sexuality, confluent love or pure relationship discussed by Giddens are not gender neutral. They better serve the interests of men than women. Whereas the emphasis on sex is welcome by the majority of men, the flight away from mutual responsibility and relationships frustrates the majority of women. Furthermore, it seems that the model for the pure relationship is the market. The partners emerge as two hominess oeconomici making rational cost-benefit analyses and choices concerning the relationship, rather than individuals working it out through mutual engagement on the basis of mutual responsibility and love. The role of plastic sexuality in the commodification of sex should also be noted. Giddens states that sexuality with late modernity came to be understood as something one "possesses" and "cultivates." These developments should also be understood in terms of the development of capitalistic individualism, turning the stuff of the world into exchangeable possessions. This is not to say that plastic sexuality per se is unwelcome as an institution, but to argue that it is not developed in a vacuum, and that it is bound up with patriarchal and capitalistic power structures creating inequality. Giddens, by not considering the power context that shape and take shape by his institutions paints an overly optimistic picture. In these terms, Giddens' findings should be qualified concerning their optimistic consequences.

As said before Bourdieu conceived of the social world as composed of fields in which individuals compete for scarce goods which constitute the stakes of the game. It can be fruitful to explain the drive towards the commodification of sex in terms of Bourdieu's notions of field and capital. In *Men's Health Turkey*, male heterosexual readers are

assumed to compete in the sexual field in order to acquire sexual capital. Sexual capital is defined as the amount of sexual experience one accumulated both qualitatively and quantitatively rather than being limited to an indice of attractiveness. Sexual capital is sought for because it can be converted into symbolic capital. However, the sexual field today imitates the economic one, which turns human relationship into market exchange.

4.2 THE ANALYSIS OF *THE ESRA EROL SHOW*

The main thrust of this chapter is to provide an analysis of *the Esra Erol Show* through excerpts adopted from the sample. As has been stated before, the selection has been made on the basis of what was deemed symptomatic of the general picture the sample offered. As marriage shows fall within the category of reality TV, a discussion on the history of the genre both abroad and in Turkey is made. A subsection explaining RTV's relationship to neoliberal governmentality follows a discussion on the conceptualization of family in Turkey. After the analysis of the excerpts, the section's conclusion places the analysis within Bourdieusian theoretical framework.

4.2.1 A Discussion of Reality Television

4.2.1.1 Reality television – An overview

The study adopts Kavka's (2012, p. 5) definition of reality television as "unscripted shows with non-professional actors being observed by cameras in preconfigured environments" as both being sufficiently comprehensive of the myriad categories of the genre and preserving its distinctive attributes. Though its origins are drawn back as far as to Candid Camera in 1948, Chad Raphael (2009) argues that the genre rose in the United States as a response to rising costs of production and became a profitable industry, its formats being suitable to both domestic consumption and export. Many leading formats like *Survivor* and *Big Brother* throughout the world achieved spectacular ratings numbered in (tens of) millions together with huge market shares and revenues, to the almost complete saturation of prime time (Hill 2005, pp. 3-5); whereas many other smaller formats targeting niche audiences swarmed specialized channels to

turn reality TV into one of the prominent genres of today. Though in Turkey, the country to have the highest amount of television watching time with 330 minutes a day as of 2017 according to Ajans Press (Anon. 2017), serials still dominate the prime time of major television channels and are significant in the cultural life of the country, with the important exception of Acun Ilıcalı's TV8, opened by the successful entrepreneur mainly as a reality TV channel to cater for programs owned by himself, reality television has become a staple of entertainment broadcasting affecting the public culture in various ways.

The main reason behind the success of reality television is found in its claim to be both factual and entertaining (Ikoro, Omessah, & Ekevere 2015). However, there is more to the success of the genre. In fact, the genre mirrors the neoliberal values of the society of which it is a product in different ways. Scholars have discussed reality television's role as a technology of neoliberal government, which will be briefly discussed below (Couldry & Littler 2008; Couldry 2008; Oulette & Hay 2008; Andrejevic 2004). In both similar and different ways, reality television in Turkey mirrors the neoliberal values in its structure and contributes to their realization in various ways.

In the theory chapter, it has been discussed in detail how in Turkey a culture of individual salvation in contrast with the previous leftist utopias for a just societyhas been established. This penchant for making it through if not turning the corner has become a main rationale for RTV participants for whom the genre provides opportunities for ordinary people to acquire visibility and employ strategies to turn this visibility into social mobility. Though successful examples are rare and fame acquired this way rather quickly extinguishes, hopes are hard to extinguish in the same way,especially talent shows claiming to shortcut the way to stardom cater to young people's desire to get fame and money without effort (Yıldırım 2007, p. 97). The words of 17 years old Büşra Zeren who joined the preselection of the famous singing contest Pop Star as reported by Necla Görgeç (2006) are very significant in that respect, as she says: "I'm a Cihangir College second class student. My greatest wish is to be a famous

person. I want people to know me, to like me. Even if I cannot sing, I will play in serials[26]".

Apart from being a blatant example of the neoliberal culture of individual salvation, Büşra Zeren's narrative frames fame as the highest value to be achieved in life. The last sentence suggests that Zeren is ready to use whatever resources she has, be they ample or meager, questions of talent, effort, training, and of merit being out of the picture. The cherished resource of reality television participants is, however, their own intimacy, a resource which is available to both upper and lower classes. In fact, reality television in general and marriage shows in particular provide an opportunity for people short in cultural capital to compete in the attention economy and acquire fame, itself a capital which can be converted into other resources across many fields,[27] as in the case of a Youtuber famous for his posts converting his/her visibility into money through advertising revenues.

Both those with fewer and larger cultural capital compete for attention through various strategies and via different media. Media visibility of ordinary people is something that is rather new both in the world and in Turkey. In the theoretical chapter, the cultural rise of the periphery as the modernization promise of Kemalism collapsedhas been discussed (Gürbilek 2001). Neoliberalism both coincided with a time in which the periphery embraced its own forms of cultural expression and created further opportunities for such expression through the mediation of the market. The cultural rise of the periphery is much linked to the market's becoming the main mechanism organizing the cultural arena, and popularity's having become the new principle of this organization. With the entry of the periphery into the game of the cultural field, culture has become an arena of class struggle in the words of Stuart Hall. And the basic resource of the periphery in this struggle is the performance of intimacy.

[26]"Cihangir Koleji ikinci sınıftayım.Hayattaki en büyük dileğim ünlü, şöhretli birisi olmak. İnsanlar beni tanısınlar, beğensinler istiyorum. Şarkı söyleyemesem bile dizilerde oyuncu olurum."
[27]Fame as capital is drawn on the notion of celebrity capital discussed by Driessens (2013) among others to be discussed further in the conclusion chapter.

4.2.1.2 The history of reality television

As Deery (2015, pp. 6-18) states, "[m]any see RTV as a good example of a hybrid genre or mega-genre that amalgamates other genres such as the game show, the talk show, the soap opera, the talent show, and the documentary." According to the author, many previous television formats served as sources to reality TV, such as instructional programming, Candid Camera launched in 1948, quiz shows, and talent competitions. The movement of *cinema vérité* inspired formats like *An American Family* (PBS 1973) and *The Family* (BBC 1974). These two latter shows were documentary productions based on the footage of the real lives of a suburban American and a British working class family.

Misha Kavka (2012) divides the history of reality TV into three. Accordingly, the first generation reality TV (1989-99) called by the author as the camcorder era was formed by reality crime programs during the first half of the 1990s and by British docusoaps in the second half of the same decade. Kavka states that *America's Most Wanted* (FOX) and *Cops* (FOX) were the exemplars of reality crime programs, shows built on the capture of criminals and on the new aesthetics of camcorder footage to give the impression of raw reality. However, as Kavka shows, the framing of the narrative based on the rules of fiction, sensationalisation of the subject matter and the adoption of melodramatic modality damage the show's claims to authenticity. Kavka relates the emergence and popularity of the genre to the Reagan-Thatcher era law and order ideology. The author states that whereas the crime show originated in the United States as a format, docusoaps that flourished in the second half of the 1990s were an original production of the European continent, based on the emplotment of the life of ordinary people in a real life setting, which increased reality TV's capacity to confer celebrity status on ordinary people, which was limited if not inexistent in crime shows. Docusoaps also marked a passage from documentary to post-documentary, meaning that reality now is affected by the procedure of filming according to Kavka.

According to Kavka (2012, pp. 75- 92) the second generation (1999-2005) draws on surveillance and competition and is exemplified by *Big Brother* and *Survivor*. Kavka attributes the difference between these gamedocs and earlier gameshows to their

simulated settings, resulting in the blurring of the dichotomies reality/fiction, public/private and authenticity/performance. According to Kavka,*The Real World* by MTV originated the format in 1992 by placing several strangers in a social setting and filming them after which Big *Brother* and *Survivor* expanded surveillance to its logical limits and added the element of competition. As a last remark, the subgenre destroyed the oppositions; actuality versus artifice and authenticity versus performance.

The second part of the heyday of the second generation between 2001 witnessed the invasion of prime time by reality shows and their diversifications, the major subgenres being life interventions, makeover shows and dating games organized around the theme of challenge faced by (an) ordinary individual(s).

Kavka (2012, pp. 145-175) calls the third generation reality TV (2002 -) as "economies of celebrity." Accordingly, the new trend in reality television is its power of making celebrity out of ordinary people as three separate types of RTV formats produce celebrities: the talent format basing the celebrity status of its participants on their talent, e.g. *Idol*, the non-talent format creating celebrities as a by-product of their participant's visibility, e.g. *Big Brother*, and the format recycling ex-celebrities, wannabes and minor celebrities.

Kavka's (2012, p. 69) account puts into perspective the evolution of the RTV space into an attention economy in which participants perform intimacy for fame. Accordingly, the crime shows' mechanism of conferring fame through visibility was limited to the show's presenter whereas with the rise of the docusoap ordinary people's potential for fame came to the fore. The process intensified through the second and third generation, as with the second generation RTV shows such as *Survivor*, *Big Brother* and *Idol* turned into national phenomena the acts of their participants becoming part of the order of the day.

In Turkey programs inspired from foreign formats, homegrown formats as well as direct imports adapted to the domestic market shaped and continue to shape RTV broadcasting in the country. Orhan Tekelioğlu (2006) states that the localization of global formats reaches such an extent that they can be understood as new domestic formats (cited in

Yıldırım 2007, p. 100). The remaining of this section is reserved for a brief discussion of domestic RTV broadcasting from its inception in 1992 to the present.

The history of reality TV in Turkey can be similarly divided into three periods. The first generation programs were generally built on the sensationalization third-page news style stories during the 1990s, its first example being *Sıcağı Sıcağına* (*In the Heat of the Moment*) that begin in May 1993 on Show TV, built around the stories of personal calamities such as traffic and fire accidents as well as judicial cases in order to arouse sentiments of terror through the use of visual effects, tension music, and enactment (Çelen 1997, p. 100, cited in Yıldırım 2007, p. 87). Its success inspired other channels to produce similar formats. *Kayıp Aranıyor* (ATV-*Missing*), for instance, brought together missing people and their relatives within a melodramatic modality (Aksop 1998, pp. 91-92), whereas *Gerçek Kesit (True Stories)* that aired on Flash TV between 1993-2008 has become a phenomenon in the country through its poor quality enactments of third page news style stories and its excess of melodrama reproducing the prevailing moral norms in a caricaturized form. Another cult program *Arena* had the self-imposed duty of exposing crimes such as food terror, smuggling and child prostitution in a sensationalized form. *Söz Fato'da,*(Kanal D- *Fato's Turn to Speak*), a format inspired by Sıcağı Sıcağına presented by Turkish cinema star Fatma Girik, dealt with subjects such as "murder, rape, incest, men or women going astray, violence towards women, elderly, and disabled; drug abuse, homosexuality, homeless children, fraud and corruption etc." via sensationalization, Fatma Girik representing the public conscience against injustice becoming the voice of the voiceless (Aksop 1998, pp. 96-97). *Yetiş Bacım* (TGRT-*Help Sister*), presented by famous singer Seda Sayan, on the other hand turned poor people's plight into spectacle ostensibly helping them through charity. In the 1990s mystery reality shows such as *Şok* (ATV - *Shock*), *Sınır Ötesi* (Kanal D – *Cross-Border*) and *Teksoy Görevde* (STAR – *Teksoy on Duty*) discussing paranormal activities such as those caused by djinns or fairies as well as other absurdities depending on the imagination of the program makers were produced.

Figure 4.2: An episode from *Teksoy Görevde*

Source:https://onedio.com/haber/90-lardan-aklimizda-kalan-11-akla-zarar-tv-programi-667668

For instance; stones capable of giving birth and healing, a cave with the power to make its visitors' hair grow; monsters all over the country, formed some of the subjects of *Teksoy Görevde* presented by Saadettin Teksoy, which were credible at the time due to the authority of the reality format based on its affinity with news reporting.[28] Above is a frame from one of the episodes of *Teksoy Görevde*, with Saadettin Teksoy on the right holding the alien model.

