

SELVES ON DISPLAY: NEOLIBERAL SUBJECTIVITIES IN TURKEY IN THE FIRST
DECADE OF THE 2000s THROUGH THE LENS OF REALITY TV SHOWS

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Title: Selves on Display: Neoliberal Subjectivities in Turkey in the First Decade of the
Twenty-first Century through the Lens of Reality TV Shows

This thesis aims to contribute to the studies of neoliberal and postmodern subjectivity by operationalizing the concept of self-display. Self-display is analyzed as a technology of neoliberal subjectification, this latter being indispensable for the sustenance of today's capitalism. Based on the observation that we are now living in a culture of self-display, which means that we are projecting ourselves as carefully crafted images in order to attain visibility; this thesis tries to understand both this phenomenon, and the society which gave birth to it. It can be said that this study is an attempt to see the society through the window of self-display, and to understand self-display itself, in order to unravel through what mechanisms it is able to function.

Out of three sites which open up the fields in which self-display actualizes, namely Reality Shows, social media and the job market, reality shows is chosen. Thus, a Turkish fashion reality show "*Bugün Ne Giysem*" (What Should I Wear Today) is selected as a case study, which gave us important insights about the mechanisms through which individuals are interpellated to neoliberal subject positions, namely, how these mediums of neoliberal subjectification legitimize themselves, into which desires they intrude and what they offer to the individuals. That neoliberal subjectivity establishes itself by intruding at the level of desire is a well-covered subject in the social sciences literature. This thesis tries to bring in a new aspect of the phenomenon and if possible, to widen the picture, by bringing in the levels of legitimation and satiation side by side with that of desire.

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Başlık: Benliğin Teşhiri: Reality Showlar Merceğinden

2000'den 2013'e Türkiye'de Neoliberal Öznellikler

Bu tez, teşhir kavramını işlevselleştirmek vasıtasıyla neoliberal ve postmodern öznellikler üzerine yapılan akademik çalışmalara katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Teşhir, günümüz kapitalizminin varlığı için vazgeçilmez olan neoliberal öznelleştirme pratiklerinin bir mekanizması olarak incelenmektedir. Günümüzde bir teşhir kültürü içinde yaşadığımız, yani kendimizi özenle hazırlanmış imajlar halinde kamuya sunmakta olduğumuz olgusu ekseninde, bu tez hem bu olguyu, hem de bu olgunun vücut bulduğu toplumu anlamaya çalışmaktadır. Denilebilir ki bu tez, toplumu ona teşhir çerçevesinden bakarak anlamayı amaçlamakta, bunun yanı sıra teşhiri de çözümlemek gayesiyle bu olgunun hangi mekanizmalar dolayımıyla işleyebildiğine ışık tutmaya çalışmaktadır.,

Teşhirin gerçekleştiği alanları açan üç farklı araçtan, yani reality showlar, sosyal medya ve iş piyasası arasından bu çalışmada incelenmek üzere reality showlar seçilmiştir. Böylece, Türkiye'de yayınlanan bir moda programı, "Bugün Ne Giysem?" bu teze vaka çalışması teşkil etmiştir. Bu program çalışmaya, bireylerin hangi mekanizmalar vasıtasıyla neoliberal öznelliklere çağırıldığı hakkında önemli veriler sağlamıştır. Bunların arasında bireyleri neoliberal öznelliklere çağıran araçların kendilerini nasıl meşrulaştırdıkları, hangi arzulara cazip göründükleri ve bireylere ne sundukları bulunmaktadır. Neoliberal öznelliğin vaatlerini arzu düzlemine sızarak cazip kılması üzerine önemli bir sosyal bilimler literatürü bulunmaktadır. Bu tezde teşhir olgusunun yeni niteliklerinin ortaya çıkarılması ve bu olguyu mümkün olduğu ölçüde "meşrulaştırma" "doyum" ve "arzu" vecheleriyle inceleyerek var olan perspektifin genişletilmesi amaçlanmaktadır.

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To my father

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A new phenomenon has started to permeate our lives. Suddenly we have become more visible, we have become used to being accessible at any time through our cellphones, to share online our private lives, to show up everywhere in order to get a job, in fact, to be exposed to each other much more than before. In short, we are increasingly getting used to displaying ourselves, or, to self-display.

This study aims at understanding the phenomenon of self-display in the first decade of the twenty-first century Turkey, and to find an answer to the questions of why and how this culture established itself in large parts of society. This thesis uses the word “self-display” to explain a specific phenomenon at a specific historical juncture, which is the advent of neoliberalism; it is defined as the conscious or unconscious manipulation of one’s image in order to put it into circulation in various social markets. The study analyzes a Turkish Reality Show, *Bugün Ne Giysem?* (What Should I Wear Today?) hereafter referred as BNG in order to understand the mechanisms through which the culture of self-display functions. The discussion engages with the literature on Reality TV as a genre (especially with U.S literature), stressing both the common points between *Bugün Ne Giysem?* and other reality shows and its uniqueness, providing a deeper understanding of both the show and the genre.

The terms “self-display” and “self-exposure” are used interchangeably to refer to the same phenomenon, but weight would be given to “self-display”. Exposure is sometimes

involuntary, like in airport scans, or to MOBESE¹ cameras, and many times voluntary, in which case it becomes self-exposure. Now, we should explore why self-display is linked to neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism opens up new fields through different media such as Reality Shows, social media and the job market. These media are the mechanisms of evaluation functioning within market logic, and the currency proper to these markets is attention. The self-displayers want to get as much attention as possible and to maximize their visibility. Self-display results in commodification. Like a commodity which enters the market circulation through being displayed, a person, too, enters in circulation through self-display. To sum up, individuals display and commodify themselves in order to enter into circulation in various social markets, and this, for attaining the maximum amount of visibility. Through self-display, we submit our very person to commodification. This concept is operationalized in this manner in this study.²

In order to understand the culture of self-display, one should first refer to the current stage of capitalism. Following the teachings of the Regulation School, it is argued that capitalism is a system always prone to crisis if it does not receive the support of a social basis of which subjectivity is a very important element. Each phase of capitalism requires its own forms of subjectivity in order to be able to function (Nilges, 2008). Self-display today is both a very important part of the forms of neoliberal subjectivity and a vehicle through which these subjectivities are actualized.

¹ A network of cameras watching Istanbul from different locations.

² After finishing this thesis I met an author who used a very similar theoretical model, which explains personal branding as an attention-getting device in a crowded market; however the model employed in this study is much more comprehensive.

Before continuing with neoliberal subjectivities, we should first explore how subjectivity is understood in this study. Subjectivity in this study is understood both as constructed, like in the definitions of Lacan and Foucault (cited in Mansfield, 2000), and natural, meaning that the subject is no tabula rasa and that power or language can only build on what already exists in humans. It is argued that neoliberalism, and capitalism in general, put into their own use the different resources that the human nature contains, and gives shape to what already exists, but does not produce subjectivities out of nothing. When neoliberalism calls individuals to new subjectivities, it does this by intruding into the level of desire which plays on basic human needs and this is what gives the capitalist system its power (Petersen and O'Flynn, 2007). Each phase of capitalism requires its own forms of subjectivity in order to sustain its integrity, to which individuals are hailed through the intrusion of capitalism into the level of desire.

Neoliberal subjectivity thrives on an ideology of individualism, according to which individuals are encouraged (and compelled) to be autonomous, individualistic, success-oriented, flexible, averse to commitment (whether personal or professional), and expressing themselves through consumption and through molding their identities by new media functioning on the basis of self-display. It is these neoliberal forms of subjectivity with which I am concerned with, in order to explain the rise of self-display culture.

Self-display is not the only phenomenon that has risen with neoliberalism. A number of phenomena make also part of neoliberal forms of subjectivity, all relatives of self-display. The enterprising self, the commodification of the human and its attributes, self-commodification, self-branding and coaching are all studied in the literature. The first “is defined by, acting, feeling, thinking, and willing in orientation to the criteria of economic efficiency and entrepreneurial calculation” (Bührmann, 2005). The second, self-branding, consists of relating to

oneself as a brand to be improved in the job market (Hearn, 2011). Self-commodification is about molding one's identity by the products one uses³ (Davis 2003), as well as about turning oneself into a commodity through self-display. Coaching is based on turning an employee into a more efficient one through extracting his biopsychic resources.⁴ All these phenomena are self-display's siblings. Self-display is the medium through which self-branding and self-commodification are actualized. The entrepreneurial self is one step before self-branding and coaching is built on the premise of endless adaptation, a requirement for self-displayers who need to constantly update their product, which is, their image.

The advent of neoliberalism with its new forms of subjectivity is not the only reason behind the rise of the culture of self-display. Another important factor is the changes in the culture industry. After recycling the previous decades, the entertainment industry, short of being able to create new content, is today turning human subjectivity into the material of entertainment for consumption. Furthermore, this material is produced by the very users themselves, setting the capital free from the process of production. Social media and Reality TV are the fields where this user generated content is produced and consumed. This thesis focuses on Reality Television.

As a genre, the history of Reality Show can be traced back to the 1940s. These were shows based on the unscripted filming of people, although they were not Reality Shows in the actual sense. After years of experimentations, the Reality Shows took its current shape in the twenty first century, starting to move in in prime time and to have a substantial impact in everyday life. It might be also said that the soap operas were early forerunners of current Reality

³ Self-commodification, according to Davis, has double meaning. The second one is self-branding explained above (2003).

⁴ The business sector is not the only area where coaching is applied but it is, meaningfully, the first sector to import the practice from the sports.

TV. These shows, with poor acting and familiar staging, and the characters' unhindered entry into the lives of its spectators as if they were one of them, were consumed as if one watched the intimate life of one's exotic next-door neighbor. Dominic Rushe in the *Guardian* stresses the rise of RTV as one of the reasons behind the decrease of soap opera's popularity (2011). It seems that Reality TV responds better to the spectator's desire to witness other people's intimacy. One should also note that the two different forms probably correspond to two different strategies of subject formation, a theme which is beyond the scope of this thesis.

In the twenty first century, Reality TV, like social media or the job market, is used as a technology of subjectification of the neoliberal world, seizing the individual at the level of desire (Petersen and O'Flynn, 2007). These media open up new spaces for the proliferation of these subjectivities, offering different motivations to the individuals. In this thesis, the program *Bugün Ne Giysem?* (What Should I Wear Today?), which this year airs its third season in Turkey has been selected as a case study, in order to try to understand the functioning of this mechanism.

Bugün Ne Giysem is a fashion reality show for women in which every contestant presents her attire to the jury members in order to get their vote of approval. This genre has a very strong place among other TV formats. One may ask why one should choose Reality Television among other media (job market and social media) as the case to study. This thesis is a work of cultural studies, trying to trace media's power on society and understand current phenomena. So the job market remains out of the equation. Social media, on the other hand, is much more self-evident in terms of self-display and what is displayed is almost completely under the control of the user, which is not the case for the Reality TV participant. In RTV, the participant cannot know what is waiting for him/her in the show. The RTV participation creates an interface where the public, the

media and the participant meet and this confrontation begs for an analysis. As a result, RTV spreads its discourses in much more subtler ways.

The definition of RTV differs among scholars. They mostly stress the unscripted and structured nature of RTV, meaning that they are without a preset scenario like in fiction and that they have a specific structure framing the rules for the actions of the participants. The most important however, is that in RTV, the very subjectivities of people are consumed. In Turkey, there is another important element that we would name convention, which consists of the repetition of similar behaviors by different participants throughout the shows. Conventions do not simply restrain the actions of the participants. On the contrary, they facilitate the actualization of self-display by providing a map of action on which the participants can project the image that they wish to. Reality TV will be discussed as a genre in the third chapter, and would be complemented with the results of the case study on *Bugün Ne Giysem?*.

“*Bugün Ne Giysem?*” is a field which interpellates people to the space it opens up by playing on the participant’s desire to be accepted by a certain normativity that in this stage it can be called but neoliberal. It should be said that neoliberalism has been an ideology first offered to the middle classes and in which the lower classes now want to be incorporated. This is both a desire to join the promise of neoliberalism for endless consumption (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2000) and to be recognized in this new world order. *As Bugün Ne Giysem?* adopts for itself the pedagogical duty of teaching the Turkish people how to dress, it projects itself as an authority keeping the gates of this neoliberal promise. This self-styled duty of educating the people renders every woman responsible for her appearance whether or not she takes part on the show. *Bugün Ne Giysem?* functions as a rite of passage for being accepted to the neoliberal normativity and thus receiving recognition from the system itself, embodied by individuals be they the jury

members in a Reality Show or one's followers on a Facebook list. The show offers its contestants new goals and aspirations; in short, new meanings in a world turning upside down.

To summarize, new forms of evaluation today open up new spaces functioning on the market logic according to which individuals put themselves in circulation like a commodity through self-display. They engage in this in order to remain in or to join the neoliberal promise by getting the maximum amount of visibility and have the recognition of the system itself. Now, we should refer to the literature in which this study dwells.

This study employed works from different literatures, using predominantly recent studies from the twenty-first century. The novelty of the studies on the commodification of the human and on Reality Shows shows the actuality of these problems. The critical literature on the commodification of the human was very abundant on self-branding, leaving the other concepts a little under studied. However both coaching and self-branding receive ample attention as business strategies. Also, a considerable literature on Reality Shows is present, of which I treated the most relevant ones. There is also substantive literature on Regulation School, neoliberalism, and subjectivity, which cannot be covered in the scope of this thesis. They have been incorporated in terms of their relevance.

This study deals with similar subjects in terms of self-display. In fact, understanding self-display helps us to understand the conditions that created it and which continue to sustain it. I hope that the operationalization of self-display will open up a new window to neoliberal society. It is in these terms that this study, based on the analysis of "*Bugün Ne Giysem?*," humbly hopes to make a contribution to the literature.

The study of *Bugün Ne Giysem?* was conducted as a content analysis. The first two seasons of the show were studied, leaving aside the third one, which is still on the air. The show

airs twice every weekdays, first at midday, and then at midnight. Each episode lasts for 3 to 3.5 hours. Out of a total 225 episodes, a sample of 20 was created. Basic information of all the contestants was noted and the passages deemed relevant were transcribed. At the end, discourse analysis has been used to study these transcriptions.

As for the organization, the second chapter is devoted to the theoretical background of this study, and discusses the reasons behind the rise of the culture of self-display, and neatly sets the theoretical model employed. The third chapter focuses on RTV as a genre and discusses *Bugün Ne Giysem?* and Turkish Reality Television engaging with the literature and in comparison with U.S. RTV. In the fourth chapter is analyzed the Turkish Reality Show *Bugün Ne Giysem?* and the fifth chapter is devoted to the conclusion of this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: NEOLIBERALISM, SELF-DISPLAY, AND SUBJECTIVITY

“Economics are the method; but the object is to change the heart and soul.”
Margaret Thatcher, 3 May 1981

“A person's moral or emotional nature or sense of identity,” appears as the definition of “soul” in Google dictionary as the second meaning of the word. It is true; the neoliberal project has changed the surface of the earth in terms of economics. Has it also changed hearts and minds of people?

It seems so. Technology and new forms of existing media, together with new principles of adapting to the age have transformed the way individuals relate to themselves, to other people, and to work, changing people's moral and sense of identity. New sets of principles, new guides of action, new purposes, and new means to achieve them have started to animate people in their journey of life. Human subjectivity seems to have changed, and self-display is one of the facets of this phenomenon. This latter forms the subject of this study.

Why study self-display? In fact, we are living it, breathing it, living through it. People are more and more getting accustomed to displaying themselves, sometimes voluntarily and sometimes involuntarily. The security state is an example, with its body scans in airports, its MOBESE system videotaping major arteries in the city, and its collection of ID numbers in every

⁵ Butt, R. (1981, May 3). Mrs Thatcher: The First Two Years. *Sunday Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104475>

single interaction with public offices. This study focuses on the voluntary part of this exposure culture, which can be called self-display or self-exposure.

Self-display, in this study is operationalized as the self-display of people through different mediums such as social media, Reality Shows or the job market. While every human interaction contains the element of self-display, the culture of self-display as the object of this study refers to a specific phenomenon at a particular historical juncture, in which it underwent both a quantitative rise and a qualitative change. So, not only are people exposing themselves more than before, but they do relate to themselves in different ways, as to be explored in the following.

While this study can only be a partial account of this major phenomenon, there are three important questions which this thesis seeks to answer. The first asks the reasons behind the rise of this culture of self-display, the second one is about the way it operates at the individual and at the societal levels, and the third one about the human motivations which makes possible this culture to operate. This section, forming the theoretical base of this study addresses the first and the last of these questions.

What are the reasons behind the rise of the culture of self-display? The sources of this study point to the answer that there are basically two channels from which this culture emanates. One is related to the macro economic developments that took place after the 1980s with the advent of neoliberalism, and the other, as this thesis argues, is related to the late developments in the culture industry, which today is impotent in terms of creating new content. Both of these reasons are addressed in the following, after a brief summary of the theoretical model employed in this study.

This study argues that neoliberalism hails individuals to new subject positions where they are required to be autonomous, averse to commitment, easily adapting to rapidly changing work and life conditions, and expressing themselves through consumption and via new technologies where the self is remolded according to these new formats. This it does by different mechanisms among which the ones operating through self-display form a major part. Among these mechanisms operating through self-display are the social media, reality shows and the current job market.

These mechanisms open up new spaces or fields, operating in market logic where attention passes as the currency proper. In these markets, individuals, by displaying themselves, engage in self-commodification and put themselves into circulation in order to acquire a certain quantifiable value of attention. The primary drive for people to put themselves in circulation as commodities is the quest for recognition, a human aspiration ever to be suitably satisfied. This is the theoretical framework of this study in brief.

It is no wonder that both social media and reality shows feed on self-display. We put our pictures on our Facebook page, we spill out our social and economic position on marriage shows, we release extreme emotions to get attention, we tweet that we hit a car to make everybody know what happens in our life. What happens?

This study focuses on one of these reality shows as a case, in order to be able to answer this question. But why reality shows rather than the job market or social media?

First of all, this study is a cultural one, so the job market remains out of the equation. Social media on the other hand, is practically hard to study in terms of forming a representative sample, as for instance Facebook has over 800 million users all over the world. The case study of this thesis is a prime time reality programming aired on weekdays, with high ratings, and a large

audience is exposed to it, making the show representative. The most important however, is the material that the reality shows provide. Social media is not less important in affecting society; however, the material it provides is self-evident. Furthermore, the user has almost complete control over his/her image, which is not the case with Reality Shows, where the participant cannot know what is waiting for him/her. This study intends to delineate the discourses that make self-display operate, which reality shows spread in subtle ways. Reality Shows are a site of confrontation between the audience, the participant, and the show, and they beg for analysis. This is why this study would be centered on an analysis of one of them.

Subjectivity in Fordism and Post-Fordism

What has neoliberalism to do with putting individuals into new subject positions? Is it about Thatcher's ambition to change the soul, as she stated in 1981? Why would that be?

To answer this question, one should perhaps begin with the Regulation Approach, which seeks to understand the working mechanisms of capitalism, because it takes the discussion to different forms of subjectivity throughout the different phases of the capitalist system of which today, self-display constitutes a basic component.

The Regulation Approach emphasizes the role of institutions for the sustenance of capitalism and positions itself in opposition to classical economics (Jessop, 1997). According to the Regulation Approach, capitalism is a system always prone to crisis if not supported by an appropriate social basis (Nilges, 2008, p. 27-28). It is this social basis that my study is concerned with. But first one should explore the core concepts of the Regulation Approach.