Yıldırım (2007, pp. 107-109) states that RTV can be characterized by its drawing on the following narrative techniques: sensationalization, suspense, victimization of the weak, individualization and sentimentalizing of events making the social context irrelevant. These five apply to all programs discussed above, with the exception of 120 Milyon (120 Million) a competition that two families had to live on the minimum wage, a show aiming to inculcate the idea that one could live on this latter (Binark-Kılıçbay 2004, pp. 76-77). These shows provided no opportunities for ordinary people to acquire fame, as they were based on the duality between the famous presenter as the center of attention and his/her ordinary subjects. This period coincides roughly with the first half of the

[28] At its aftermath, the show became a cult. n11.com, a shopping site made a mock *Teksoy Görevde* episode as an advertisement with Teksoy himself. Many 1990 reality shows live a second life today as they are re-circulated in platforms such as YouTube.

first generation of Kavka, epitomized in crime shows. The subgenre docusoap did however not develop in Turkey.

Though within the vein of global trends, these programs were mostly homegrown; but in 2001 Turkey met with global formats such as *Big Brother* through their direct import (Binark&Kılıçbay 2004, p. 77). The first decade of the millenium emerged as the heyday of reality programming as many reality TV participants spectacularly rose to fame. Among the renowned programs setting the agenda of the day were *Biri Bizi Gözetliyor* (*Big Brother*), *Orada Neler Oluyor* (*What is Happening There?)* –a*BBG* spinoff- *Pop Star, Biz Evleniyoruz* (*We are Getting Married*) and *Gelinim Olur Musun?* (*Would you be my Bride?*), this last format a Turkish invention in which mothers in law selected a bride from among the suitors for their sons from the house in which they are living together, a format that has also been exported abroad (Yıldırım 2007, p. 96). Participants achieved fame both through blatant performances of intimacy –an example is *Biz Evleniyoruz,* groom Caner's breaking a glass on his head during a live broadcast apparently out of rage- and through appealing to particular segments of the population as a representative of them. Making an analysis of *Pop Star* of which almost all the contestants met instant fame, Orhan Tekelioğlu (2006, pp. 161-162) argues that the show was, more than a music contest, a program whereby social groups competed through the contestants who embraced their representation. Accordingly, the main competition in the first *Pop Star* was between Serkül, who first was embraced by the voters as a physically disabled person, and Bayhan, who came out to be an ex-prisoner convicted off murder. As Tekelioğlu explains, when Serkül refused to be supported on account of his disability, his popularity shrank whereas Bayhan with a background of destitution and crime (his being a social handicap) became a phenomenon, and probably the winner of hearts. The peculiar demeanor of the *Pop Star* candidate arousing speculations about his probability of substance abuse contributed to his popularity, Bayhan's idiosyncratic gestures and mimicry can be observed in Figure 4.3 below. A similar tendency to the one explained by Tekelioğlu was seen throughout the *Biri Bizi Gözetliyor* and *Orada Neler Oluyor* series, in which differences in the proclivities of the contestants were turned by the show crew into disputes such as between lowbrow and highbrow values or other conflicts corresponding to the social actuality of Turkey (Binark-Kılıçbay 2004).

Figure 4.3: *Pop Star* contestant Bayhan performing during the show

Source:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfMAffVI9Nw

After the genre made its peak, during which reality TV affairs became almost national issues, it can be said that three major types dominated the RTV genre. The first is marriage shows which primarily targeted housewives and occupied morning time broadcasting between 2007-2017, until they were banned by governmental decree. They will be shortly discussed below. The second is fashion contests that marked the second decade of the second millennium. The show referred to in the Introduction Chapter with reference to Bahar Candan is a recent example. Analyzing one of the early examples of this subgenre, *Bugün Ne Giysem?* (*What Shall I Wear Today*), Yıldız (2013, p. 112) argues that these shows function as rites of entry to neoliberal citizenship, based on the grooming of perfected bodies. Accordingly, a contestant is either denied access, through rituals of humiliation or welcomed and recognized by the jury members, the gatekeepers of the competitive field opened by the contest. In the third category can be grouped global formats imported by Acun Ilıcalı, aired on the channel TV8, owned by the same entrepreneur. Among those drawing the attentionare:*Yetenek Sizsiniz (*Turkish version of *America's Got Talent*), *O Ses Türkiye* (Turkish version of *The Voice*) and *Survivor*. The first two are talent shows whereas the last reinvents the *Big Brother* format as a competition between two groups on an exotic island. All three have been very successful as *Survivor* tops out in ratings as of the writing of this thesis. It is observed

that in the third generation, the audience of reality television has been established with each format having a more or less defined viewership. In the beginning of the second generation, fame was a by-product of RTV visibility, the possibilities of which the participants became aware through the process. As RTV evolved and participants came to adopt self-conscious strategies for increasing their visibility, reality TV lost its initial allure, audiences got segmented, and competition intensified, making it relatively harder for celebrity wannabes to achieve their aim. In the following marriage shows will be briefly considered, including a discussion on how brides-to-be and grooms-to-be capitalized on their visibility in these shows to convert their fame into other types of capital.

4.2.1.3 Reality TV as a Neoliberal Genre

Reality TV is both a global phenomenon where newly invented formats circulate throughout the world and a genre proper to the neoliberal era. The literature surveyed here mainly from the United States reveals how reality TV is enmeshed with neoliberal technologies of governance to contribute to the formation of neoliberal subjectivities.

Oulette and Hay (2008) in their book “Better Living through Reality TV” state that “reality TV has become the quintessential technology of advanced or "neo" liberal citizenship” (p. 4). The authors’ analysis is remarkable in delineating the translation of neoliberal macropolitical developments into the micropolitics of everyday life via the mediation of reality TV. The key transformation has been tied to the so-called “reinvention of government” that originated in the 1980s in the United States and was entrenched throughout the 1990s. As Oulette and Hay (2008) explain, through the denigration of the public bureaucracy as inefficient, as a source of dependency culture and a danger to economic growth and freedom, the government and the citizen have been refashioned into the norms of the business world, the government acting like a enterprise, the bureaucrat replaced by the manager and the citizen turned into consumer.

Oulette and Hay’s (2008) analysis of RTV is based on the notion of governmentality as established by Foucault and developed by Rose among others. Rose (1996) analyzes contemporary liberal government through the terminology of “advanced liberal rule”

which accordingly governs through freedom. Lemke (2002, p. 3) elucidates Foucault's concept of governmentality as functioning through "governing the forms of self-government, structuring and shaping the field of possible action of subjects." This is a power relationship not necessarily implying a breach of the freedom or will of the subjects but of their possible "responsibilization" and "empowerment" (Lemke 2002, p. 5). According to Lemke (2002, p. 3), governmentality as a concept solves a number of theoretical issues:

> *it offers a view on power beyond a perspective that centers either on consensus or on violence; it links technologies of the self with technologies of domination, the constitution of the subject to the formation of the state; finally, it helps to differentiate between power and domination. Let's take up one aspect after the other.*

Rose (1996) states that from the aftermath of the Second World War the welfare state received various criticism; beginning from Hayek who considered economic planning as the easy step to totalitarianism (Hayek 1944). According to Rose (1996), the welfare state was attacked on the basis of the following arguments: The "productive" private sector was being penalized by the taxing requirements of the welfare state, Keynesian economic policies were inflationary and harmful to the currency, the welfare measures directed to remedy the social ills actually worsened them and its main beneficiaries have been the middle classes excluding the poor and producing dependency rather than responsible citizenship. The neo-conservative rules that took power throughout the 1770s in the US and UK tried to handle these problems separately in the beginning, their endeavors culminating in neoliberal governmentality (1996, p. 41). Rose explains as follows:

> *Advanced liberal rule … does not seek to govern through "society", but through the regulated choices of individual citizens, now construed as subjects of choices and aspirations to self-actualization and self-fulfillment.*

Neoliberalism therefore does not aspire to non-government but to "better" government through new ways of "governing at a distance". Perhaps the most significant shift in terms of our analysis of reality TV has been in the new configuration of the subject of government following the principles of self-care, empowerment, self-fulfillment and self-actualization through choice; subjects formulated now as customers "seeking to 'enterprise themselves', to maximize their quality of life through acts of choice,

according their life a meaning and value to the extent that it can be rationalized as the outcome of choices made or choices to be made" (p. 57). Following the responsibilization of the subject through the valorization of choice, those excluded from the benefits of this new configuration of subjectivity are not considered as passive subjects of structural constraints but as actors of their own lot suffering from their own inactivity based on a dependency culture on the Welfare state (Rose, 1996).

Following Rose and according to Oulette and Hay (2008), reality TV functions as a resource, guiding us in our conduct to transform ourselves into enterprising citizens. Their introducing example is Todd TV, whereby Todd transforms himself according to the input of the viewers of the show, his cooperation in this rule through freedom "presented as his democratic duty to pursue happiness, self-fulfillment, and success" (p. 9). According to the authors, education through television has been experimented prior to reality TV but more in the didactic vein dominated by intellectual authorities whereby reality TV offers citizenship education through entertainment to turn it into a "desirable commodity". Reality TV addresses individual cases of hardship through private resources such as expertise, volunteerism procuring new models of social service without "entitlements" and of civic participation that are outside the framework of the welfare state (2008).

As is commonly discussed in literature, the self has become a flexible commodity within the prospect of the new job and retirement insecurity (Oulette & Hay 2008). Oulette and Hay (2008) state that reality TV through its different subgenres functions as another resource for working upon the self in order to improve one's value in the job market. Makeover shows' interventions to reshape the looks, wardrobe, house or behavioral patterns of its targets are examples through which individuals are instructed to "improve" themselves through care of the self. This logic of empowerment penetrates reality TV in its venture to produce citizens aiming to maximize their life through self-care. In this vein, reality TV emerges as another dimension in the outsourcing of public welfare. One step in this outsourcing is the commercialization of neediness in terms of situating it within the frame of market forces rather than an understanding based on civil rights.

Charity TV purports to “elevate” the “needy” individuals into self-caring citizens. The conditions of eligibility for Home Edition’s donation are to have a home in bad shape and a good story to tell. The criterion of homeownership goes hand in hand with the promotion of marriage of the Bush administration as a substitute for welfare entitlements. Welfare recipients are coded as lazy and helpless, and in gendered, racialised and classed terms. The civic obligation to the body politic is replaced by volunteerism on the basis of responsibility towards the community. Apart from the *Home Edition*, Oulette and Hay (2008) discuss the program *Three Wishes* which addresses extraordinary health problems, reality TV emerging as an alternative to a public health system and which built a town library to realize a sick teenager’s dream within the context of budget cuts in public schools. Reality TV therefore proposes private solutions to those issues that are framed as individual cases but in fact are part of a larger problem (2008).

Lifestyle interventions occur in cases such as obesity, addiction, compulsory shopping, and problems in child rearing or house cleaning among others. Again, the structural sources of these problems are unaddressed, and they are blamed on the bad choices of individuals who cannot deal with their own problems and need to be taught how to care for themselves. Rose (1998) contends that consumerism has been embraced as a macropolitical objective whereby “consumers are constituted as actors seeking to maximize their 'quality of life' by assembling a 'lifestyle', though acts of choice in a world of goods … in the new domain of consumption, individuals will want to be healthy, experts will instruct them on how to be so, and entrepreneurs will exploit and enhance this market for health” (p. 162).

In another article published again in 2008, Oulette and Hay argue that makeover television is a technology of citizenship providing the resources for their self-realization in the context of the absence of welfare safety nets within the purview of their freedom and empowerment. Andrejevic (2004) on the other hand describes RTV as an arena where “the participation of consumers in the rationalization of their own consumption is sold as empowerment (p. 15, cited in Couldry & Littler 2008). RTV legitimizes the neoliberal working conditions, as in the case of the Apprentice (Couldry & Littler,

2008) as well as reproding and diffusing the "common sense" of neoliberalism (Couldry, 2008).

As can be observed, this literature mainly draws on the United States. Many Turkish RTV formats are adaptations of their western counterparts, so it can be said that the reality TV genre is an import from the West. The dialectical process marking the encounter of a western format with the Turkish context produces unique dynamics within these shows. Though matrimonial shows are not straightforward adaptations and are originally produced in Turkey, they share the genre's characteristic qualities. In the following analyses of the excerpts, I will try to underline both the commonalities and specificities of the Turkish case.

4.2.2 The Analysis of *the Esra Erol Show*

Zeyneb Feyza Akınerdem's (2015) study based on her ethnography in the show's studio provides a fruitful entry point to the analysis of *the Esra Erol Show*. Akınerdem frames the phenomenon conceptualized in this work as the cultural rise of the periphery as the fragmentation of the representative economy of the nation especially thanks to the privatization of television broadcasting. According to Akınerdem, there is a double fold *leakage* occurring on *the Esra Erol Show*. The first is the leakage of masses into the representational economy of the nation, and the second is the leakage of the excessive stories of the participants transgressing the framing that the show endeavors to build. It will be argued below that what Akınerdem terms as leakage, implying a lack of control by the show makers, is in fact the very stuff of reality television on which the programming draws. The point will be explained further below.

Akınerdem places matrimonial shows within Turkey's history of nation building. Two main points are important in this construction process: the role of television and the role of the family. Accordingly, the decades of state monopoly in televised broadcasting in the hands of TRT (1964-1990) is a history of the silencing of dissident voices and differences, be they ethnic, political, religious or class-based. This representation of a homogenous nation crystallizing in the stereotype of the middle class, educated and Turkish speaking subjects was, according to Akınerdem, at the service of the nationalist

elite implementing their modernization project. TRT was therefore a tool for educating citizens through entertainment. With the beginning of commercial broadcasting, masses gained access to representation from which they were formerly excluded.

The nuclear family, on the other hand, "is central to the making of the nation in Turkey at both the level of governing the social and of subjectifying the individual" (Akınerdem, 2015, p. 39). In her account of the nuclear family, Akınerdem draws on Sirman's (2002) definition of family 'as a regime of secrets', whereby structures of domination and violence are contained within the family unit to conform to the normative ideal. The project of the nuclear family was invested at both the levels of institution and personal desire.

At the juncture of these two axes, Akınerdem places matrimonial shows. Accordingly, with the establishment of commercial channels in 1991, formerly excluded masses were being "*upgraded* from the *dangerous masses* to *ambiguous persons*" (emphases original, p. 24). "Formerly silenced aspects of family life also began to leak onto the television screen, complicating ideal-type representations of the family" (p. 40) "Though these shifts did not give the *dangerous insiders* full access to the screen … television production acquired new techniques, forms and frames to cut and shape them into proper images and stories (emphasis original, p. 65)"

Akınerdem states that during her ethnography, one question she encountered time and again has been "is it for real?" She argues that this question arises from the nonconformity of matrimonial shows with hegemonic representations of the nation. Our perception of what is real and what is unreal on screen is therefore shaped within a matrix of a representational economy privileging ones and excluding others. Akınerdem views matrimonial shows as arenas whereby "the boundaries of reality and thus propriety [are] normatively" redrawn (p. 23), hence an arena of negotiation over what is representable:

> *I look at how the show differentiates candidates from each other within a spectrum between propriety and what will be called here the money shot. I borrow the term from Grindstaff (2002), who points to the 'explicit revelation in which people "get down and dirty" and "bare it all" for the pleasure, fascination, or repulsion of viewers' … the money shot in the context of the marriage show refers to moments when an excessively tragic story of failure or suffering leaks onto the stage. … Thus,*

> *the marriage show format is a product of tension between the frames and the leakages that transgress these frames. (Akınerdem 2015, pp. 33-34.)*

Akınerdem's critique of the representational economy of the television screen with respect to the nation building project and her emphasis of the nuclear family institution within this scheme is plausible. However, her conceptualization of the rise of the periphery and of the poshlost as leakage is problematic. The first leakage she speaks about disrupts the framing of the homogenous nation imagined as free from contradictions, stratifications and differences through the appearance of 'dangerous masses' on TV. The second leakage she explains through the concept of the money shot disrupts the frames though which the show constructs "the participants as marriageable subjects, while also registering the show as a quality program which is seriously dedicated to marrying people within the norms and conventions of marriage in Turkey" (p. 9). Both arguments will be objected to.

At the level of the representational economy of the TV, though not stated explicitly, Akınerdem seems to imply that the entry of "the private lives of 'normal people' into the public sphere" is mainly a consequence of the commercialization of television in 1991. Though this argument is not erroneous in itself, it is necessary to situate this development within the context of the establishment of neoliberal policies in Turkey. Akınerdem refers to Öncü (2011) to state that post-1990 television stays at the juncture of state and neoliberal market discourses, without elucidating further. However, the leakages as discussed by the author are not only democratic representations putting into question the representative scheme of the power bloc. The representative scheme has in fact changed to accommodate new neoliberal forms of governmentality, duplicating its tools of exclusion with that of inclusion. The *dangerous masses* do not therefore simply *leak* to complicate the previous representational scheme. It has been a long time that the ideal of the nation free from contradictions and differences has been eroded, which proves anachronistic to explain a phenomenon of the 2nd millennium. It can be rather proposed that, neoliberalism governs through the inclusion of the masses, however assigning to each their own stratified place, which leaves back the old ideological baggage of the Republic. Inequality therefore subsists, but functions and is lived in different ways.

At the level of the matrimonial show, a similar procedure is at work. What is conceptualized as leakage by Akınerdem is also framed by the show, packaged as VTRs (video tape recording) and covering the main footage. The *proper* participants without an intriguing story get the least air time whereas stories of violence, hardship, and quarrels are prolonged as much as possible to capture the ratings. *Leakage* in the terms of Akınerdem is therefore not simply an element complicating the previous representational scheme, but also a tool of neoliberal governmentality deliberately introduced. The concept of poshlost, which according to Akınerdem constitutes a leakage, is in fact the very stuff of the Esra Erol Show. In the following, excerpts from the sample of *the Esra Erol Show*will be thematically analyzed.

4.2.2.1 Alev & Hasan: How welfare is delegated to the family

(Caption below the screen with capital letters reads as follows whereas the show continues:)
WHOSE SUITOR AMONG THE CANDIDATES WOULD BE ALEV?
HER CHILD WAS BORN DISABLED, HER HUSBAND LEFT HER, SHE REMAINED ALL ALONE
Hasan Bey is introduced by Esra Erol
Esra Erol: … Hasan Bey is 48 years old. He is a building contractor. He made one marriage and lives in Rize. His suitor comes with applause.
(Some introductory conversation)
Hasan: What do you think about me?
Alev: You are sentimental.
Hasan: I am wounded you should be wounded too for having chosen me.
Alev: Yes… it has been like that.
Esra Erol: Why do you need this sentimentality?
Alev: My child…
Esra Erol: He needs a father?
Alev: Yes.
Esra Erol: His own father?
Alev: I don't know. We got divorced.
Esra Erol: This is not a classical story? We couldn't get along, so we got separated, it's all over, not like that?
Alev: No. (Orchestra plays dramatic tunes as Alev puts her hand on her forehead)
…
Esra Erol: Why did his father leave him?
Alev: He couldn't accept him because he is disabled, I did but he couldn't.
…
Alev: I have been through the peril of the prospect of losing my child, many times. He can't take nourishment. If he gets food through his mouth it leaks into his lungs. He gets nourished through ng, I mean from his nose. It's too hard. Whenever I eat it gets stuck on my throat. I mean one can only know through living that, who didn't cannot, who lived can know it.
Esra: Well, how does that gentleman eat?
Alev: I don't know. Nobody can understand. One can only know through living that. It has been more than 11 years. More than 11 years. I am looking after him. My

mother is looking after him. My brother, my sister, my family are looking after him. May Allah make them remain always beside me.
Esra Erol: Amen. Amen.
(Alev explains that her child has problems with breathing because of scoliosis and hence their frequent stays at the emergency services.)
Esra Erol: You can struggle with all of that, I see that strength in you.
Alev: I am very powerful.
Esra Erol: But sometimes one needs a backing, an arm concerning the child, the fruit with one's spouse… however supported by her family she may be.
Alev: Yes. Yes. You perfectly understood me. I want support.
(Alev's mother connects to the live broadcast)
…
Alev's Mother: Our child, dear Esra, our child has many expenditures. It must be a gentleman who can accept this.
Alev: Mama!
Esra Erol: But she says that openly and honestly. While you as two women stood on your feet you took this amount of responsibility; whoever is going to enter your life, to become your spouse must be a person able to support you.
Alev's Mother: I never put them in a position of need. I embraced all of them. My dear Esra, I am 63 years old, should the need arise, I'll work but will feed them and not let them fall into a position of need.
…
Esra Erol: All I want to say is that… listening to your speech. I mean the mothers of the year, of the world are the mothers of the disabled because they need two times, three times more affection, patience and power. …
…
(Some discussion that the show will cater to some of Alev's son's needs such as a wheelchair and special bed as well as another wheelchair promise to an acquaintance of Hasan's... When the curtain parts and Hasan and Alev see each other, Hasan invites Alev to drink tea.)

Figure 4.4:Frame from *theEsra Erol Show*: Alev and Hasan

Source: Esra Erol Show, December 28, 2015

Previously it has been argued that what *leaks* into the dominant representational scheme (here the story of the mother of a disabled child, left by her husband) is in fact deliberately *introduced* thanks to the dynamics of a new representational scheme. Akınerdem (2015) in her study relates how participants are chosen for the show. Accordingly, a call center works to select from among the applicants suitors and candidates conforming to criteria such as authenticity. One among these criteria is to have "a good story" to tell, one that is possible to elicit the "money shot". Alev's story of extreme hardship and betrayal is such a story. Her story enfolds through the questions of the host of the show, who remains firmly in control of the narrative. Referring to her notes, the host guides Alev's narration and frames her story, asking questions she knows the answers to most of the times. This "narrative through conversation" proves to be a successful tool in eliciting emotional response in the viewer, compared to a monologue. Through the form of question-reply, curiosity and suspense is generated, as the story gets more and more charged with an emotional load to generate peak moments. Esra Erol participates in the conversation at the moment she knows would enfold the story, by asking why Alev emphasized Hasan's sentimentality. The response hits the jackpot: "My child…" The host escalates the conversation until Alev reveals her child's severe condition and her plight in a dramatic way, then asserts that Alev is strong enough to bear it all. She concludes by supposing that Alev might want the backing of a spouse, which the suitor confirms.

The conversation between Esra Erol and Alev has been depicted in detail in order to show how in fact what constitutes *leakages* at the level of one representational scheme (that of the homogenous nation state) is in fact the very stuff of a new representational scheme (a neoliberal one bringing masses to the screen), carefully framed and presented. The life story of Alev is therefore packaged for easy consumption, to elicit drama and catharsis.

However this excerpt is significant also in another respect. The fact that Alev states that she came to the show to find a father for her child and not to find a husband is significant. However, this need is not a possible psychological need of her child for a father but Alev's own need for a spouse to share the burden of care of a disabled child.

At this point, questions on the role of the state concerning individuals in need of care come to mind, to be addressed below.

Family has always been one of the main pillars of the Turkish welfare system. Esping Anderson classifies different welfare regimes throughout the world on the basis of different compositions of welfare as provided by the states, markets and households (Eder, 2010). In this distribution, the role of the households in a country like Turkey without a "mature welfare state" (Buğra & Adar 2008; Göçmen 2016) has traditionally been prominent, functioning as a mechanism of containment against social unrest together with other safety valves to be discussed below. The sustainability of these safety valves came under pressure in the 1980s, but it was the crisis of 2001 which showed that the reform process was inevitable. Azer Kılıç (2010) states that the current reform marks a shift from familialism to individualism. "The concept of familialism (also sometimes know as 'familism') focuses on the family –or more broadly defined, on private households- as an important resource of welfare production," delegating the responsibility of care of the elderly, children and handicapped to their (female) relatives (Leitner 2006, p. 444). It would be argued that contrary to Kılıç's views, the family continues to remain an important resource of welfare production, albeit under different policies.

The welfare system in Turkey dates back to the aftermath of the Second World War with fickle roots in the late Ottoman period (Buğra & Adar 2008; Kılıç 2010). Age and health benefits were received on the basis of the premiums paid by the employers and employees according to employment status, thus a system marked by a corporatist and inegalitarian character (Buğra & Adar 2008). "The social security institutions that formed the backbone of the welfare system in Turkey were … the Social Insurance Institution, established in 1945 to cover workers; the Retirement Chest (Emekli Sandığı), established in 1949 for civil servants, and Bag-Kur, founded in 1971 to cover the self-employed" (Göçmen, 2016, p. 719). However, this system left not covered a large segment of the population, namely small farmers, the unemployed, and those working in the informal sector (Buğra & Adar 2008). Turkey's welfare mix contained this structural problem through policies such as agricultural subsidies, harnessing rural-urban migration; by making available public land for informal housing which facilitated

the integration of newcomers to the cities and by relying on individual's familial, kinship and *hemşehri* networks; all of these providing ample room for clientelism and populism (Buğra & Adar 2008; Eder 2010). However, these indirect mechanisms came under strain from the 1980s on, as the market economy put in question the viability of agricultural subsidies, the commodification of urban space marking an end to the period of informal settlements, and urbanization that weakened extended family and kinship ties (Buğra & Adar 2008).

This picture shows significant reliance on family and kin networks in the production of welfare in Turkey. For instance, rural-to-urban migration and the integration of the new city dwellers to the city marked by the formation of squatter settlementshas been through their use of family, kin and hemşehri-based networks. In this line, newcomers first established contacts with the previous settlers in their network and migrated to settlement areas adopting similar jobs. The informal settlements paved also the way for the preservation of the family unit as the members of the household are capable of erecting their shelter literally in one night through their own means. As *gecekondu*s were granted land titles and settlements provided with municipal facilities, the *gecekondu* emerged as an asset that could be vertically or horizontally expanded, to accommodate new family members or to become a source of rent (Buğra & Adar 2008). The family remained also paramount in the case of individual migrations. In this case, the migrant, a young man in most cases, saves and sends money to his family in the village, whereas in return he receives supplies in kind, such as bulghur, chicpea, and wheat. The fact that children traditionally tend not leave the family home till they are married plays an important role in the containment of youth unemployment. Last but not least; child, elderly and disabled care is relegated to their female relatives on the bases of love or respect.