The term “Regulation School” is seldom used to mean the Parisian Regulation School, of which Michel Aglietta, Robert Boyer and Alain Lipietz are the major figures and from which in fact originated the Regulation Approach that gave birth to different wings (Jessop, 1997). I use the term Regulation Approach to comprise all of the Regulation schools, including the Parisian one.

The basics of the Parisian School are generally accepted among other regulationists. To begin with, the term “regulation” comes from the approach’s concept of “mode of regulation”, which will be explored in the following pages.

What is the agenda of the Regulation Approach? In the words of Robert Boyer, it is “to carry out an analysis of capitalism and its transformations, with the purpose of understanding the periods of stable growth and the moments of structural change” (Boyer 1995, cited in Gajst, 2010). To pursue this analysis, the Regulation Approach developed four core concepts: industrial paradigm, mode of regulation, accumulation regime, and model of development.

An industrial paradigm “is a model governing the technical and social division of labour,” like mass production (Jessop, 1997, 291). An accumulation regime refers to the mode in which the distribution, the reproduction, and the consumption of the social product are ensured (Gajst, 2010). Each regime of accumulation requires its own mode of regulation, necessary to create “moments of relative stability” in the capitalist system (Nilges, 2008, p. 28). This, however does not eliminate the crisis tendencies of capitalism, but temporarily contains them (Peck and Tickell, 1994). The concept of mode of regulation would be further explored in the following. And in the words of Jessop:

..., when an industrial paradigm, an accumulation regime and a mode of regulation complement each other sufficiently to secure for a time the conditions for a long wave of capitalist expansion, the resulting complex is analysed as a model of development (1997, p. 291).

Fordism is the model of development from which the Regulation Approach started its study.

What is of concern for my purposes is the mode of regulation under the Fordist and post-Fordist model of development as they point to different subjectivities.

Jessop defined a mode of regulation as the following: ...a mode of regulation is an emergent ensemble of rules, norms, conventions, patterns of conduct, social networks, organizational forms and institutions which can stabilize an accumulation regime” (1997, p. 291). Some regulation approach schools stress the importance of culture in their analysis. They study the cultural component of the system at a fifth level, and call it

...modes of societalization', 'societal paradigms', 'comprehensive concepts of control' or 'culture of everyday life.' This level refers to the broader social framework and discourses within which a model of development is embedded, from which it derives its meaning, and to which it imparts in turn its own distinctive features (Jessop, 1997, p. 292).

As stated, Regulation Approach has many wings, and our argument would center on the ones which state the importance of culture.

Mathias Nilges, in his article “The Anti-Anti-Oedipus: Representing Post-Fordist Subjectivity,” embraces this fifth level as a part of the mode of regulation, an approach that I also espouse, in order to explain the importance of subjectivity for the functioning of the capitalist system. Nilges states that a new mode of regulation is necessary for the transition to a new economic structure, which also means new forms of subjectivity and social forms (Nilges, 2008). Hence, the integrity of capitalism in its different phases is also premised upon the forms of subjectivity which operate at the social level, and self-display is a basic component of post-Fordist subjectivity.

To sum up: The everyday norms, behavior, morals, sense of identity, patterns of relationship hence the subjectivity of people form very important parts of the social basis, which is indispensable for the functioning of capitalism. The subjectivity of people forms a core element of the mode of regulation necessary for the sustenance of the capitalist system, to momentarily contain its crisis tendencies.

The following focuses on the Regulation Approach's teachings about the societal level during the Fordist and post-Fordist era, with their respective macroeconomic conditions, in order to understand the cultural part of the social basis which supports capitalism.

As told before, the Parisian Regulation School started to form its theory with an analysis of Fordism, which they studied as a model of development (Peck and Tickell, 1994; Broomhill, 2001). Fordism was built on the principle of mass production/mass consumption, and the Keynesian welfare state with demand management. The first describes Fordism as a regime of accumulation and the second as a mode of regulation.

Fordism's equilibrium was possible as the regime of accumulation functioned so that the productivity gains were shared between the profit and the wages, which in turn ensured that production rises would be absorbed in the markets (Lipietz). This system was compatible with and made possible by the use of Taylorist labor techniques, mechanization, capital intensive machinery and long cycles of production. The Fordist entrepreneur was sure of the market share of his outputs and willing to invest in heavy machinery. On the other hand, as the mode of regulation, the agreement between the unions and the capital was key to the system, the first agreeing to the alienating labor conditions of Taylorism in return for wage gains, job and retirement security. This mode of regulation also included its own cultural component necessary for social reproduction, including "increasing adoption of the values of mass consumerism, of

modernism, of state welfarism and of the ‘male breadwinner model’ of the nuclear family” (Broomhill, 2001). Hence, the integrity of the Fordist regime also was premised upon its own form of subjectivity.

Apart from the adoption of these values, job and retirement security functioned so as to provide a stable sense of identity and belonging to the workers under the Fordist regime. Muchlebach argues that “the form of social belonging ... centrally institutionalized and cultivated within Fordist societies [was] that of the capacity to belong to and be publicly recognized by the world through waged work” (2011, p.1). Other authors emphasize the feeling of security and stability under the Fordist social arrangement.

In his book “The Corrosion of Character,” Sennet notes that Fordist society was able to provide its members with a sense of a life narrative including meaningful life-long relationships (1998). However these need not be understood as a plea for Fordism, in which the conditions of the workplace were not desirable at all. Suffice it to say that in a Fordist society, individuals were invited to more stable subjectivities, formed their identities based on waged work, and were recognized through the same token.

The Fordist regime of accumulation and the above values are accepted to have collapsed in the mid 70s. Before but increasingly under neoliberalism, they came under attack in order to be replaced by new ones and a new array of subjectivities. But first it should be discussed whether or not neoliberalism amounts to a new mode of regulation of a new post-Fordist regime.

There are different positions among the regulationists on this subject, but Peck and Tickell argue that neoliberalism cannot be the mode of regulation of a post-Fordist regime. This is because neoliberalism does not lead to sustained growth and does not stabilize the system and, to the contrary, generates crisis. Broomhill also states that neoliberalism is only beneficial for

capital's short term interests, and is opposed to their long term ones (2001). According to both authors, neoliberalism is a transitory period, "the law of the jungle," before the establishment of a real "institutional fix" that is necessary for a new regime of accumulation: Neoliberalism is the result of an institutional vacuum (Peck and Tickell, 1994). In sum, these thinkers do argue that neoliberalism is not the mode of regulation of post-Fordism. So, is it possible to oppose this argument?

This study supposes that neoliberalism may perhaps be treated like a mode of regulation though not fulfilling the basic conditions set by the regulationist approach: According to Peck and Tickell, neoliberalism generates crises rather than fixing them and is not coupled with sustained growth as evidenced in the recessions of the 1990s. However, it has been almost forty years since the first experiment of neoliberal structuring in Chile. If to change maybe radically the regulationist framework, one can argue that today, there is a new regime of capital accumulation. This regime has a new "institutional fix" which succeeds at supporting its survival no matter how many crises the system generates. This regime's accumulation is, in the words of David Harvey, an "accumulation by dispossession," concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a few by dispossessing the public of their wealth or land. Accumulation through dispossession is developed by David Harvey from the Marxian concept to describe the primitive accumulation of capital (Glassman, 2006). This process of primitive accumulation materialized through enclosure, the expelling of the resident population from their lands, and the commodification of land and labor (1944, Polanyi). Today, according to Harvey, accumulation by dispossession operates through privatization, financialization, management and manipulation of crises, and state redistributions.

In short, capitalism, in its many guises, today has neoliberalism as its guardian angel.

David Neilson, taking a similar approach, describes the post-Fordist situation as “the neoliberal model of development” (2011, p.168). He argues that the regulatory power has been transferred from the state to the hands of finance capital, turning the former into “committees for managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie” (Cerny, 2003, cited in Neilson 2011). This is important for the argument for the existence of a new model of development, which Neilson calls neoliberalism, but here will be called as post-Fordism, because it shows that, the regulatory power being transferred to the capital, the mode of regulation, hence the model of development, has changed.

The author states that the neoliberal model is unstable and crisis-ridden, in contradiction with the Fordist one. If in this line, it is accepted that we are now living in a post-Fordist model of development, with neoliberalism as its mode of regulation, what is the relevance of this argument in terms of studying the phenomenon of self-display in 2000s Turkey? What happens if there is a change in the mode of regulation?

If there has been a change from one mode of regulation to another one, as from the Fordist to the post-Fordist mode of regulation, this transition would be particularly relevant for the purposes of this study as it would mean a socio-cultural change with its concomitant forms of subjectivity. In fact, the emergence of new forms of subjectivity is both the vehicle and the result of the transition from one mode of regulation to another (Nilges, 2008, p. 28). These new forms of subjectivity fit into, take their shape from, and sustain the social system of which they are a part. This study argues that the phenomenon of self-display is an integral part of the emerging neoliberal subjectivity, taking shape in, and supporting this new phase of capitalism. Now, it would be proper to present the conditions in which post-Fordist subjectivity took shape and this would begin, as was with the Fordist one, with its macroeconomic conditions.

Contrary to the Fordist one, the post-Fordist regime of accumulation is designed to respond to short cycles of production. Short cycles of production have a consumer-led logic where the production is geared towards consumer choices in the short-term and volatile market. Short cycles also are an answer to resource shortages and price fluctuations made possible by the increased globalization of markets, and the internet starting in the 1990s, giving faster information on transactions.

The labor organization in post-Fordism is decentralized, marked by sub-contracting and the development of multi-skilled and semi-flexible workforces, based on the principle of lean production. Flexibility at a number of different levels is a key in that respect.

Post-Fordism renders obsolete the previous forms of worker's struggle, as the unions were liquidated following the neoliberal argument for free labor market (Harvey, 2006). There is no job or retirement security under the post-Fordist regime of accumulation, there is no compromise between the labor and the capital vehiculated by the state. With the neoliberal policies, first the unions have been attacked and a mentality is taking hold that the idea of struggle is obsolete. Before, there was a latent antagonism between capital and labor, which meant that there existed an arena for struggle. Today, the worker is integrated into the capitalist system through subtle mechanisms of subjectification. What is expected from an employee under flexible production is the alignment of personal benefit with that of the business (2007, Coz and Gari). This new ethic now prevails in and outside the workplace and forms the founding stone of neoliberal subjectivity. Every individual is an entrepreneur responsible for his/her own salvation.

The erosion of the unions and of the welfare state, the establishment of new production techniques such as flexible and batch production resulting in job and retirement insecurity mark

the new neoliberal subjectivity. A new neoliberal credo has risen to fill the vacuum left by the erosion of these institutions which once secured society's integrity, putting the burden on the shoulders of the individuals (Coz and Gari, 2007; Hearn, 2008): If there is flexible production, the individual has to embrace the principle of no commitment, both in private and professional life, and of smooth adaptation to change. If no stable job provides a sense of identity, belonging, and recognition to the individual, he/she must have recourse to new technologies to remold his/her sense of self and to consumption. If no welfare state establishes a security net for the society, the individual needs to learn to be autonomous. But embracing these sets of behaviors is not sufficient: one has also learn to love them. The neoliberal subjectivity is an entrepreneurial one. It holds the individual responsible for his/her own faith and seeks to "bring all human action under the domain of the market" (Harvey, 1997, p. 3).

Nikolas Rose explains the formation of new subjectivities from the perspective of neoliberal⁶ governmentality. According to him, there has been a passage from the welfare state's understanding of citizens constructed as subjects with needs to be fulfilled by the state to one of citizenship as clients pursuing their rights to happiness and personal fulfilment, as consumers of health services, of training, and of transport (1996). Although Rose argues that this new formulation of the subject understands the citizen as active agents in their lifechoices (1996), it is nevertheless possible to remark that structural inequalities mark this process of client-provider relationship, opening spaces of action to some clients where depriving others (Rose, 1996). However, his arguments about the different constructions of citizenship before and after the

⁶ He rather uses the term "advanced liberalism" to describe the present situation but also refers to neoliberalism to refer to the present stage.

establishment of neoliberalism is important in terms of self-display, as the construction of citizenship is intimately linked to that of subjectivity.

To repeat, but not unnecessarily, neoliberalism calls individuals to subject positions where they are required to be autonomous, averse to commitment, easily adapting to rapidly changing work and life conditions, and expressing themselves through consumption and via new technologies where the self is remolded according to these new formats. Self-display is a basic component of this neoliberal subjectivity.

The Commodification of the Human

A number of phenomena rose with the advent of neoliberalism together with self-display. The entrepreneurial self, the commodification of the human and his/her attributes, self-commodification, self-branding, and coaching are all relatives of self-display and they have been studied throughout the literature. There is a causal relationship between them. The first to be explored among these is coaching, as it brings to light a wider picture showing how the individual is left to his/her own means in dealing with today's macro scale economic, social and psychological problems. The second one is self-commodification, another means of dealing with these problems, which narrow down the subject to self-display. The third one treats self-commodification in its second sense: self-branding, and relating to oneself as a product to be improved in order to achieve a certain exchange value on the job market. This last two bring us directly to self-display. All three will be explored in the following.

Coaching

Coz and Gari explore how coaching has become an important industry in the health and business sectors after migrating from sports, addressing problems which in fact are systemic, at the individual level, as is the case with personal branding. Whereas personal branding claims to offer a strategy for dealing with job insecurity, coaching claims to respond to the psychological suffering brought about by the advent of neoliberalism. What kind of problems does coaching respond to?

Coz and Gari define these problems as the feeling of insecurity in a gigantic market, followed by fears of insufficiency and the imperative to be free (2007). One can add to this the imperative to be autonomous and the imperative to be competitive. The coaching sector, wholeheartedly embracing the neoliberal conditions, aims to change the individual, without questioning the conditions themselves. The International Institute of Coaching defines coaching as the following:

Coaching is a simple yet effective form of personal development where the Client and Coach create an alliance that promotes and sustains the Client's personal growth and competence. This powerful relationship enables the Client to give up who they are for who they want to become.⁷

The coaching business treats the individual body as the source, the means, and the site of the resolution of problems it addresses. It builds on the premise of the human capacity for adaptation, but this potential for adaptation has supposedly no limits. One only needs to turn inwards and employ his/her “biopsychique resources ready for exploitation” (Coz and Gari, 2007). For instance, financial coaching websites declare that wealth is not important for being

⁷ *A simple yet effective form of personal development.* Retrieved February 21, 2013, from http://internationalinstituteofcoaching.org/what_is_coaching.php

happy, but that what is important is gaining control of one's money. In this scenario, financial difficulties can only be the result of bad budgetary control, which can be remedied through changing the behavior of the individual. Such factors as unemployment, the erosion of the welfare state's security nets, low wages etc. are all out of the equation. One only need turn inwards.

According to these websites, achieving budgetary control not only remedies one's financial situation and makes people happy, but it is also fun. This repackaging turns coaching from a disciplinary activity into fun: One must also love one's journey of becoming.

Coaching in the business sector on the other hand, directly serves the needs of the corporate world as a critical tool for increasing efficiency. Coz and Gari define coaching in business sector as an activity which "allows a person, a group to develop their own performances in order to better satisfy the demands of the company" (2007, p. 75-76). In this example, draining more resources from the individual through managing her psychology and behavior is directly in the interest of the company, rather than ostensibly alleviating the problems from which the individual suffers.

Coaching has become so widespread, especially in the United States, that one can find coaching service for almost any issue. Financial coaching, life coaching, dating coaching, business coaching, health coaching, career coaching, makeover coaching of different types are among the examples. Self-coaching is also very popular, coaching videos of various types being widely available on sites like Youtube. Coaching has become so much diffused into the culture that it has become an internal device on dictating the behavior of the individual, replacing the old dictates high from above. Self-improvement has been democratized.

Self-Commodification

Self-commodification is a concept used to understand a number of phenomena in different fields and is becoming more and more widespread today as an explanatory framework. Online dating sites have been conceptualized as marketplaces by various scholars (Hirschman, 1987; Ellison, Gibbs andn Heino, 2010; Coupland, 1996). Similarly, the path-breaking book of Hochschild, *The Managed Heart* showed us how human feelings are commercialized by capitalism's different sectors (2003). With the latest developments in medicine, the commodification of human body parts and of reproductive cells have become one of today's most contested issues. All of these phenomena show that the commodification of human and of attributes proper to human are spreading to new areas with the advent of time, as is the case with commodification in general.⁸ This study employs the conceptualization of Joseph E. Davis for self-commodification.

Self-commodification is defined in two different senses by Joseph E. Davis in an article "The Commodification of Self" (2003). The first is the building of one's identity through appropriating the properties of the commodities. Hence, we build ourselves by choosing among the different alternatives of image, fashion, and lifestyles available on the market and understand ourselves and each other through their mediation. Davis continues that in its second sense, self-commodification means "personal branding." In this respect, an employee is advised to brand him/herself in order to have (better) job opportunities. At this point, before continuing with self-commodification, it would be appropriate to discuss self branding at greater lenght.

⁸ There are a number of articles in the literature containing the phrase "the commodification of everything."

Personal Branding

There is a vast literature on personal branding and this, from two different directions. The first one is about self-help for career development, and the second one is a literature developed as a critique of this first and the phenomenon it describes and promotes. The self-help literature is a bulky one, with different branches and internal debates, whereas also, there are a number of authors who engage critically with the concept. What is personal branding?

The father of personal branding is Tom Peters. He delineates the basic principles of crafting a successful personal brand in his article “The Brand Called You” (2005; Shepherd; 2011, Labrecque, Markos and Milne). Alison Hearn, in a critical assessment, states that the literature of personal branding started in the 1990s, with gurus like Stedman Graham, Tom Peters, and Peter Montoya, who apparently offered “ways to compete and gain power in the volatile work world of flexible capital” (Hearn, 2008, p. 205). According to the self-help literature on personal branding, professional success is dependent upon a successful “packaging of the self and the unrelenting pursuit of attention” (p. 205). “We are [all] CEOs of our own companies: Me Inc” (Peters, 1997).

In this discourse, self-branding is presented as a new life strategy, inducing people to change for the better and to abandon old-fashioned life strategies. It sounds empowering and fresh. The discourse, in fact, repackages the new working conditions marked by insecurity as the dawning of a new era of self-branding. For example, Peters heralds the erosion of job security as a change in the concept of loyalty:

Start right now: as of this moment you're going to think of yourself differently! You're not an "employee" of General Motors, you're not a "staffer" at General Mills, you're not

a "worker" at General Electric or a "human resource" at General Dynamics (oops, it's gone!). Forget the Generals! You don't "belong to" any company for life, and your chief affiliation isn't to any particular "function." You're not defined by your job title and you're not confined by your job description (Peters, 1997: 83).

According to Peters, the only loyalty one should have is that to "Me Inc." This may sound selfish, so it is; but the logic is "what is good for me is good for my company" (1997).

Another example is about the career path of today's employees for whom the previous prospect of climbing up the ladders is presented now as outdated. According to Peters, the career path today is a checkerboard on which the player should move in each direction, even backwards if necessary. What in fact is disguised under this discourse is the lack of lifelong job security with an expected career path.

What self-branding promises is social and economic success. This is possible by turning oneself into a marketable commodity, into an object of desire (Davis, 2003). Self branding is presented as a personal cure in a world where, "job security is ... predicated on [personal] 'employability'" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2006).