The pre-reform social security system relied heavily on the family, but also was familial in terms of its adopting the male-breadwinner model (Kılıç 2010). "Women are not considered a central component of the labor force and … are integrated into the social security system mainly as dependents of their insured family members –as wives, daughters, or mothers – and granted benefits like healthcare on the basis of familial status" (p. 170). Kılıç relates that women's participation in the labor force is

discouraged as following the male-breadwinner model they are supposed to remain in the private sphere of the house and assume domestic responsibilities of household chores and care. According to Kılıç, with the recent social security reform there has been a shift from the male-breadwinner model to the universal breadwinner model, as evidenced by the abandonment of gender discriminatory regulations in the system.[29] However, in the absence of policies favoring female participation to the workforce - indeed the female employment dropped by 12.7 % between 1988-2008 (World Bank, 2009, cited by Göçmen 2016) - and the resilience of the gendered perception of house and care work, these new regulations are prone to produce an erosion of women's rights however based on wrong premises. As stated before, Kılıç (2010) argues that the shift from the male-breadwinner model is a shift from familialism to individualism. I will try to show that familialism continues in different forms, and that family remains an important institution of welfare provision. I will mainly rely on Yazıcı's article "The Return to the Family: Welfare, State, and Politics of the Family in Turkey." As Yazıcı (2012, p. 107) satates:

> *[However] defined … neoliberalism has a characteristic feature with respect to the domain of welfare. In tandem with a commitment to budgetary austerity, the state's responsibility in social care and protection is often transferred to non-state actors including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and familial networks.*

The Return to the Family Project is a project of de-institutionalization of children under residential facilities through subsidizing their families. Financial destitution of families is therefore seen as the main factor behind their entrusting their child to the state. Foster parents or adoption are encouraged as alternatives for families who cannot take care of their children. This neoliberal policy of relegating state's responsibilities to private actors fits well into the current government's discourses on family. The government, espousing a three generational model of family (children taking care of their elderly parents) and if possible with three children, discursively situates itself both against an imagined West whose societal values presumably have got corrupted and a secularist

[29] According to Kılıç (2010), these regulations are as follows: Daughters could benefit from their father's health insurance regardless of their age till they get employed or married. Sons are subject to age limits except in cases of disability or destitution. Survivor pensions were granted to widows and orphans till they get employed or (re)married. Survivor disabled son's pensions were not subject to any condition whereas marriage for disabled daughters meant the termination of their pension. Kılıç states that these regulations do not stem from a policy of positive gender discrimination but from a patriarchal state mentality assuming a male-headed family.

upper-middle class who (adopting the nuclear family model) have neglected their parents. In these terms, neoliberal policies are enmeshed with a conservative discourse (Yazıcı, 2012).

All these in mind, it should not be forgotten that the state both retreats and retrenches. As Buğra and Adar (2008) state:

> *... the empirical evidence largely falsifies expectations of a general decline in social spending as a result of neo-liberal globalization. There has been no sustained decline in the share in GDP of public social expenditures in developed market economies, and a novel consciousness of the importance of social policy could be observed in countries without mature welfare states (p. 84).*

It should be also noted that the new Turkish Welfare system inherited a tradition of populism and clientelism from previous policy makers (Eder 2010).

We have to understand Alev's story within this context. Eder (2010) relates that historically the Department of Social Services and Protection of Children (SHCEK) was responsible for the institutional care of the disabled and the elderly. In 2006 private care was institutionalized and in 2007 a new policy of home-based care for the disabled based on cash-transfers to their families came into effect. "The number of disabled people receiving home-based care increased dramatically from 56 in 2006 to 156,806 in 2009" (p. 172). It is not possible to know whether or not Alev receives cash transfers for home-based care of her child. From the long conversation is absent the state's possible responsibility in the care of the disabled. The problem is presented not as a problem of social security, but as an individual problem of extreme bad luck finding its zenith in the absence of a father. The panacea is the restitution of the family unit through marriage, whereas the representational possibility of a single-headed family is excluded.

The framing of Alev's story and her coming to the show "to find a father for her child" underplays the importance of the family through the interplay of absence and presence. She has a family who supports her: Her mother, her brother and her sister help her with the care of her child. However, her family is absent, because incomplete, and in need of a father. Her mother is the most important figure who states that she embraced both the child and her mother and that she would not put them in a position of need though she is 63 years old. The model of three generational families is present here, though not the

elderly but the grandchild is cared for in this case. All these details, however, are framed within an economy of dramatic presentation.

The flow of the conversation and the presentation of Alev's story are built as a cascade of sentimental moments. This is one of the strategies adopted by the Esra Erol Show to frame the family unit as an enclosed space of sensationalized intimacy and to arouse interest through tickling the sensitivities of the audience. What is of importance here is the framing of Alev's story in a way to arouse pity while purporting to arouse compassion. Alev's story therefore functions to elicit catharsis in the audience both in front of the screen and within the studio. The techniques adopted by the show to reinforce the dramatic element in the story are the leading role of the host herself, an exaggerated use of music and editing itself as can be seen in Figure 4.5 below.

Figure 4. 5:Frame from *the Esra Erol Show*: Alev dashing away her tears

Source: Esra Erol Show, December 28, 2015

The purported social sensitiveness of the show in donating medical equipments to Alev's family amounts in fact to charity, which has been a recurring theme in the neoliberal transfer of welfare responsibilities to non-state actors, as in the case of G. W. Bush's "compassionate conservatism." To conclude, it can be repeated that "leakages" seeming to disturb the representational economy of the nation according to Akınerdem should in fact not be deemed as "leakages", but as instances of a new neoliberal

representational economy, operating through inclusion rather than exclusion, a process also much linked to the cultural rise of the periphery in the aftermath of September 12 that has been discussed in the second chapter. This topic will be further explored below.

4.2.2.2 Ahmet & Luvrita: The proper way to marriage

> *(Ahmet comes to tell the story of the nascent relationship between him and a previous bridal candidate. Apparently both have been candidates on the show without meeting each other, being at the lodge at different times. As Ahmet tells, the lady established connection with him through social media, they exchanged messages, and they talked on the phone thanks to a misunderstanding and eventually meet each other. When Esra Erol asks Ahmet about his feelings, he states that he is confident that he feels something which is the reason he came to the studio to make an announcement. Melek, a female candidate from the lodge begins to speak :)*
> *Melek: Can I interreupt? Sorry. We live at the villa. We stay there and believe it I don't say that because I am here. In all honesty no respite is given in the villa. We are never permitted to leave the villa and even when we do, we go there with drivers and come back again with drivers. Why? First, for our self-respect, then for our respect towards the team and our respect towards you... But some friends I mean outside in Istanbul…*
> *EE: Especially male candidates…*
> *Melek: There is no difference between male and female candidates anymore. In the end men make that with women, with the opposite sex.*
> *Ahmet: Let me give an answer to this.*
> *Melek: Hang on Mister Ahmet. I am not speaking to get an answer. I am speaking for the improper behavior you have done. But some friends living in Istanbul's surroundings can easily meet with their suitors and here we can only see when they announce it, they may not have announced other stuff. What's this pickled cabbage?[30] I mean what has been done is not ethical at all. I accept it as an act of disrespect. So let me rent an apartment in Istanbul and go out to see my suitors; if I like them, I bring them here. Is that possible?*
> *(Some discussions)*
> *Melek: Because Mister Ahmet comes here two days of the week, three days of the week then he doesn't come the next day. There are these intervals… So what are you doing here? Go out and look there for your suitor.*
> *(Ahmet and Bahar ask Melek if she never met a suitor during the time she was in the lodge.)*
> *Melek: No. With no one... Before coming here of course I had a private life.*
> *Ahmet: Ok.*
> *Melek: I came here after finishing that.*
> *Ahmet: You have never been out with somebody after coming here?*
> *Melek: I have never been out with anybody. If I did, prove it. For whatever I do I inform the team, me too I am receiving offers.*
> *Ahmet: Well then what I do here is without their information? I am sharing what happened with millions.*
> *Melek: No. I… The team… I am receiving offers from the outside. I go if the team says ok; I don't if the team says no.*

[30] The expression in Turkish "Bu ne perhiz bu ne lahana turşusu?" can be literally translated as "How can you eat pickled cabbage when you are on a diet?" meaning that there is a discrepancy between what a person professes to believe in or say, and do.

Ahmet: Ok.
Melek: So look out for your suitor outside. What are you doing here?
Ahmet: Look Miss Melek. I want to express something to you. Please listen very carefully. I have already left the program a week ago because of my works. I mean I was not going to participate in the show anymore. But because the lady was a lady from the lodge and you know very well the rules here, you know them better than me, I had to come here and share the news here. I mean if I married outside…
Esra Erol: Because she is not anybody. She is from the lodge.
(There is an exchange between Bahar and Sevtap, the latter previously rejected by Ahmet, and the former accused by Sevtap for this rejection. Sevtap states that she doesn't believe in the veracity of what Ahmet says. Ahmet asks Melek why she invited him to a dinner when he first joined the program on the grounds of her previous comments about ethical behavior. Melek says that the said dinner was a 25-person group dinner which had nothing to do with a one-to-one going out. Bahar claims that rapprochements happened during that dinner which Melek firmly refuses. Demir intervenes warning Bahar that she should not implicate people and instead give specific names. Esra Erol asks Ahmet whether he is sure about his feelings.)
Ahmet: I am sure about my feelings. So of course if I did not feel something I mean if I had not been that thing with an emotion, I wouldn't come here. I mean I would have come here after I was utterly sure about it. And now I thought that I was utterly sure about it. And I was thinking that if I will do the things I am going to do from now on and their not being part of the show would be unethical in that case. I think that now what I am doing is right because yesterday I talked to Mister Ömer and asked for an appointment I said I will tell them what happened and that I will see Mister Ali. Thanks to him he said: "Ok. Of course come here." And I came as an honest person…
EE: Do not announce the name of that person.
Ahmet: I will not announce now.
EE: That person… Come with that person tomorrow
(Ahmet explains that Mister Ali said the same thing. Yıldırım takes the microphone and accuses women for meeting people when out during the weekends.)
Melek: Mister Yıldırım. Mister Yıldırım. I beg your pardon. When you speak such that… This is the reason why we said the same thing to Miss Bahar and to you. We have families.
(Yıldırım asks about the number of male friends in Melek's facebook.)
Melek: Yıldırım Bey, outside, I have more male friends than female ones. But if you say, women go out and find guys when out for fun it may be understood in a multiple of ways. It may implicate anything. I want you to recognize the difference.
(Esra Erol makes the closure :)
EE: … Please be aware of that. You are sitting here, looking for suitors. Then people having seen your characters on screen, having known you become your suitors. If there is a way for that it is through here my friends.
(Then Esra Erol states that those using social media too much do not get suitors in the show for having deterred their suitors of using the right way and sends Ahmet offstage.)

Apparently, there are strict rules for seeking a mate in Esra Erol, which is presented as the proper platform to marry. Flirting with people other than show participants, either in online or offline environments is therefore considered disrespectful and unethical according to Melek and wrong according to Esra Erol as she implies that participants

need not abuse the visibility they gained thanks to the show which would otherwise be to their own disadvantage. How then does the show produce its discourse as being a legitimate mediator for marriage?

Table 4.1 : How people met their spouses in Turkey according to age in 2011

How the Spouse is Met According to Age (First Marriage)										
	From the circle of family and relatives	From the neighborhood	From the school, or private teaching milieu	From the job milieu	From the circle of friends	Internet	Marriage agency	Other	Total	Number
AGE GROUP										
18-24	44,6	28,0	6,0	6,2	11,6	0,3	0,1	3,2	100,0	710
25-34	39,3	29,6	6,3	9,7	11,6	0,3	0,0	3,3	100,0	3629
35-44	41,9	36,4	3,6	6,8	8,5	0,1	0,0	2,7	100,0	4190
45-54	43,9	41,8	2,4	3,1	5,9	0,0	0,0	2,9	100,0	3642
55-64	40,9	47,0	2,2	2,5	4,5	0,0	0,0	2,9	100,0	2627
65+	36,7	52,8	1,7	2,0	3,4	0,0	0,0	3,3	100,0	2374
Turkey	41,0	39,6	3,5	5,3	7,4	0,1	0,0	3,0	100,0	17174

Source: Adapted from Türkiye'de Aile Yapısı Araştırması 2011

According to Finkel et al. (2012 pp. 9-10) discussing matchmaking practices to introduce online dating, using intermediaries for helping people marry has a long history, even appearing in the Bible. Accordingly, traditional matchmaking, which in many cases comes to be a side-role of ecclesiastics or elderly women, employed the matchmaker's own personal circle and intuition for the offered services, whereas the advent of print gave way to matrimonial advertisements in newspapers, with the first example dating back to the early 1700s. As stated by the authors, advertisements consisted of some descriptive qualities of both the advertiser and of the future partner and some remarks on the nature of the desired relationship. Accordingly, video-dating where potential partners met each other after viewing each other's videotaped interviews emerged in the 1980s, with the introduction of videotaping technology. Online dating however, after its emergence with the proliferation of Internet use and of

smaller, cheaper and more powerful computers, became a much more widespread practice than print advertising or video-dating as Finkel et al. state.

Marriage shows are one of the recent matchmaking practices like dating websites. Though they used to give numbers of the marriages they bred, together with the number of babies these families gave birth to, there are no reliable statistical data revealing the ratio of these marriages to the general population. In Table 4.1 above showing the statistics of the way people met their spouses according to age, marriage shows do not appear as a variable though Internet and marriage agencies are included. Even though it is considered that marriage shows constitute the whole category of "other," this amplified percentage is far from explaining Esra Erol's firm belief in her show's being the proper way to marriage. What is happening here?

Feyza Akınerdem's (2014, pp. 77-92) study based on her ethnography of *the Esra Erol Show* gives us important clues about the perception of the show by the participants. Accordingly, the participants describe the show as a safe and reliable place. As Akınerdem demonstrates through examples from her interviews, especially female participants think that the show is a safe and sound way to marriage thanks to measures such as security checks at the entrance to the separate treatment of men and women who do not meet offstage, and because the visibility of the television guarantees that the participants cannot keep secrets about their past, making the audience and Esra Erol the witnesses of a future marriage. One female interviewee responds Akınerdem's question by stating that marrying on the show is like marrying through arranged marriage, this time in front of Esra Erol. The comparison is important because as of 2016 statistics of TÜİK (Turkish Institute of Statistics), family-arranged marriages constitute more than half of the marriages made in Turkey, with 47.8% with the consent and 12.1% without the consent of the married. Accordingly, 30.2% chose their own spouse and got their family's consent whereas 2.5% having chosen their own spouse did not consult their family, with the last important figure being elopement with a percentage of 7. These statistics show that the family plays a very important role in marriages in Turkey, for even if the family does not arrange the marriage itself, its consent is important. The case of elopement confirms this situation, for it is a strategy to bypass non consenting families. Some discussion of arranged marriage in Turkey will be of help here.

As Karaboğa states (2008, pp. 13-14), in arranged marriages the initiative comes from the man's family, as families seek a suitable mate among their connections to find "a decent girl," a virgin with a good family background who has known no other men for fear of her comparing her prospective husband with others. Accordingly, a suitable girl should be inferior in position to her prospective husband with conduct and demeanor being more important than looks. According to Litton Fox (1975, p. 182), Muslim societies use arranged marriage as a way to protect the family honor, which is based on the preservation of the chastity of its female members. This argument is important to understand Melek's objections to Yıldırım who accuses women of meeting men outside. Also, as congruent with the statistics, arranged marriage and love matches form the two prominent ways through which mates are selected, with arranged marriage being considered the traditional way and love matches the modern one (Litton Fox 1975, p. 180). Where is the place of *the Esra Erol Show* in this picture?

The salience of family is ever present in *the Esra Erol Show* in multiple ways: first, the show presents itself as a homemaker and thus a breeding ground of future families; secondly, especially young participants are frequently asked whether their families are informed of their participation (meaning whether they did get family consent); thirdly, as Melek does in this excerpt, participants evoke their families implying that they are not doing anything that might be disapproved by them.

Güven and Kanık (2016) argue that *the Esra Erol Show* functions like a place of arranged marriage, the approval of Esra Erol and of the audience accepted as the approval of the family. But another salient discourse on Esra Erol is love, as participants are expected to have feelings for each other in the case they decide to marry, as can also be seen from the repeated inquiries Erol directs to Ahmet about his feelings. It can be said that *the Esra Erol Show* reconciles the two predominant ways of marriage selection: the participants are making their own choices, but in a perfectly controlled environment which, particularly of concern for women, leave their chastity unsullied. Melek states that Yıldırım's words on women meeting men outside the show might implicate anything, which is best explained in this framework of family honor: Melek is firm to acknowledge that as female villa residents, both the show's rules and their espousal of them provide an environment where they can safely look for mates without

losing their chastity. The same is expected from men as a token of honesty and dignity. The primary rule of the show much stressed by Melek, leaving one's private life outside once inside becomes therefore the primary way the show proves its properness as a way to marriage: in principle, the private lives of all of the candidates are in the open, on television, to make sure that nothing improper happens. This is also the explanation for disclosing one's intimacy onscreen. Whatever is not videotaped for screening is ideally supervised by the team. Or what happens in reality falls shortof this ideal, according to Bahar and Yıldırım…

Occasional scandals about marriage show participants such as bridal candidates' nude pictures (Anon. 2016) or two of the candidates' intimate pictures in bed (Anon. 2017) leaking onto the Internet raise program ratings and the popularity of the involved participants rather than undermining the reliability of marriage shows. Though further research needs to be made to illuminate this discrepancy, it can be hypothesized that they may be considered as exceptions that prove the rule, binding only the persons who are involved in the scandals. Indeed, when general comments are made by Bahar or Yıldırım about possible rapprochements between the participants and suitors outside of the procedure of the show, Bahar and Demir warn them not to implicate people and ask them to give specific names: it cannot be stated that the show is a breeding ground for illegitimate couplings; if there are people who engage in unethical behavior, it is their fault. Indeed, they will not get suitors anyway.

4.2.2.3. Zehra & Mustafa: The dynamics of equivalence

EE: Here come Mustafa and Zehra.
(A VTR from the day before shows how Mustafa, the male suitor, and Zehra, the female candidate, met each other :)
Mustafa: I came here to take you away.
Zehra: Would you be able to earn my trust?
Mustafa: Thank God I hope for sure that I will earn your trust.
Zehra: We are so pretentious! Congratulations!
Zehra: My 6th sense is a little bit strong.
Mustafa: Be it the 6th or the 17th sense I will not live without her because I really love her too much.
Zehra: The guy is so pretentious… All of a sudden "I will take her away, bring her away…" Oh God not so fast!
Zehra: Let me tell you something. No offense but I am both complicated and very hard to get. I mean not everybody, every Tom, Dick and or Harry can get me. I am that kind of a person.

(The VTR ends, Mustafa and Zehra come to the studio, Mustafa is crying whereas Zehra looks miserable, some humorous comments about their situation, Esra Erol asks Mustafa what happened.)
Mustafa: You see abla[31] *let me tell you something… Dear spectators, much dear studio participant… Let me repair my mistake about a word I used yesterday. The words "I will take her away" means in fact "I will send my parents and ask for her hand with God's command and the Prophet's word. It wasn't meant to be… There is nothing that can be…*
Zehra: I feel nothing abla. *Let me tell you the truth and please acknowledge that I am right. I mean… How can I say? Well… I don't feel close to him. Close… I mean he feels closeness but I feel nothing. Well, can you be with someone you don't love? Please acknowledge that I too I am right. Everybody tears into me…*
…
EE (to Zehra): Well then, did you let this boy express himself?
Zehra: But I don't feel anything!
…
EE (to Mustafa): But did you talk? She asked you something, which offended you. What is that?
(Mustafa, crying, tells how he used to skip school with his friends as a result of which he could not graduate)
Mustafa: I am illiterate. I can confess here, in front of millions, I am illiterate. But I believe that I will be able to solve these problems about literacy and I believe that I am not detached from life that I continue living and that I cultivated myself.
EE: Was this the biggest problem?
Mustafa: This was the biggest problem.
(Some exchange between Esra Erol and Mustafa)
EE: But you can accomplish that. Today, you see it as the biggest impediment to a relationship. (To Zehra:) Zehra, I mean had you settled down, wouldn't you be able to give him the necessary encouragement and desire?
Zehra: I don't feel it dear abla.
EE: You don't feel it.
(Zehra states that she spent the night sleepless because of the insults she received on Facebook. Mustafa apologizes repeatedly, a last time on behalf of the insults on Facebook, participants in the lodge accuse Zehra apparently for arrogance. One of the participants comments on Mustafa's lack of education :)
Melih: Can I say samething to you Miss Zehra?I have a question for you. You may not be feeling something, of course, I respect that but to judge somebody's lack of education? What is that?
Zehra: My mother and I… I mean, my mother is of the same opinion this is not only my decision.
Melih: No… Having made of it an excuse for… Making an excuse out of it… This is nonsense according to me. Do you understand? This man today came beside me and he said: "She makes an excuse out of it and her decision is negative." I mean, do you understand? This is what offended me. I mean, I was not expecting that from you.
EE: The biggest wound in his life is his lack of education…
Melih: Yes but the way she sends him away is ugly Esra abla.
EE: The woman in front of him refusing him because of this made a double wound. Ok.
(The couple leaves after some discussion, Zehra repeats that she needs to feel something to find love; Mustafa, at the end, pieces together his pride and heads offstage in a proud manner while Zehra is still talking. Below Figure 4.6 shows Zehra in the beginning of the exchange and Mustafa at the end of it having a last glance to Zehra)

[31]*Abla* is a word in Turkish literally meaning elder sister, used as an address form both implying sincerity and respect.

Figure 4.6: Frame from *the Esra Erol Show*: Zehra and Mustafa's strong emotions

Source: Esra Erol Show, January 5, 2016

Rejection in front of millions can be hard for the suitors as can be seen from several examples from the show. The exchange between the male suitor Onur and female candidate Yıldız is an example. Onur, having been rejected because of a disagreement over the scheduling of a future marriage, states that Yıldız, as a woman, crushed him, shattered him, cast him down, and split his heart into two. Then Esra Erol asks the couple if they are both too proud (*gururlu* in Turkish) as persons. In fact, *gurur* which is translated as pride in English, has a very special role in the Turkish culture of romance, but the English translation does not do justice to the specific Turkish context. Neel (2015, pp. 41-48), stating that pride is an emotion depending on the cultural norms, shows how the emotion has been historically treated as being both a virtue and a vice. Accordingly, pride in the Christian culture is the deadliest of the seven deadly sins, having caused Satan's fall from heaven but at the same time, it is "the satisfaction, pleasure, exhilaration, or vindication that arises from having our self-image confirmed," hence the author's evaluation that there are indeed two types of honor. The same argument is put forward by Turkish psychiatrist Nevzat Tarhan (2017, p. 152), but with a slightly different definition of its good version, suggesting a cultural difference between the western context of Neel and the Turkish one. Accordingly, "the first [form of pride] we can call positive is the one known as honor, dignity, reputation, respectability, and self-esteem," and the one with the negative connotations, on the other hand is associated with concepts such as arrogance, vanity and conceit.

The main thrust of this section is about exploring how suitors, when refused by the candidates in front of millions deal with rejection. Many responses are quite civil but there are frequent disputes in which other candidates from the lodge get involved, blaming the refusing candidate for not being courteous enough to have at least a glass of tea with the suitor. It seems as if the lodge defends the suitor against the rejecting candidate. The same happened in an amplified way in the above case, as both candidates from the lodge and some viewers attacked Zehra for having rejected Mustafa, and what is more, for having rejected him on the grounds that he was illiterate. Apparently, rejection when the suitor shows signs of taking it as an offense turns it into a public issue. There are indeed two important reasons for this: firstly, everything is a public issue in *the Esra Erol Show* as the format is designed for taking private matters into public debate. In this way, not only the acts but also the desires, intentions and sentiments of people who accepted to appear on the show are legitimate subjects of scrutiny. Secondly, the sentiment of pride in Turkey has a strong affinity with honor, which makes it something based on another's evaluation, thus something with a public facet, as can be seen from Tarhan's (2017, p. 152) work, defining *gurur*/pride "as honor, dignity, reputation, respectability, and self-esteem."

Rodriguez Mosquera et al. (2002, p. 17) give the following definition of honor: "Having honor implies being respected by others. Although one's own honor is dependent on an internal sense of honor … it is the social recognition of individual behavior that legitimizes individual claims to honor." To be honorable implies a set of actions defined by the code of honor, to a body of unwritten rules of conduct indicating a defined course of action to be pursued within a defined scenario. Honor implies the fusion of the individual with societal norms, of his/her becoming the embodiment of the norm as its vehicle and its bearer, and across societies; there are both similarities and differences concerning their honor code.

Abu-Lughod's (1985) famous study "honor and the sentiments of loss in a Bedouin society" can therefore be instructive for the Turkish context as an eastern and Muslim society. Accordingly, Awlād ʿAlī individuals studied by the author espoused two different forms of expression when they experienced loss or offence: In everyday conversation within public context, their reaction manifested itself through a range of

sentiments of anger, blaming others or stoic denial of having been affected, whereas in intimate moments they expressed sentiments of vulnerability, emphasizing how they have been hurt and are sad for what happened through a specialized form of poetry. As the author observes, these little poems move those listening quite a lot, posing an enigma for the researcher.

Abu-Lughod stated that this enigma cannot be solved by arguing that public expressions of anger and not caring are forms of ego defense, whereas what are expressed in poems are natural emotions of their reciters. She argues instead that the two discourses depend on the code of honor of this society, praising autonomy above everything else. Accordingly, "[t]he ideal person … is … the apogee of control who manifests his independence in his freedom from control by others, and his strength or potency in his unwillingness to submit to others" among Awlād ᶜAlī. As the author explains, dependency is associated with the weak who are low in social status. The author concludes that in their intimate circle, by admitting through poetry the existence of powerful sentiments lying beyond what is permitted by the honor code, Awlād ᶜAlī individuals express the endeavor they have to make to conform to the norms, which also contributes to their honor claims. Though of course not functioning the same way, this discussion of the honor code among Awlād ᶜAlī can be of help to understand how *gurur* /pride functions in the case of Turkish romance.