More about Self-Commodification

It was said above that self-commodification was defined by Davis in two senses, the first as forming one's identity by choosing among the commodities' properties available in the market, and the second one as personal branding as explained above. In the case at the hand however, these two meanings are intertwined, at least in the spaces opened up by social media and reality shows if not in the job market. The process may be explained as follows:

One first needs to cultivate and build an image from among the choices available in the market. Then are put these images on display in social media or on a reality show to be ascribed a certain quantifiable value. This process of identity building through commodities and personal branding do not follow each other in an orderly fashion, but are rather simultaneous: the very building of the identities/images is bound up with the strategies of personal branding. Based on the social market's response to that image, improvements and changes are made. Hence, people are turned into façades of themselves, as presented by their photographs and commentaries on social media sites, or their appearance in reality shows or their presentation on a blank sheet of a resume.

Personal branding, the entrepreneurial self, coaching, and self-commodification are all individualistic strategies for adapting to sweeping economic and social changes. The form of subjectivity they call forth has the twin aims of containing the stress brought about by these changes and of extracting more profit from the individual body. It is in this characteristic that these strategies are strictly neoliberal and self-display is linked organically to them. Obviously, self-display is the medium through which personal branding , and the entrepreneurial self are actualized. Self-commodification results in self-display as would be the case with a regular commodity displayed for sale. Coaching builds on the premise of endless adaptation, a topic on which self-displayers are proficient as they demonstrate in their dizzying adoption of ever-newer technologies. It is in this environment, brought about after the 1980s, that self-display found itself a perfect nesting place. But there is another ingredient to this nutritious environment:

The New Culture Industry

The culture industry today, said above, is incapable of creating new content. Culture started to be recycled starting in the 1980s and having even consumed this, has to be supplemented now with user-origin content. New technologies, most notably in social media, in their design and format require the user to supply and update content. In fact it is in the nature of the technology itself to create the producer/consumers, or the prosumers (Schwarz, 2010) of today.

One might not see a problem with all these developments. What if the users produce their own content? Is this not more democratic? Doesn't for instance, YouTube offer every person his/her own moment of fame, turning everybody equal in front of this latter? Does not user-origin content increase collective creativity?

The questions may continue. But the answer is not that straightforward. In fact, the rise of the user-origin content in culture is not that innocent. Why?

First of all, the nature of this content is problematic, for the reasons discussed below in the following. Secondly, capitalism makes profit out of this user-origin content, draining this source without even taking the pains of engaging in production. These two answers point to the fact that capitalism has invaded newer areas of human existence, capitalizing on resources unthought of before. How so?

In 1944 Adorno and Horkheimer publish their book *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in which they first used the term "the culture industry," defined as producing standardized cultural goods to manipulate the masses (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2011). They valorized traditional modernist high art, opposing the mass culture, infiltrated, as they demonstrate, by the commodity structure. Post-modernism, on the other hand, is characterized by the elimination of this old frontier

between the high culture and the mass-commercial culture, which was sustained by high modernism before (Jameson, 1991). Accordingly, postmodern culture employs the forms, categories and contents of the culture industry (1991). What is new today? Today a further step has been taken since the elimination of the separation line between the high and the mass-commercial culture. This is the transformation of the very stuff of individual lives into the material of the entertainment industry. This fact forms the framework of the blurring of the line between the public and private, which we can also formulate as the display of the private realm on the public arena. This is the world of user-origin content, of producer-consumers, or in short, of prosumers (Schwarz, 2010). In fact, when what is consumed is produced by the very consumers themselves, the capital is set free from the very process of production. This is probably a huge step in its very history.

What is the relationship of these developments to self-display? Self-display, is the mode of functioning of this new type of entertainment. Individuals are being invited by new media and structures, such as reality shows or social media, to display themselves in the public arena, and this forms the material of this new form entertainment. Surely one of the most impressive and successful formats for display of the self is the social networking site: Facebook.

User-generated content is the staple of Facebook. What is remarkable, however, is the nature of this content: the very lives of the users are consumed by the community of Facebook. Each user has an account with a number of friends, on which they post their pictures during their recreational activities, status messages revealing what they feel or do at the moment, or their location. The users exchange comments on these content, like the posts, tag themselves and friends on pictures and so on. In fact, there are countless features of Facebook which must remain outside discussion here, promoting the consumption of the very substance of the users'

existence. The profiles are regularly updated, users routinely posting new content. The site can be seen as a catalogue⁹ of millions of users, a catalogue updated at an incredible speed. The structure of Facebook is designed to turn people, their attributes and abilities, their experiences (especially the recreational ones) into commodities, like a factory processing the very human stuff in order to get smaller marketable packages. However, these little packages are not the only commodities in question; there are also those on which the advertisements appears in social networking sites such as Facebook.

Jonathan Beller argues in his book, *The Cinematic Mode of Production* that today there is an “attention economy” within the entertainment sector, functioning via the advertisement industry (2006). For example, in Facebook, as users screen the streams of new data, they are exposed to diverse advertisements and the site capitalizes on their attention in this way. What is magical about this equation is that the entertainment industry doesn’t even need to produce culture: fun is already made by the consumers themselves, and the relations of production totally and magically disappear. This is true for both social media and reality shows. Facebook is an extreme case in optimizing the advertisement potential of its product. The advertisements make use of the data revealed by the user during his/her activities and play on their consumer preferences to entice the consumption of the products they promote. For those who want to publish an advertisement in the site, numerous devices for targeting, including choosing an age range, marital status, or educational state are available.

If Facebook is the ultimate example for social media, the program “Big Brother is Watching You,” which has been aired in different versions throughout the world, is the ultimate example of the reality show world. In fact, this show, which placed a group of people in a house

⁹ The idea of catalogue has been adopted from Schwarz (Schwarz, 2010, p.163).

under camera surveillance with their written permission, was a pioneer in the culture industry's use of human subjectivity as its new cherished material.

So far the reasons behind the rise of a new discourse of individuality, the discourses promoting the new forms of relating to oneself as a commodity through self-branding and the new developments in the cultural sphere integrating the societal level into the mechanisms of capitalism's profit making have been discussed. The purpose of this thesis is also to delineate the mechanisms through which these phenomena are actualized. It is true that new discourses circulate, and interpellate people unto the new subject positions discussed above, and this for the interest of capital, but how these discourses are turned into a reality lived by everyday people requires explanation. It may be true that new technologies such as social networking websites are now available for people to share their private lives but this doesn't explain by itself the wholehearted embrace these new technologies have received. What are the reasons behind the adoption of these new subjectivities promoted by the neoliberal discourses?

Eva Bendix Petersen and Gabrielle O'Flynn, in their article *Neoliberal Technologies of Subject Formation: A Case Study of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme* analyze the way the neoliberal discourse "enters into the production of subjectivity" through coming "to operate at the level of desire" (2007, p. 197). The Scheme functions as the following: Young people between the ages of 14-25 participate, for undertaking "extra-curricular activities (within four categories: service, expeditions, skills, and physical recreation) at three levels, and progress from Bronze to Silver to Gold awards" (p. 202). The website of the Scheme underlines that the Scheme is all about challenging oneself and not about out-competing others but its competition logic is revealed on the "Why do it?" link of the website, listing the reasons to join the Scheme including the item "It looks great on your CV" (p. 206). The same list tells us that joining the

Scheme “is great fun!” (p. 206). Relating the student narratives of a group of young woman who participated in the scheme, the authors argue that the Award scheme “invites participants to desire and assess worthwhileness along entrepreneurial lines” based on the ideal of endless self-improvement (p. 209). One “ought to be driven, busy and committed” (p. 209) in order to fulfill this ideal. However, because the ideal has no endpoint, neoliberalism “produces a constantly ‘failing subject’” (p. 209).

Self-display is a technology of subject formation, like the Duke of Edinburg’s Award scheme. Like it, self-display enters into the production of subjectivities” at the level of desire. The purpose of this thesis is to discover the mechanisms through which such desire is produced at the individual level, enticing people to display themselves. The question is through what mechanisms and why people display themselves in today’s mediums, via which neoliberal discourses interpellate people to today’s new subject positions.

Half of the answer to this question lies in the human desire for social recognition. It addresses the “why” part of the question. Social recognition is a basic human need, by which is meant that the public acknowledgement of a person’s identity and status is a basic human need. Heidegren defines it as “a basic medium of social integration... also crucial to the process of socialization and identity formation” (2004, p. 365). According to Heidegren, an individual is dependent upon the recognition of the other in order to develop his/her identity (2004). As argued in this study, being recognized by one’s family and close friends is key for the development and sustenance of a healthy personality and life, but is not sufficient and should be supplemented by social recognition of a larger segment of the society. How to get this recognition?

The neoliberal invitation to new subject positions, including the ideals of individualism, consumerism and remolding of the self via new technologies was discussed above. Social recognition, too, is part of human subjectivity, and it has received its part from the transformation from Fordism to post-Fordism. Whereas older forms of recognition continue to operate, the new mediums discussed in this study offer new arenas for getting social recognition. And this is where the desire enters into the equation. What is the difference between Fordism and post-Fordism in the subject of recognition?

Andrea Muehlebach, in her article “On Affective Labor in Post-Fordist Italy,” argues that Fordism gave its citizens a form of social belonging and recognition based on salaried jobs, as the workers constructed a stable identity and self through waged work. To take her argument further, it can be said that under Fordism, everybody was equal in front of salaried work, meaning that everybody was entitled to equal social recognition and belonging provided that he/she had a job.¹⁰ What happens under post-Fordism?

It is argued in this study that under post-Fordism, the primary means of acquiring a sense of social recognition and belonging passes through the market or through mechanisms operating in the market logic. To return to the metaphor used at the beginning, the market assigns everybody his/her place under the light beam: the closer one is to the center, the more one is recognized. Unlike Fordism, the market bestows social recognition and belonging in an unequal fashion, and people must compete for scarce resources that the market distributes. This is an economy of attention in which every individual strives to get as much attention as possible in order to get the maximum amount of possible recognition, to get closer to the center of the beam

¹⁰ This does not mean that the Fordist society did not have its own hierarchies, the argument here is on the subject of social recognition and belonging.

of light. Today's new mediums open up the new fields in which this economy of attention is played out.

However exposure is not always voluntary. Although this thesis studies the voluntary exposure of people displaying themselves, one should also note that there is a minimum threshold of exposure below which it is unadvisable to exist. Having a Facebook account, for instance, may become obligatory for a student whose university teachers give their assignments on this site and once one is within the system, he/she is within the system. This aspect of this new exposure culture is maybe even more insidious. The economy of attention is like a centripetal force pulling in ever new people and domains under its dominion.

These new mediums such as social media, the job market or current reality shows open up the spaces for the encouragement, the actualization and the proliferation of the new neoliberal fields where the quest for attention is played out, and they themselves proliferate at a remarkable pace, invading and even marginalizing the previous¹¹ modes of social existence. The principal mechanism that makes these new spaces operate is the mechanism of self-display.

The Israeli photo-sharing site Shox, analyzed by Ori Schwarz, is a good example. On Shox, users publish their self-portraits on their profile page and strive to achieve "celebrityness," which has three criteria: The number of friends on one's friend list, the number of comments one has received, and page traffic (2010). Shox has opened up a new field where the quest for social recognition and social differentiation are carried out.

The principle mechanism through which this process operates is the mechanism of self-display. Through displaying their online self-portraits, individuals put into circulation their

¹¹ Previous forms of social recognition continue to coexist with the new ones but their spaces get invaded by the new ones.

pictures, which in the field opened up by the site acquire a certain quantifiable value following the logic of the market. Each Shox user strives to achieve as much attention as possible in order to achieve “celebrityness” to reinforce their respective places within this new neoliberal field. People with minimum exposure on the site like those who do not have pictures are accused of ugliness, the primary sin in the realm of Shox users. Self-display becomes a moral question.

Turkey in Neoliberal Transition

After having discussed the overall state of affairs in general, we also must look at the picture of Turkey in the time of neoliberal transition, where the culture of self-display has its roots back to 1980s when the transition began. This section discusses four books written by Turkish authors that will provide a thorough picture of the cultural changes that have brought us to the present.

Turkey began its neoliberal transition after the 1980 coup, with the government of Turgut Özal. It is of this transition that Nurdan Gürbilek, in her book, *Vitrinde Yaşamak: 1980'lerin Kültürel İklimi*, (*The New Cultural Climate in Turkey: Living in a Shop Window*) delineates the cultural component. According to Gürbilek, this period witnessed the rise of two contradictory developments: oppression in the political realm and in media, and an explosion in the visibility of the private life. After a period of scarcity, which characterized the previous decades, the shop windows were now filled with commodities, and not only commodities but also person's private lives, where sexuality became open to speech, as part of a new culture of display that offered a new promise of freedom.

Gürbilek relates that the city became an area of spectacle, and that now existing, both for commodities and individuals, was possible to the extent that they were visible and shown. She

shows that there were two options facing the individual, either to increase his value in the showcase or to remain a spectator. Galleria, the first shopping center opened in Turkey, was a place where individuals were turned into tourists in their own country, visiting the commodities on display.

The story that Gürbilek tell us points to the fact that the history of display and even self-display in Turkey, with its roots back in 1980s, is also the history of neoliberalism. This culture continues today both in its changed and unchanged forms. There are still people from the lower echelons of the society who come to visit shopping centers to contemplate the goods that they will never be able to buy, and also many others enjoying shopping, an activity integrated to their daily lives. Our lives are still possessed by images, but there are also important differences between the 1980s and today. To delve into that, one has to look further to Gürbilek's arguments.

Dissident movements in the Western world, such as the punks and the skinheads, who in a world governed by images, engaged in a "semiotic guerilla fight" (Eco, cited in Gürbilek, 1992, p. 34) by stealing the dominant culture's images in order to construct a new language that challenged the dominant one. However, the language that these subcultures constructed were stolen back to become symbols of capitalism, stripped of their original meanings. Language itself became an image, and in Turkey, the suffering ones also were living their pain in the show case.

Gürbilek's story is not about individuals; it is about the groups composing society. It is about a society where history, class, politics, places, culture and segments of society are turned into images, severed from their content, forming a semiotic system where every image refers to nothing but each other. Today, images are no longer simply images. They have become palpable. They have lives of their own. They are not simply objects of look. They circulate as commodities; they are assigned a value by the mechanisms of evaluation of RTV, social media,

and the job market. They have become commodities and individualized. Now, the lower classes do not showcase their suffering. They have hope of embracing the neoliberal promise. Images have become democratized.

Can Kozanoğlu, in his book *Cilalı İmaj Devri: 1980'lerden 1990'lara Türkiye Starları*, (*The Age of Shiny Images: From the 1980s to 1990s, Turkey and its Stars*) (1992) discusses the history of images in Turkey from another perspective. It should be noted that the word “image” has a different connotations in Turkey that may be different from the meaning that Gürbilek employs, which is similar to its English usage. When we say that a person has a particular *imaj*, it implies that the person has adopted a specific persona and has put in into circulation to project a specific idea about him or herself in the public opinion. So I will also use the Turkish word “*imaj*,” when it seems necessary to distinguish the two. According to Kozanoğlu, the rise of *imaj* in Turkey is related to the advent of the new discourses and changing attitudes that came with the neoliberal transition. He relates that a new ideology of individualism, in its positive sense, put as the opposite of herd psychology, supposedly which had been adopted in the previous decades, was risen, but that in fact, this new individual was nowhere to be found. The Republican ideology now discredited, new elite groups from the business realm were taking the place of the old ones. The most common words of the age was “computer” and “English,” of which possessing knowledge became leading status symbols. Kozanoğlu writes that the ultimate marker of status became purchasing power. Apart from this, even one’s culinary habits our sexual experiences could become one of these markers, in a world where belonging to country or to urban life (this latter meaning civilization) was identified by the capacity to consume. Consumption is everything.

Kozanoğlu delineates how the new ideal of hitting the jackpot became part of the culture, and how the media functioned to hide information rather than to give it. It was in this atmosphere that the *imaj* tradition invaded the country, to fill the void left by the retreat of political movements, oppressed under the heavy hand in the aftermath of the 1980 coup (1992). Gürbilek also relates that this void was filled by an explosion of discussions about private life. Here, with Kozanoğlu, we see that the same void was also filled with the images of public figures, be they politicians, artists, or journalists. For instance, he tells us the story of Mesut Yılmaz, three times prime minister of Turkey in the 1990s, who was nothing but a carefully crafted image of the modern politician. Yılmaz had been chosen by the business circles as a mold which they could give shape according to their interests. The media propagated the *imaj* of the prime minister, attributing new meanings to his every behavior comprising a wide range, including his culinary habits. Apart from the real Mesut Yılmaz as a family man, there was an image, carefully prepared by the business elites and pumped by the media.

Kozanoğlu says that it was the same with Turgut Özal, who was the first president to present himself wearing shorts, taking on an image in opposition to the one of Republican bureaucratic elite now discredited. Hence, the images of the public figures were manipulated for different purposes.

Today, the age of *imaj* has not lost anything from its performance. On the contrary, it has become an activity run by specialized public relations companies. For instance, the *imaj* of Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan has been constructed as follows: His birthplace, Kasımpaşa, is stressed, a place known for the vigilance of its young men to protect the weak. The party also has projected itself as a brand new political entity, coming in fact from a long tradition of political Islam. *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party) was positioned as against the

economic crisis, political corruption and anti-democratic practices, manifesting itself in the being (read imaj) of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

But today, it is not only the public figures that project images of themselves. In our time, almost all the individuals have the capacity to manipulate how there are seen by others and similarly to see these latter's images. However, the images of public figures do not circulate in the social markets opened by the new media, or, they circulate in a different market, composed of public figures, this time for acquiring more votes or more popularity. While in the case of ordinary people, individuals, after creating a certain representation through self-display, cannot change back their image and what is displayed becomes part of themselves once and for all, public figures, be they politicians or artists, can manipulate their imaj without bothering about what happened in the past. This is how Tayyip Erdoğan cast off his previous association with political Islam and adopted himself a new political image. If we, the ordinary people, are governed by our own images, they, the public figures, are free to govern theirs thanks to publicity and press coverage. Once again, money considerably enhances one's capacity to manipulate one's image

The book of Tayfun Atay, *Yaşasın Meşrutiyet Çağı: Popüler Kültürden Kitle Kültürüne Türkiye İzlenimleri (Long Live the Age of Fame: Impressions from Turkey from Popular Culture to Mass Culture)* transports us to 1990s, when visibility came to be acquired through television. After the ages of showcase and imaj, it was now the age of fame. Atay relates that differences such as age, gender, social status or socioeconomic position became insignificant in front of the desire for fame. He argues that universities lost their previous appeal in a country where unemployed university graduates has become commonplace. According to Atay, young people were also criticizing their parents for expecting salvation from the state. Working was good for

nothing. Their expectations were geared towards television channels, which offers them fame, hence visibility, money and social status.

Atay describes the 1990s as the age of entertainment. He relates that our relationship with entertainment became confined to watching, whereas previously entertainment was a social act produced (not solely consumed) by the society. In today's world however, the role of the majority is to watch what is produced by a small minority. The relationship with entertainment became a relationship of watching, and entertainment became a technology of government, as a passivating industry severing the bonds of entertainment from life. Whereas a part of population continued to get disciplined by pain, torture, hunger or through prisons, another important portion was getting disciplined through exposure to entertainment.

Atay's book also shows us the intrusion of the reality show genre to Turkey, through shows like the “Popstar” that became phenomena in the country. It is possible to observe how reality shows in 1990s were big events offering their participants easy fame and how today, at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, they became a routine part of our lives. The desire for visibility continues, but in its new guises.

Cenk Özbay, Ayşecan Terzioğlu, and Yeşim Yasin, on the other hand, discuss the transformation of privacy under neoliberalism in Turkey. This transformation marks the move of the previously thought private sphere, considered as personal, into the public one. They argue that this sphere has undergone two simultaneous transformations: the increasing and unstoppable influence of the institutions such as state, economy, popular culture and medicine on the private sphere, and the transformation that privacy underwent, becoming a subject of inquiry, of investigation, of display, of sharing, and of representation. This means, according to Özbay,

Terzioğlu, and Yasin that the way we construct privacy and define it has changed while also the lines between privacy and public undergoes a transformation (2011).