A possible outcome of courtship is rejection. Fiske &Yamamoto (2005, pp. 185-195) acknowledge that rejection has both universal and cultural underpinnings but posit as its cause the human need to be in control. Accordingly, rejection disrupts a person's feeling of control (Williams et al. 2000), which is necessary for a sentiment of effectiveness in the environment. However, in the Turkish case, the need for control does not seem to be what is at stake. Rather, rejection or acceptance by a potential partner seems to have a bearing on the public value of that person. Rejection becomes an offense against the honor of the one who is rejected, as if through his/ her capacity of hurting him /her, (s)he acquires some superiority over that person, in a way somewhat similar to the functioning of honor among Awlād ᶜAlī. The danger of loss of status is also present in the Turkish case, though the separation between what is acceptable in public and in private as a response to intimacy is less clear cut. What is most important is one's

attitude towards the rejecter as (s)he should not struggle too much for acceptance lest the danger of being charged with having no *gurur* /pride, a devastating accusation. There are therefore degrees of expressing indifference to what happened, so that one can keep one's devastation to him/ herself, live it in his/her intimate circle or in public but what matters is not showing it to the rejecter. A cliché line in classical Turkish cinema built on a melodramatic modality is "Once there was a young man without money but with much pride.[32]" This is the defining line of usually the same story of a poor lad refused by the father of his beloved when he asked for her hand on the grounds of his poverty. There is therefore a double claim to superiority of the father, emanating from his socioeconomic status. A reversal of fortunes makes our lead actor rich and confronts him once again with the father, who in some cases may have become needy of his help. Then the lead utters the said line, recuperating his damaged *gurur* /pride. A similar scenario is applicable to women. This cliché marks the importance of *gurur* /pride in the Turkish culture.

As rejection is public in the case of *the Esra Erol Show*, suitors may experience it as humiliating because, as if by proxy, the candidate who rejects becomes a judge of the suitor's desirability and hence his/her public status. There is, in fact, a discourse of equivalency in the Turkish culture in terms of romance and marriage. According to this discourse incarnated in the proverb "Davul bile dengi dengine çalar," literally meaning "Even drums can play only when they are well-matched," the groom should either be equivalent or superior to the bride socioeconomically, an understanding affecting both social and personal perceptions. This is why rejection may be understood or can be a claim to superiority or a kind of condescension, meaning that the rejecter does not in some way consider the suitor as his/her equivalent, for instance financially or in terms of attractiveness or again in terms of education as in the case of Mustafa and Zehra. The fact that Zehra interprets the situation in terms of equivalency can be seen from her reaction to Mustafa's initial assertions about taking her away. Her statement: "Let me tell you something. No offense but I am both complicated and very hard to get. I mean not everybody, every Tom, Dick or Harry can get me. I am that kind of a person" shows

[32] "Bir zamanlar fakir ama gururlu bir genç vardı."

her high appraisal of herself in the marriage market. This expression also means that she doubts Mustafa's assets for claiming a potential equivalency.

When it is revealed that Mustafa is illiterate, it becomes apparent that there is a huge gap between him and Zehra in terms of socioeconomic status. Zehra's offstage reaction revealed by another candidate, Sevtap, shows how Zehra considers even the contemplation of such a merger between herself and Mustafa an insult to her social status. The reaction of Zehra is in fact very understandable in terms of Turkish romance culture and compatible with its values. However, rather than arguing that Mustafa as a suitor is not equivalent to her, Zehra repeatedly puts forward that she feels nothing for Mustafa, that she wants to have sentiments for the person she considers to be with and so on. That is her only defense, and the only acceptable defense, for the discourse that love is above everything else is paramount for the show. However, Sevtap, having taken the microphone, implies that there are other reasons behind Zehra's refusal of Mustafa:

> *Well, Miss Zehra now here sits like that as if she has done nothing but offstage she has different statements, different manners. Furthermore, Mister Mustafa, you are apologizing but she has to apologize because she approaches you very differently. I tell what I have heard. She tells stuff like… "Who are you to treat me like that?" I mean she refers to you. You see, she makes: "He said he will take me away. Who are you to take me away?" And I said "Don't speak like that. I mean the gut may have said it with good intentions."*

Apparently, though everybody may make calculations of equivalency personally, making public the claims of superiority is not culturally acceptable, for it amounts to humiliating the rejected person. Mustafa's initial attitude and the huge socioeconomic difference between him and Zehra make the rejection a particularly humiliating one. Therefore the candidates from the lodge attack Zehra for her arrogance, and Melih states that he got personally offended because of Zehra's treatment of Mustafa, showing that the matter concerns everybody personally. As said before, Zehra defends herself on the basis of her lack of emotions for the suitor. Thus on *the Esra Erol Show*, the discourse of equivalency needs to function through the discourse of love, if not to lose its legitimacy, as in that case rejection would amount to a claim of superiority, as has been perceived in the case of Zehra. The jargon of this discourse of love in the program revolves around the concept of *elektrik*, literally meaning electricity, somewhat alluding to have a feeling of chemistry between the couple. In fact, *elektrik almak* literally to

have some electricity between means that the candidate found the suitor attractive. However, rather than using a language implying judgment such as "I liked him/her," "I didn't like him/her", candidates on the marriage shows use the jargon of *elektrik*, which implies a neutral evaluation of the chemistry between the participants. The primary ground for rejection is, therefore *elektrik alamamak – not being able to get electricity from the suitor*, which is an excuse beyond any dispute. However, with her offstage declarations, Zehra publicly revealed her claims of superiority, which made her subject to harsh attack from both the spectators and the other candidates in the lodge.

What about Mustafa? What are his resources when confronted with public humiliation on a reality show?

According to Neel (2015, p. 49), "To humiliate someone is to assert power over him by denying and destroying his status claims," which is stigmatizing. Accordingly, there is no proper defense that can repair humiliation; one should simply recover his/ her self esteem and continue with his /her life. Esra Erol's comment about Mustafa's lack of literacy being his biggest wound, doubled by having been rejected because of this illiteracy not only describes the event but also ascribes vulnerability to Mustafa. Mustafa, on the other hand, surprisingly, makes no substantial effort to defend himself and repeatedly apologizes to Zehra probably for having caused such a situation in which she is being attacked because of him. As long as he does not defend himself and defends Zehra, candidates in the studio speak on behalf of him and attack the latter. But once Mediha, a middle-aged candidate from the lodge speaks up for Zehra and takes her side, heading towards closure rather more favorable for Zehra, Mustafa suddenly becomes bitter and leaves the scene while Zehra is still talking, taking a last glance expressing his lately found *gurur*/ pride.

Therefore, different strategies while performing intimacy are adopted by Mustafa and Zehra. Whereas Zehra professes a wish to be understood on the grounds that she has also been a victim in this situation, Mustafa chooses to further degrade himself in front of millions by apologizing and crying, which unexpectedly (or expectedly?) works in his favor as the audience and the viewers take up the duty of defending him against Zehra, moved by the unfairness of the situation. When, however, Mediha makes a

speech supporting Zehra, suggesting a closure favorable to her, Mustafa takes a defensive position through his sudden departure and bitter gestures. In fact, for both parties, the experience has been a painful one, as Mustafa was humiliated and Zehra attacked. However both parties managed to negotiate their position in the public arena to a certain extent through their performances and to shield themselves from the deleterious consequences of exposure to the public, which becomes an arena of trial in that respect, a courtroom in which both Mustafa and Zehra perform humility to gain the jury's sympathy. In that way, both manage to fend off a deadly blow to their reputation.

4.2.2.4. Luvrita & İbrahim: The rise of the periphery

> *(İbrahim and Luvrita are two of theshow's participants whose frequent fights on the program constituted one of the rating sources of the show. So much so that the couple got transferred to another marriage show as first İbrahim and then Luvrita left the program to appear on Zuhal Topal's show (Anon. 2016). The present excerpt dates from the second month of their meeting, when Luvrita came to the show as a suitor to İbrahim and was eventually rejected. They are mostly treated by the host as two lovers who cannot join each other because of their pride. The excerpt below is obtained from one of their encounters in the show, ostensibly to resolve the fight the day before during their commute to the villa. The parties attack each other refusing the ascriptions that they have mutual feelings. One of the primary accusations is to be present on the show in order to advertise oneself. Only those passages relevant to this theme are included in the following excerpt. The broken Turkish of Luvrita who is Russian by origin is rendered in proper English so as to preserve the understandability of what she says outside its context.)*
>
> *Luvrita: I want to say something. I want to say something before speaking about yesterday. I came here. İbrahim came here before me. It has been maybe two months. There was a Mister İbrahim in the lodge. Nobody heard him speaking. A man was sitting there. And I came and stuff happened. Mister İbrahim appeared in all newspapers together with me. I don't need that. I think that Mister İbrahim needs it. This is why he advertises himself by using me. First of all, this subject* (the fight of yesterday) was dropped anyway. *I said it all. I don't have feelings for Mister İbrahim. I said it. I said whom I like earnestly. You are my witnesses. I don't have feelings for him. I don't know if this man tries to advertise himself by using me.*
> *EE: "Till I came İbrahim was here, nobody knew him. Now everybody knows him thanks to me." This is what you say?*
> *Luvrita: Yes.*
> *…*
> *İbrahim: Let me tell you something. You say that I was not known before you. This is a marriage show. Nobody needs to be known.*
> *…*
> *İbrahim: Let me tell you something. I will not deal here with people who act as I said before. I said this to a friend.*
> *Ayça: I don't need acting İbrahim, you need it, you are new.*
> *(Ayça states that İbrahim has a crush on Luvrita, quarrel between the two.)*
> *İbrahim: You are after advertising yourself, now that you are being filmed by the camera, this was what you wanted, and you reached your goal my dear!*
> *…*

> *Luvrita: The subject yesterday was closed for good. But Mister İbrahim thought: "I will not appear on screen tomorrow."*
> *(Then İbrahim accuses Luvrita of advertising herself using him, the same goes forLuvrita respondingto the accusation in the same vein, no resolution obtained.)*

İbrahim and Luvrita are not the only participants who became famous thanks to their successful performances of intimacy. Two news items by Posta (2018) show how bride and groom candidates of marriage shows have transformed the "celebrity capital" they acquired through poshlost into other goods such as social connections with important people, acting careers, appearances on music clips as well as advertising revenues from social media, hence social and economic capital. According to Driessens: (2013, p. 2),

> *Celebrity capital, or broadly, recognizability, is conceptualized as accumulated media visibility which results from recurrent media representations. In that sense, it is a substantial kind of capital and not a subset or special category of social or symbolic capital, the latter being defined as legitimate recognition by other agents in a social field.*

Whereas most of the bridal candidates riveted their position by using their sexuality, it can be observed that a considerable chunk of famous grooms became news stories thanks to their criminal activities such as prostitution, acting in porn, purse snatching, and fraud. Seemingly, even petty criminals can become famous in today's Turkey. Now a long detour will be taken to understand the story of Luvrita and İbrahim, through looking at the migration story of Turkey.

As a late industrializing country, the domestic migration in Turkey from the country to the cities is more than recent history. Especially metropolises such as Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara were deeply affected by continuous waves of migration from the 1950s on. *Gecekondu*s[33] built on public land and *hemşehri*[34] networks mobilized for finding a job were the main mechanisms through which newcomers took hold in the city. The history of neoliberalism in Turkey is also part of the history of their integration.

Kozanoğlu (1992, pp. 38-41) states that during the first decade of the immigration wave, in the 1950s, *gecekondu*s did not have a cultural production of their own; and that their voice was represented by the social realist movement in literature. Accordingly, in

[33] Literally meaning built in one night, the name given to squatter settlements in Turkey.
[34] Meaning from the same hometown, *hemşehri* is an important allegiance in Turkey that can be used to mobilize people.

the 1960s, they somewhat started to consume and towards the end of this decade Orhan Gencebay started to make their music, *arabesk*; followed bu*gecekondu*s' making their own music with the rise of *arabesk* stars from among their own ranks such as Ferdi Tayfur and Müslüm Gürses. Though despised by the elites *arabesk* played an important role in *gecekondu* dwellers' integration to the city and of modernization (Kozanoğlu 1995). However, till the 1980s, there was no real conflict between newcomers and old city dwellers, as the latter's condescension finding its expression in name callings such as *kıro, keko or hanzo*[35]had not morphed into enmity yet (Kozanoğlu, 1992 p. 42)

According to Murat Belge (1997, p. 96), in contradistinction with the West where different classes were formed in their own separate urban locales during industrialization, the urban legacy of Turkey from the Ottoman Empire was *mahalle*[36], which could be considered as a microcosm of the whole society. The desire of the middle to upper middle classes to isolate their living spaces through gated communities is relatively a latecomer, taking precedence from the 1980s when the condescension of old urbanites towards the immigrants turned into enmity. The new middle classes building their identity on their adoption of a new lifestyle based on consumption found their defining other in the image of the poor immigrant. Consumption as a marker of class status was therefore transformed into a problem of becoming a true urbanite and not remaining a villager through adopting the required consumption habits (Kozanoğlu 1992, p. 48). The retreat of the new middle classes into gated communities, their endeavor to expand urban quarters free from the presence of unwanted elements such as immigrants, the nostalgia for the old Istanbul and its refined minorities (Kozanoğlu 1995, p. 110) were all part of the spatial exclusion politics of the new middle classes. The new middle classes, especially its university educated young members, also produced cultural strategies to build up cultural capital through the adoption of a cynic humor excluding and parodying lower classes; a strategy that will begin to abandon its exclusionary aspects in the 2000s as new middle classes saw the privileges the system provided them liquefy (Şimşek 2014, pp. 193-196). Lower classes produced their own strategies to counter these attacks. For instance, against the names such as *zonta* and

[35] Name callings used by old city dwellers for newcomers from the village akin to their English counterparts like hillbilly or country bumpkin.
[36] Literally meaning neighborhood, *mahalle*s were also the smallest administrative unit of the Empire.

maganda[37]attributed to them, they produced the adjective *entel*, a derogatory abbreviation of the word *intellectual* in Turkish implying false pretense of knowledge. In the August 1988 issue of Kaıdnca, there is an interview with Ali Genç "who is considered by some *entel*s as a *zonta*" (Özdilek & Gülgün 1988, p. 76). Accordingly, Ali Genç beat up the son of Ali Sirmen, a famous Turkish writer, in Ortaköy, one of the most popular neighborhoods in Istanbul on the Bosphorus. The exchange between Genç and his interviewers shows that there is an ongoing conflict for sharing Istanbul's popular quarters and between different socialization rules. Ali Genç is against drinking and making love in public, rules that he enforces personally may infringements arise. Besides that, Ali Genç is keen to acknowledge that he is a modern person without any personal animosity against *entel*s. Hence, lifestyle based on consumption defined the different parties in the conflict as not being excluded was premised on the ability to consume.

The first signs of discontent from these excluded segments came with the rise of *Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party), an extremist Islamist party that adopted a discourse against exploitation and poverty. The Welfare Party first rose in the provinces; that did not bother the elites, but when Refah took the municipalities of metropolises such as Istanbul and Ankara in 1994 local elections, this created havoc (Kozanoğlu 1995, p. 121). This rise continued with the coming of the Welfare Party to power as the senior party in a coalition government with DYP in 1996, after its electoral victory in 1995. Necmettin Erbakan, the party's chairman, became prime minister. The process ended with the resignation of Erbakan in 1997 as a result of the developments known as the February 28 process and labeled by some as a post-modern coup. Erbakan in fact was pressured by the military to sign 28 February dated National Security Council Decisions formulated around the preservation of secularism deemed under threat during the present government, which he preferred not to sign and to resign instead. However, this would only temporarily contain the rise of the periphery.

It can be said that the oppositional language developed by the periphery against the elites had been an Islamic one. Hence, the periphery did not develop an opposition

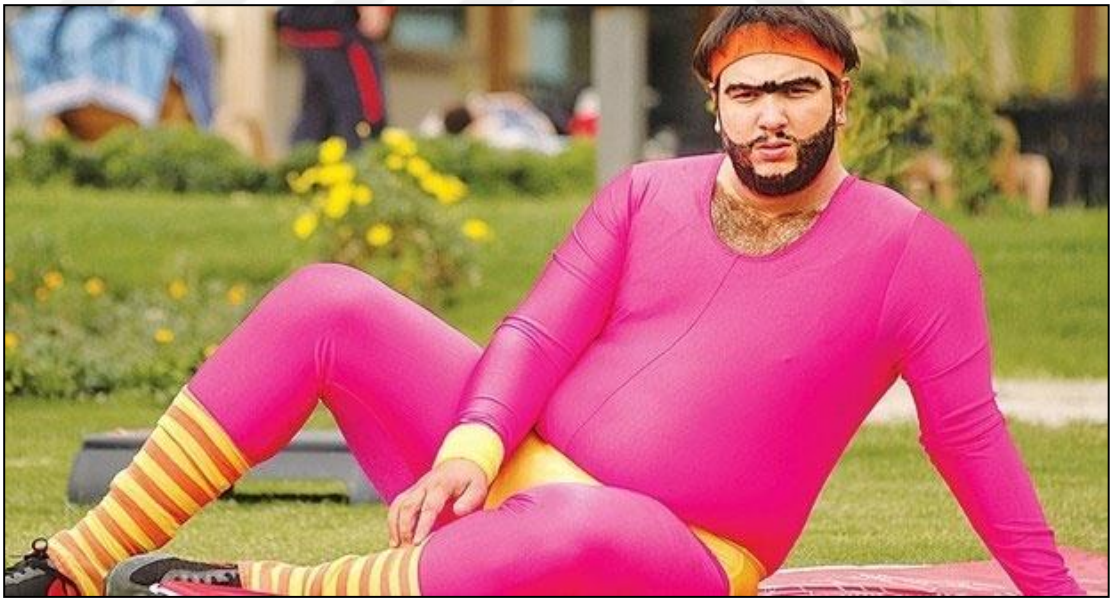
[37]Name calling akin to *boor* in English, implying an uncouth man who disturbs the true urbanites by his presence and his uncouth behavior.

against neoliberalism that had created the conditions of its exclusion in the first place. Now the periphery obtrudes the spaces the elites previously reserved for themselves. What it does is not a complete espousal of the latter's values to become like them, nor a complete oppositional stance producing an alternative value system. It creates rather hybrid cultural forms as well as lifestyles that espouse the probability of benefitting from the previously elite privileges, however in its own way.

The elites' responsibility in this backlash can be seen in Algan's (1996) discussion of the cinematic production in the 1980s. She shows that major directors in this period, with few exceptions, produced movies embracing the ideals of empty individualism put into relief against a scorned province. Accordingly, art films in this period exalted the lifestyle of its upper class protagonists, which acquired its value in comparison with the deprecated lower classes.

The blockbuster *Recep İvedik* series, however, shows the infiltration of a type that would previously be called *maganda* in white-collar spaces.

Figure 4.7: Recep İvedik in aerobic suit



Source: http://www.radikal.com.tr/kultur/recep-ivedik-icin-son-karar-1522805/

According to Tekelioğlu (2009), İvedik represents a hybrid humor bringing together the periphery and the center, and directing its self-confident aggression towards the

intellectual who used to grow on its condescension towards the periphery. However, Tekelioğlu disregards that once in power; the periphery is also proved to be prone to the abuses that power may bring with it, present for instance in Şahan's arrogant and aggressive demeanor. Above in Figure 4.7 is shown a scene from Recep İvedik where he makes aerobic in a resort hotel to the discontent of his classmates.

Perhaps even before the cinema, the movement of popular taste from the periphery towards the center was in music (Tekelioğlu 2006). The apogee of this movement may be İsmail YK, a German Turk who has made very successful albums from 2004 to the present day. İsmail YK's musical style can best be understood as hybridization, which is also visible in the visual elements of his music clips. In an interview with Ayça Örer, İsmail YK said the following: "Mine is free style. There is R&B, pop, arabesk, reggae and also ideological songs. This is why I don't make albums of an obvious style." In fact, İsmail YK, apart from using different music styles in different songs, also fuses different styles in one song, making hybrids of pop-*arabesk*, rock-*arabesk*, pop-folk song or *arabesk*-rap ect. His music clips are a remixing of any visual element that can be deemed classy, emptied of any implication that they could have in their original context.

Hence İsmail YK can smash a top model car, figure among semi-naked dancing beauties or escape from the city holding the leg of a helicopter, as well as fall in love with a girl in hicab or dance the *halay*[38]accompanied by shawm-and-drum. Furthermore, İsmail YK is very successful in catching up with trends among the youth, and makes catchy songs using quotidian language, for instance, about Internet dating or Facebook. In this way İsmail YK reclaims with virtuosity all goods which previously were part of the cultural baggage of the upper classes, wiping them out of their class origins. What remains as content is always an empty story of love, be that a playful song about a new meeting or a morose piece about a break up. This visual and musical collage shows that İsmail YK is capable of belonging anywhere and everywhere, and to reclaim both that from which he was excluded and his original self through hybridization. Below are two frames from İsmail YK's two different music clips showing the range of his visual style in Figure 4.8.

[38] Regional folk dance in Anatolia.

Figure 4.8: Frames from İsmail YK's Music Clips

Source:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Czx_8Mmqqt8&https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2jK-6B47nc

To return to *theEsra Erol Show*, what strikes the reader of the above excerpts is the abundance of the accusations about advertising oneself or about acting which practically means the same thing. Luvrita and İbrahim accuse each other, Demir (who is not included in the excerpt) and İbrahim accuse Ayça and soon. It seems, therefore, that the participants in the show and probably the audience have a folk theory on how the show functions. However, according to this folk theory, there is a clear distinction between *acting* and being *authentic*; a dichotomy that the concept of *performing intimacy* attempts to overcome. There are, therefore, many shades of this performance situated between the range of the two ideal types of pure *acting* and pure *authenticity*. The accusations of advertising come to those who remain closer to the former end of this equation, accusations that also contribute to the visibility of the accuser. It should be borne in mind that this excerpt is chosen for its quality of illustrating in the best way the discussed theme, and not because of an absence of similar themes among other participants. An obvious example is the romance between Özlem and Ali Haydar, a

couple whose engagement was charged for being factitious and made for advertisement. Eventually, the couple broke up as Ali Haydar declared that he would be unable to economically meet the life standards of Özlem, putting an end to the story which left the allegations of advertisement unresolved.

After appearing on *the Esra Erol Show*, Luvrita was transferred to Zuhal Topal's marriage show (Anon. 2016) and then again to the fashion contest show *Gardırop Savaşları* (*Wardrobe Wars*) on FOX TV (Anon. 2016). It seems that participating on reality shows can become a career in itself. It should be said that many accuse marriage shows of recruiting their participants from casting agencies. However, be the participants drawn from casting agencies or recruited from among ordinary people or a combination, the fact that reality shows in general and marriage shows in particular provide ordinary people a platform in which they can acquire celebrity capital remains the same. This is so because even the members of casting agencies are ordinary people who want to make it through accumulated visibility.

Hence, reality shows in general and marriage shows in particular are spaces where one can discern the rise of the periphery. Excluded before from media visibility (Akınerdem 2015), now the periphery is everywhere. Its members can now reproduce their own values and their own culture. The ban on marriage shows did not change this fact; the same reproduction continues in other formats with the same hosts. However, this visibility of the periphery is acquired through integration into the system. The dreams are for individual salvation to the true spirit of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism in Turkey responds to the periphery's desire to benefit from its privileges; but throwing them a bone, the true winners make the big bucks. In the battle between the new middle class and the periphery, today both seem to be the losers.

5. CONCLUSION

“It is no more true that the 'public' is set on colonizing the 'private'. The opposite is the case: it is the private that colonizes the public space”, which reverses the task of the critical theory from being the defense of the private autonomy into the defense of the public space from the invasion of the private (Bauman 2000, p. 39). Sennett (2002, p. 5) had similar concerns when he reproached the advent of psychology and psychoanalysis for instilling the idea that personal fulfillment lies in the “understanding of the inner workings of the self *sui generis*”, breeding in masses of people an obsession with their personal life-histories and their emotions, a psychological imagination of life that Sennett names as “an intimate vision of society”, making people value intimate relations at the expense of the impersonal public life. Though Bauman does not directly blame psychology and psychoanalysis for the colonization of the public by the private, his concerns prove to be similar in his discussion of the salience of counseling and chat shows. Accordingly: “the way individual people define individually their individual problems and try to tackle them deploying individual skills and resources is the sole remaining ‘public issue’ and the sole object of ‘public interest’” (Bauman 2000, p. 72). Both authors therefore reproach the rise of private issues at the expense of the public ones with different emphases.

Throughout this thesis, the attempt has been to make visible the colonization of the public by the private through the perspective of the intimate, with the argument that this colonization has bleak consequences not only for the public sphere but also for the private one, e.g. for intimacy. It has been argued that this transformation has taken shape through a neoliberal logic, which is skillful in incorporating independent developments such as those in the psychology discipline into its rationale. It is not the place here to make an assessment of the relationship between neoliberalism and the discipline of psychology; suffice it to say that discourses of pop-psychology and self-help became discourses efficient in the formation of neoliberal subjectivities, based on the idea among others that personal fulfillment lies in individual salvation through competition and not in a culture of civic responsibility. Pop-psychology and self-help culture draws on an understanding of a self-contained individual, who needs only to

draw on his own resources to achieve happiness and fulfillment, making external circumstances such as structural inequalities due to capitalism insignificant. Looking at the picture from a broader perspective, therefore, alerts the observer to the stakes capitalism has in the recession of the public sphere at the expense of the private, which has consequences for both, as the latter forms the subject of this thesis. Accordingly, under neoliberalism, what is intimate has been transformed into something to be displayed in public as a form of capital to be converted into other forms of goods, such as symbolic or economic capital.

The first example has been the case of Men's Health Turkey, of which the discourse interpellated its upper class male readers to neoliberally sexualized positions. It can be said that these upper class men are the disgruntled heirs to the yuppies of the previous decades, whose position is best explained by a cynicism of perfect integration to the system in deed despite being fully aware of its contradictions, explained by Şimşek (2014, p. 216): "It is possible to sum up the cynicism of post 1990 as follows: I know but I do nevertheless. This is far from the spot where the ideology critique stood through the postulate 'they don't know but they do'". Hence, today it is common for white collars to think of themselves as slaves of the system canned in *plaza*s devoid of human warmth. The system however offers new solutions through new packaging of the old panacea lifestyle. Algan (2018) discusses the new trend of *living offices:* Against *canned plaza life* is packaged the *living office,* which supports the employees' needs and activities through facilities ranging from breathing therapy to ping pong halls. This, however, is for the sake of raising productivity and hence profitability. The living office however is packaged as a lifestyle privilege from which emanates its employees' status claims. *Plaza* life which was *in* back into the 1980s and 1990s is now *out*, leaving its place to living spaces.

What is striking in this development is the invasion of what used to be public space of work by the intimate sphere. Productivity is raised, therefore, through the incorporation of leisure, what used to be a defining feature of intimacy, which shows that work now as part of public space can only be valorized through the injection of intimacy, which takes the observer back to Bauman and Sennett. A similar procedure happens with the conspicuous consumption of sex.