Self-display is a key to this transformation in the construction of the new private sphere and of the demarcation line between the private and the public. The remaining of this thesis would be devoted to the explanation of this latter.

Conclusion

The driving force behind the phenomenon of self-display is the quest for social recognition in today's neoliberal conditions. But there is no respite in this quest. Postmodern literature first talked about the fluidity of the self, and today nothing is enough. One needs to be always on the move, constantly renewing and repackaging one's product (meaning oneself), or otherwise accept to remain at the outskirts of the field of attention. Or as Peterson and O'Flynn write, neoliberalism always produces failing subjects (2007). Neoliberal subjectivity builds on the discourse of endless self-improvement: "enough will never be enough; ... good will never be good enough" (p. 205). The satisfaction of self-improvement under neoliberalism is momentary, and disappears as if it has never existed. The same is true for the attention and recognition acquired through self-display. It cannot be grasped. It is fleeting and this is what makes it necessary to frenetically update one's product, which is at the same time required by the very structure of new technologies, in the quest to grasp the ungraspable.

At this point, it would be appropriate to sum up the conceptual framework used by this study: Neoliberalism calls individuals to new subject positions through different mechanisms among which are those operating through self-display such as social media, reality shows and the

current job market. These mechanisms open up new spaces or fields in which individuals, through self-display, commodify themselves and put themselves into circulation in order to acquire a certain quantifiable value of attention within the market-like functioning of these fields. The primary drive for people to put themselves in circulation as commodities is the quest for recognition and social differentiation, the two aspirations ever to be suitably satisfied.

“*Bugün Ne Giysem?*”, a reality show program where the contestants present their outfits in order to be chosen the most fashionable woman of Turkey, has been chosen as a case study for the subject of this thesis. Other options might have been an analysis of a social networking site, or of a segment of the current job market. The reality show as a genre has been chosen because it is more opaque in terms of its mechanisms of functioning and begs for in-depth analysis, which can bear further material on the formation of neoliberal subjectivity. Social networking sites or the functioning of the job market on the other hand, are more transparent in that respect.

Furthermore, few studies have been conducted on reality TV in Turkey. A comparison between Turkish studies and American ones shows not only the scarcity of the studies conducted in Turkey, but also points to a striking cultural difference between the two countries. Whereas makeover shows in the United States pretend to transport their participants to dramatically changed new lives through the magical touch of the show, the shows’ crews in Turkey leave the participants to their own means, leaving them responsible for their own fates. The reasons for this difference will be discussed below.

“*Bugün Ne Giysem?*” has become a phenomenon in Turkey, turning its jury members into celebrities and inspiring similar programs. In these terms, it is representative of the Turkish cultural milieu at the time of this writing. Before discussing this program in detail, reality TV as a genre will be analyzed.

CHAPTER III

REALITY TV AS A GENRE

In the future everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes
Andy Warhol¹²

We live in a world of self-display, whether this voluntary or not. This thesis is concerned with the voluntary part of this culture. This culture of self-display has found its place in today's new neoliberal environment in new platforms, channels, technologies such as Internet formats like blogs, e-mail, and the vast world of user-generated content, and finally, on television, in the phenomenon of RTV.

As explored in the previous chapter, reality shows form a new field through which neoliberalism calls individuals to new subjectivities of which self-display forms a substantive part. This new field functions on the logic of the economy of attention, where actors strive to maximize their visibility in search of social recognition, the positive motivation for projecting oneself, and the negative motivation for not being out of the system. These two are posed as basic human needs. But before proceeding with the analysis of Bugün Ne Giysem, we first need to explore Reality TV as a genre. This is because, I, on the basis of a survey of literature and of several reality shows in Turkey, suppose that in the twenty-first century, Reality programming is in itself, almost by definition, a tool spreading the neoliberal ideology, in its different versions and categories. In this logic, this chapter situates Bugün Ne Giysem within a larger context, and

¹² Andy Warhol, International Retrospective of Art, Stockholm: Moderna Museet (1968)

whereas the general picture will help to illuminate the example, the example would too, illuminate the larger picture.

Literature on RTV in Turkey is not abundant. The shows that have received the much attention are the marriage shows. There is, however, a substantive international literature in which discussions are mostly centered around the problems of neoliberal citizenship formation through RTV, the encouragement of ethnic and racist stereotyping, the formation of celebrities, audience responses to cosmetic¹³ surgery shows, and surveillance on Big Brother. Our subject falls within the category of neoliberal citizenship formation, as I am interested in neoliberal subjectivities.

Two comparables are used in this chapter to explain the RTV genre in general and the Turkish case in particular. The first is the American Reality Television. The U.S. is chosen because the literature is much more accessible and because RTV has an important place at this country as witnessed by the existence of special channels which only broadcast RTV. The second comparable element is the social media, for the double reasons of providing a glimpse of this genre and because it functions in the same logic as the RTV in terms of self-display.

RTV is not a new genre. It can be traced its back as far as the 1940s; although it experienced its golden age in the first decade of the 2000s when it took its current shape, and became a phenomenon affecting larger parts of the society. This study examines the literature directly relevant in terms of self-display, beginning with the definition of the genre.

¹³ Like eating disorders.

The Definition

As Wilson, Robinson, and Callister state, the number of content analyses made on reality programming is limited and the definition of the genre differs among the scholars. (Wilson, Robinson, and Callister, 2012). A survey of the literature confirms this point. For instance, they adopt the definition of Nabi et al., as follows:

- a) people portraying themselves (not artists or public figures);
- b) filmed at least in part in their living or working environment rather than on set;
- c) without a script;
- d) with events placed in a narrative context;¹⁴
- e) for the primary purpose of viewer entertainment (p. 263).

Joel Windle, on the other hand, while making her definition of RTV, stresses the structured and unscripted nature of it, and its function as a tool of public pedagogy (2010). These concepts will be explored in detail below. Rachel E. Dubrofsky's definition, while also stating the structured and unscripted nature of Reality TV, is based on the concept of "constructed fiction" (2006).

This concept will also be dealt in the following, in order to form my own definition of the genre.

The structured and unscripted nature of reality shows are the two sides of the same coin. It means that Reality TV does not have a scripted scenario like fictional TV, but that this does not mean that the participants are free to produce their own content. One can say that the content of a show is delimited by, and takes shape according to the structure of the show. For example, the case study of Dubrofsky centers on the American series, "The Bachelor," which is formed around the scenario of a men choosing a wife from among 30 women. The bachelor dates the women in groups or in private, and eliminates them one by one by a ritual called "The Rose

¹⁴ This narrative concept applies to the shows like "Survivor" "The Bachelor," where the filming is selectively montaged to form a story or where the structure of the show is based on a narrative form like plastic surgery shows, which tell us a story of transformation. The narrative context is not applicable for Bugün Ne Giysem.

Ceremony,” in which he gives a rose to the ones he wants to eliminate. This structure bounds the contents of the show, but does not directly determine it as would be in the case of a scripted scenario.

The structured but unscripted nature of RTV is accepted by Windle and Dubrofsky. Where they differ, however, is in their concepts of public pedagogy and “constructed fiction” that they adopt respectively. Windle defines RTV as a vehicle of public pedagogy. This is an approach that this study also adopts. Windle argues that the talent-quest reality formats spread the discourse of the neoliberal learner-worker in order to supply neoliberal employment demands and to legitimate them. The idols that these formats create what Windle describes as “ideological exemplars for the management of disappointment, the cultivation of hope and the maintenance of belief in meritocracy” (2010, p. 251). These idols provide narratives of success stressing luck, compliance, and effort; treating the viewer as accountable for their own circumstances and wider inequalities (2010).

It was said above that the neoliberal subjectivity takes people responsible for their own faith, under the post-Fordist conditions of the erosion of the welfare state and of the job and retirement security. It was also argued that a new form of subjectivity was necessary for the transition from the Fordist to the post-Fordist regime of accumulation. Windle’s argument that RTV is a vehicle of public pedagogy shows again that reality programming is a channel which enables neoliberal subjectivity to function at the individual level, through teaching the neoliberal ways of existence and creating the desire to adopt them.

This point will be further explored in the following chapter on “Bugün Ne Giysem” but in a few words, it should be stated that BNG as a talent-quest format show is a vehicle of public pedagogy, such as Windle argues. In fact, one of the jury members, Hakan Akkaya, says that

they “are going to have an informative aspect,” which consists of teaching the Turkish public (their own claim) how to dress. How to dress is, however, not as simple as it sounds. The motto of the show, “You can be chic even with a small amount of money,” means “You must be chic even on a small amount of money.” The contestants are left to their own means and held responsible for the larger inequalities as it is their problem to be chic whatever their circumstances. At the same time, they are invited to neoliberal normativity, of which they desire to be a part, and are taught the ways to be so. This point will be explored further in the following chapter.

Having discussed Windle’s concept of public pedagogy, we can proceed to Dubrofsky’s concept of constructed fiction. This concept points to the construction of a fictional narrative through selective montage in reality programming. Dubrofsky argues that, the show crew, using probably only a small percentage of the footage, constructs a fictional narrative by processing the material provided by the participants. She relates how she understands the characters in reality show not as “real” people, but as discursive constructions (2006). This definition helps her to delineate which voices are heard and which are silenced in terms of the ethnicity of the RTV participation.