It has been stated once and again that the sexual liberalization in Turkey took place in the aftermath of 1980 through the country's integration to global networks of consumerism (Öncü 2002, p. 173). It has then been a marker of status in the 1980s (Kozanoğlu 1992, p. 107) as can be seen from the important magazines of the era such as *Nokta* (Çeler 2011), *Kadınca* and *Erkekçe*. All these magazines targeted an upper segment of society, be they men or women, and embraced the position that sexuality was a natural part of human life which need not be repressed. It has been argued in the Theory Chapter, in the section making a brief sketch of the history of sexuality in Turkey, that during the Ottoman Empire sexuality was regulated by the society, and then by the state and experts, and then by the market. In Turkey, the first effects of the market on sexuality were not completely negative as the 1980s and 1990s somewhat substituted the western sexual revolution of 1968, providing sexual education as well as liberation to some segments of the population at least to a certain extent. However, from the 2000s on, sexuality became a site of competition especially for upper class men, turning it into consumption rather than being an experience shared among human beings.

Recently, a number of movies where the male protagonist is defined by its casual sex life[39]have recently been shot, which is interpreted by the movie makers as a personal solution to personal problems such as those of a broken heart, alienation or a crisis of manhood. Şen Telci (2011, pp. 151-162) states that these characters, lost in the metropolis are in search of a male identity through the accumulation of sexual experiences. Though these may be individuals' particular reasons for engaging in conspicuous consumption of sexuality, the canalization of different personal problems to the same solution begs for explanation. In fact, as said before, conspicuous consumption of sex has become one of the main components of the lifestyle-sexuality-status triangle, as the accumulation of sexual experiences has become a matter of competition among men.

In previous times, one society had one Casanova, building his reputation through his conquests of the honor of maidens and of widows, in societies where honor was among

[39]*Issız Adam* (2018), *Kaybedenler Kulübü* (2011), *Dünyanın En Güzel Kokusu* (2016), *Dünyanın En Güzel Kokusu 2* (2017), *Kaybedenler Kulübü Yolda* (2018).

the most praised assets (Caro Baroja 1965, p. 110). Now the numbers of Casanovas has risen exponentially, turning the stakes into competition among men. This competition is possible through the imagination of sexual conquests as if happening in the public domain, where everybody's successes are pitted against those of each other. In a way, sexuality becomes yet another domain in which competition is conducted, competition having become a main part of neoliberal subjectivity. Competitiveness is also an attribute of the neoliberal hegemonic masculinity, offering upper class men a gender identity through the conspicuous consumption of sex.

Foucault (1978) argued that Western history from the 18th century on witnessed a radical deployment of sexuality and a proliferation of discourses functioning on bodies, to deduct and establish the truth about sex, among which are demography, biology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, ethics, pedagogy, and political criticism. Accordingly, sex became an object of analysis and concern, the hidden truth about which could be reached through the mechanism of confession inherited from the Middle Ages. Foucault contended that it was in the 19th century when humans began to understand themselves as beings having a sexuality. This development coincides roughly with the shift from ars erotica to scientia sexualis, which laid the ground for interventions into the sexual domain especially by the state. Can casualization of sex be an outcome of the understanding of humans as each possessing their own sexuality?

There is certainly some truth to this argument. It is true that men engage in conspicuous consumption of sex in the spirit of having sexual desires to be met and a sexuality to be cultivated. However the way sexuality was regulated by states and experts during the early Republic and the way it is regulated now by the market is much different, bringing the observer once again to Foucault's concept of governmentality. As Rose (1996) contends, the government of individuals is done today through freedom, as has been repeated throughout the work. Consequently, sexuality today is governed through freedom, a situation much different from the interventions of the early Republic. Therefore, publications like Men's Health as well as social media, television and so on disperse discourses enticing people to experience excess and competition in sexuality, in which people engage through their free choices. Foucault's (1990) "care of the self" is transmogrified from the ethical self-construction of men into a matter of lifestyle.

Conspicuous consumption of sexuality is presented as conferring status upon its practitioners. It provides identification and a sense of privilege. It is the new lifestyle package of capitalism through which it soothes its disgruntled upper strata.

Conversely for women, the spirit of "Tell me who you sleep with and let me tell you who you are" pervades the day. As with most cases concerning women, the way sex confers status upon them is vicarious, and is mediated via the status of men they sleep with, which answers the question posed in the Introduction about Nip/Tuck character Kimber's sudden change of mind of sleeping with Christian Troy.

A last thing to say on this subject about what is peculiar to Turkey in this picture: In Turkey, westernization has always been associated with status. Thus, from Ottoman times on, westernization in particular domains, with the caution that it is not taken to the extreme, has been the preserve of the upper strata, with trickle down effects to the other parts of society in the aftermath. The casualization of and the new trends in sexuality such as swinging or group sex are western imports into Turkey, which contributes to their potential of conferring status. A line from the movie *Dünyanın En Güzel Kokusu* (The World's Most Beautiful Scent) summarizes the point: "It is finished men, what we used to call marriage, we finished it. We have ruined relationships saying 'This is modernity man'. As if this had anything to do with modernity… People went to space; we are trying to bridge the gap through group sex".[40] However, in this movie and in the other movies discussed in this study, the protagonist always falls in love, which brings to mind the possibility of love as resistance. In the end, consumed or not, sex always has the possibility of breeding affection and love.

The Esra Erol Show, on the other hand, is an example of the incorporation of lower classes into neoliberalism. The penchant for individual salvation is again to be found in reality television of which *the Esra Erol Show* is an example, as participants use their intimacy as a resource to acquire "celebrity capital" which can be converted into other goods. The ultimate example of these goods is upward social mobility.

[40] "Bitmiş oğlum evlilik denen şey biz bitirdik. Hangi çağdayız abi diye diye de ilişkileri de mahvettik. Çağla ne ilgisi varsa. Millet uzaya gitti, biz o açığı toplu seks yaparak kapatıcaz sanki."

Celebrity capital is acquired on reality television in general and on *the Esra Erol Show* in particular through the performance of intimacy of the participants. In this way, a number of *the Esra Erol Show* bride and groom candidates turned their fame into social mobility and got established in some sort of show business such as acting in serials as leads. It has been argued that what is rewarded in these shows is poshlost, which makes people perform an exaggerated and vulgar form of intimacy. This new opportunity of turning intimacy into a resource gives an edge of advantage to lower classes which may not possess other forms of capital, making it possible for them to join the competition for individual salvation. The evolution of reality television is parallel to the evolution in sexuality discussed above, as the use of the intimacy as a resource to be disposed of in the competition within the public sphere began with the 2000s. Before, during the 1990s, the reality shows such as *Sıcağı Sıcağına* contributed solely to the fame of the host and not to those of the ordinary people. The dating show *Saklambaç* airing on Show TV in 1992 is strikingly different from contemporary marriage shows. In *Saklambaç,* one male or female selectorto the left side of the screen chooses from among the three contestants the one (s)he is going to spend an evening with on the basis of the answers given to the questions prepared by the show. What is rewarded is not poshlost but the ingenuity of the contestants to find clever replies to the questions, and though *Saklambaç* is credited with being a dating show, no revelation of intimacy is made by any parties, keeping the show within the firm confines of the public space. The date that the contestants are rewarded with at the end of the show is a double date, involving activities like a limousine drive, a dinner and dancing in a bar, aimed at instilling American style dating practices rather than making real couples out of people. In fact, there is no question of the participants seeing each other after this date.

Today, however, in marriage shows, every intimate detail may be spilled over into the public realm to turn into poshlost. It should be emphasized that by the word poshlost, having negative connotations, is not meant to designate some sort of people from lower classes. First of all, poshlost may be embraced by people from all walks of life as can be seen on other reality shows such as *Survivor*. Secondly, what is named poshlost and deemedtrashy, vulgar, Philistine, crude, and moronic is a performance, not the person him/herself. What is specific to lower classes in terms of poshlost is the fact of their being relatively devoid of other sorts of capital, making poshlost their primary tactic in

a reality show. Having said this, there is no harm in repeating that poshlost is a tactic frequently embraced by lower classes on reality TV in general and in marriage shows in particular. Here will be introduced Stuart Hall's (2005) concept of popular culture as an arena of class struggle to deepen the discussion.

Stuart Hall (2005, p. 481) problematizes the two prominent approaches to the concept of popular. The first treats people as purely passive receptors of culture, assuming that they are 'cultural dopes.' The second approach is a heroic one, arguing that the working class has its own authentic culture, without "attention to the manipulative aspect of a great deal of popular culture" whereas no popular culture exists outside of power relations. The author then states that popular culture study oscillates between these two unacceptable poles.

Hall (2005) argues that there is a dialectic of cultural struggle, an uneven and unequal one, where popular culture is constantly disorganized and reorganized by the dominant culture; aiming to enclose and confine this former's definitions and forms within its own confines. Moments of supersession and resistance coexist side by side. The field of culture is a battlefield for winning strategic positions where there are no once-for-all victories, and there are no cultural forms which are wholly corrupt or wholly authentic.

Stuart Hall (2005) states that there are many forms of cultural struggle: incorporation, distortion, resistance, negotiation, recuperation. According to the author: "the culture of the oppressed, of the excluded classes… is the area to which the term popular 'refers' us." Hall states that not class against class, but the people versus the power bloc is what shapes the arena of class struggle over culture; but the people are not always a popular democratic cultural force as they may say 'Yes' to power. According to the author, popular culture is partly the place where hegemony arises and is secured and a site of social intervention and action, where relations of power are both established and contested. And it will be argued in this study, based on the discussion of Michel de Certeau (1984), that lower classes engage in this struggle through the use of tactics such as poshlost.

According to de Certeau (1984), small everyday actions belie the totalizing tendencies of the totalizing discourses. Accordingly, everyday practices of people offer them an

escape from the coercion of discursive regimes that are described by structuralists in totalizing ways. To explain his point, the author introduces the concepts of strategy and tactics. Strategy belongs to the side of the power and of the dominant discourse and aims to totalize its domination. Tactics, on the other hand, are calculated actions of individual agents to evade strategies in momentary absences of power. Tactics cannot become discourses because they are short-lived. Tactics are the way to resist through using the gaps of the dominant discourse, by using the present opportunities offered by the situation (cited in Herndl 1996).

In this sense, poshlost becomes a tactic used by the dominated classes to obtain celebrity capital to be converted into other resources. However, the logic of poshlost completely matches that of the system and does not therefore produce moments of resistance, which becomes a moment when people say "Yes" to power. Most people today do not aim to resist the discourse of the power block but to become part of the block through emulation. The periphery that rose with the 1980s (Gürbilek 2001) strives to become part of the system without relinquishing its own culture; obtruding the spaces, lifestyles and consumption habits of the upper classes. Catering to their expectations, neoliberalism today in Turkey governs through the inclusion of the lower strata into the system, making them in a way more enthusiastic for integration to the system. This is why poshlost has become associated with lower classes as a tactic, and this is why Bahar Candan is at pains to emphasize her class origins and her law education, hers being the perfect example of poshlost.

It is hoped that this study contributes to academic knowledge and could answer the questions it posed, as well as pointing towards new questions to be the subject of further research.For the time being, there are several research arenas that may be supposed. One of them is the recent emergence of the prank videos on Youtube which are usually produced by white young men through the compilation of footage gathered via pranking innocent bypassers in public spaces. The pranks may range from the reenactments of horror scenes to make the victim believe his life to be is in danger to verbal manipulations making the victim behave in ways that may otherwise be contrary to his/her belief system. Whereas the end product is the resul of heavy editing both during and after the footage, the YouTubbers promoting their videos present it as raw reality. A

common habit among pranksters is calling what they do as social experiment, to endow their otherwise questionable practice with the backing of scientificity. Below in Figure 5.1 is shown a frame from a compilation named “Killer Clown 11”, in which victims are chased by a scary looking clown carrying a huge hammer.

Figure 5.1: Example of Killer Clown prank

Source:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zb-FXzyb-I

The Killer Clown subgenre of YouTube pranks draws upon an established visual baggage of horror movies. Setting these types of pranks in places people might feel insecure, the pranksters elicit traumatic responses from the victims. Horror pranks is only a subgenre of prank videos. There are many different types however in all of them the prankster manipulates the setting in order to elicit a particular response from the victim, which afterwards is presented as unbiased fact. A majority of prank victims are colored people. Lee (2017, 4) states that he “found hood prank videos employ historical anti-Black stereotypes of Black men as violent, dangerous, criminal, drug-involved, and fearful of the poliçe.” But it can be said that the racism found in many prank videos is based on practical purposes rather than ideological ones. Pranksters in fact choose their victims based on practical considerations and some pranks work better with colored men than with white people.

Apart from the *schadenfreude* these videos elicit on pranksters and viewers (Hobbs and Grafe 2015), these prank videos seem to be a step further after the developments forming the subject of this study. So far, the leakage of intimacy to the public sphere was happening through the intent of the subject be that through social media, reality shows or sexuality. But these pranks are manufacturing situations to elicit intimate responses from innocent victims without their consent. And apparently and can be seen from the videos, many experiences of these pranks are traumatic. And this process is integrated to capitalism's logic as these videos are made to be famous in YouTube thus eventually to earn money. It seems therefore that these YouTubbers manufacture trauma in order to turn it into cash. Seemingly, the triangle of intimacy-neoliberalism-new media will breed further noveltied in the future, for the good or for the bad. And it is hoped that this study has been successful in contributing to this newly emerging research area.

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