However, none of these definitions stresses what was discussed in the theory chapter: The fact that reality television transforms the very stuff of human subjectivity into the material of the entertainment industry. It is the people themselves who are consumed. Based on this principle, the definition of RTV in this study is: a public vehicle of pedagogy, functioning on the basis of the consumption of subjectivity of real people in a structured but unscripted format. Dubrofsky’s concept of constructed fiction is not adopted, based on a survey of several reality shows in

Turkey.¹⁵ If Dubrofsky's definition of RTV is accepted as describing the situation in the U.S., one can suppose that there is a cultural difference between U.S. shows and Turkish ones. First of all, it can be observed, that selective montage is probably not used to silence some voices and to make some others audible, as the participants come from the mainstream Turkish population and as a result are much more homogenous in socio-economic terms. Secondly, the literature on U.S. RTV shows that in the U. S., the metanarrative of the show is constructed by the show crew, leaving little room for the participants to affect it. In Turkey, on the other hand, the participants are much freer to affect what is going on in the show, although not totally. These facts have some implications in terms of self-display.

Both in the U.S. and in Turkey, the participants engage in self-display but there is a difference between the two countries. In the U.S, the raw material that the RTV participants provide is much more processed, leaving little room for the participant to form his/her own representation. RTV, through selective montage, constructs a meta-narrative from the material provided by the participant, and limits the participant's own representation of him/herself. As a result, when a participant enters in circulation in the economy of attention, his or her entry point is much more affected by the show crew, who step into the construction of his/her image. In Turkey, however, the participants are much more free to form their own representation through self-display.

This is because the Turkish people create their own material without leaving recourse to another narrative superimposed on what actually happened. This doesn't mean that there is no question of selective montage in Turkish RTV, but that the participants' voices are much more

¹⁵ Including *Yemekteyiz* (At Dinner), *Müge Anlı ile Tatlı Sert* (Sour but Bitter with Müge Anlı), *Bugün Ne Giysem?* (What Shoul I Wear Today?), *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* (Marry Me on Esra Erol), *İzdivaç* (Marriage), *Bana Ne Giysem Yakışır* (I Look Great in Whatever I Wear), *Survivor* and *Yetenek Sizsiniz* (You are the Talent).

audible and that the narratives that they construct are deemed more attractive to the viewer. The participants use their capacity of getting attention through dramatic acts and display themselves taking the viewer's perception into consideration. For example, one participant broke a glass on his head after a performance of anger, a crafty invention of his and an act which gave him fame for a while. It would seem as if that the Turkish people are very inventive in terms of creating new material for RTV.

In Turkey in fact, it is the conventions of a show that affect the metanarrative rather than selective montage. The conventions neither are scripted nor are part of the structure, but they form an important element of the picture of RTV especially in Turkish television.

Convention in RTV means the repetition of similar behavioral patterns by different participants throughout the shows. This latter is not addressed by other authors but needs consideration, because it is relevant in terms of this study on self-display. For instance, the Turkish Reality Show *Yemekteyiz* (At dinner) is structured such as follows: Each contestant hosts his/her show mates, in order to be graded by them on the quality of food served. However, when the host leaves the room for the kitchen, convention takes over the scene and the guests start to talk behind the host's back. This is a behavioral pattern repeated show after show. So, should it be said that behavior of the participants' is closer to fiction than to reality?

In fact, RTV is a genre where fiction and reality blend. It is maybe more proper to ask what the opportunities of the participants are to manipulate their image, through self-display. It has already been said that the conventions are an important part of RTV in Turkey; they form a malleable base on which one can construct one's image. Self-display finds itself an entry point and a roadmap for its actualization. This means that rather than limiting the possibilities for self-

display, conventions facilitate its actualization through providing a context. By this token, the element of convention should be added to the definition of RTV of this thesis.

Reality TV in Its Different Facets

An exploration of Reality TV shows that self-display manifests itself through many different facets, including narcissism, pornographic displays of extreme emotions, enframing, and stories of transformation (Makeover TV). One should also note the twin brother of self-display, that is voyeurism, which in a way secures the functioning of self-display: The one shows and the other looks. At this point, the different facets of self-display, as manifested through RTV can be explored.

Narcissism

Many of the studies that have been done on social networking sites have focused on whether or not the use of these sites is related to the narcissism of its users (McKinney, Kelly, and Duran, 2012). Social networking sites are different from reality television. Their mechanism of functioning is much more evident and in social media, the users have almost complete control over their representations. They can utilize the raw material of their lives and subjectivity in order to give a certain shape to them. In contrast, reality shows may result in complex situations stemming from the encounter of the participant, the audience, and the media. The show reframes, manipulates, or simply uses the material that the participants provide, a situation begging for analysis from multiple angles. The exploration of social media might be of significance for the understanding of similar processes in Reality TV as well as for the general framework of this

study. With this in mind, having an idea of the functioning of social media would be useful here because self-display functions similarly in both of these mechanisms of evaluation. As said before, in both of the media, individuals, by commodifying themselves through self-display, enter into different social markets in the pursuit of acquiring more visibility. Here, narcissism would be explored in the example of social media, or specifically, Facebook.

For instance, Özgür Köseoğlu, who examines the motivations of Facebook users, identifies narcissism as the first among another six whereas McKinney, Kelly, and Duran cites many studies which have found an association with narcissism the use of Social Networking Sites. These latter define narcissism by quoting Buffardi and Campbell: “Narcissism refers to a personality trait reflecting a grandiose and inflated self-concept” (p. 109). One of the entries in Google Dictionary defines the concept similarly as the following: “Extreme selfishness, with a grandiose view of one’s own talents and a craving for admiration, a character personality type.” This implies that narcissism is a problematic trait which should be considered and addressed in that respect. However, the definition of narcissism need not be pathological or abnormal. Sigmund Freud, argued that self-love might not be abnormal as thought previously and even might be a regular part of the human psyche. Thus, narcissism can be defined as self-love that human beings enjoy. This is this kind of normal or mild narcissism that SNSs encourage in fact.

Almost by definition, narcissism goes hand in hand with self-display. The narcissist, whether pathological or not, needs the approval of the other for the confirmation of his/her qualities, which he/she tends to display when and where possible. What is the relationship of narcissism to neoliberal subjectification?

The drives that make people engage in self-commodification are not limited to a few, and narcissism is surely one of them. In the case of self-branding, one engages in self-

commodification consciously, to form one's own company: Me Inc. But in terms of the use of Social Networking Sites and RTV participation, people may consciously manipulate their image, but they do not perceive themselves to be commodities that they themselves produce for consumption. This is not their motivation. Narcissism, on the other hand, is one of the important motivations pushing people to display and commodify themselves. This, we do not engage in order to turn ourselves into commodities, but our narcissistic concerns can bear but this fruit.

A former teacher¹⁶ of mine used to say that capitalism never creates new drives for its purposes, but that it puts into use what the human psyche already contains. He usually gave the example of sex for selling commodities, a human, yet an animal drive put into lucrative use by capitalism. Again, neoliberalism did not create narcissism, but it put its stamp on it.

Narcissism is an important drive which pushes people to display themselves. It is a new resource that neoliberalism put into use, as the neoliberal mind is never short of finding new mines to exploit.

The Pornography of Emotions¹⁷

Pornography (often shortened to "porn" in informal usage) is the explicit portrayal of sexual subject matter for the purpose of sexual gratification. Pornography was an early form of self-display, and like its new counterpart, continues to result in the commodification of the human beings who engage in it.

¹⁶ M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, Professor. The Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, Boğaziçi University.

¹⁷ This concept has been adopted from Rachel E. Dubrofsky (Dubrofsky, 2009, p. 353).

A sexual act is not pornography if it is not displayed. It becomes porn once it enters into the public realm. Porn is exaggerated and unrealistic. It plays on the unrealizable fantasies of its viewers. Similarly, emotions also can be pornographic. Displaying extreme emotions in public may mark the person as dangerous (Dubrofsky, 2006), unstable or suspicious. Extreme emotions in the public sphere stigmatize the person who expresses them. The place of extreme emotions is the private realm.

However, emotions on RTV do not function that way. Extreme emotions are flashed out to put the emotion together with the emitter under spotlight, in the center of our economy of attention. RTV emotions are unrealistic and exaggerated, like in porn, and like in porn, they are as close as a TV screen but as far as impossible. They play on this fantasy of seeing people lose their control under the weight of extreme emotions, to consume it from the security of its distance. The following explores this pornography in its different faces.

The Pornography of Drama

Reality TV feeds on the display of the feelings of its participants, and the participants, most of the time, are fed by displaying the drama of their emotions. The more drama, the more famous the show. And using one's emotions, if properly manipulated, is a ticket to fame, a ticket to secure a central place in our economy of attention.

The supposed love story of Caner Toygar and Tülin Koca, from the reality show "*Biz Evleniyoruz*" (We Are Marrying), a marriage show in which candidates of brides and grooms are gathered together in a house à la "Big Brother Is Watching You" in order to find suitable mates, is an extreme example. The couple, who experience a romantic connection in the house, start to

have dramatic fights after the show finishes, which are enthusiastically covered by the media. In one of the instances, Caner Toygar, on a program where he is invited as a guest, received a call from Tlin Koca. He portrayed dramatic scenes of anger and complaint and then, under the weight of his supposedly extreme emotions, broke a glass on his head, and act which became a sensational phenomenon in Turkey. The couple experienced a period of spectacular fame, due to their dramatic encounters, display of extreme feelings and the manipulation of the media hungry for human material. But this fame was short-living.



Figure 1. Caner Toygar in telephone conversation with Tlin Koca before breaking a glass on his head.

The media is constantly on the lookout for new fodder. One's place under the beam of light is never secure. The product needs constant updating, a little mistake makes you fall into disuse. There are many former RTV participants turned-singer who tried to use their fame for securing a durable place among the celebrities. And many of them have failed in their project.

An event in RTV, once is created, is already sealed with the kiss of death. It becomes outdated at the very moment it is produced. Media events are consumed more quickly than consumer products. The media's power lies in the following word: Next?

The Pornography of Violence

Aggression is a staple of reality television. It adds drama to the narrative structure and is encouraged in order to push up the ratings. An example is “*Yemekteyiz*” (At dinner), a program mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. To remember, it is a competition where every contestant hosts the others for dinner and where they grade each other based on the quality of the food served. When the host leaves the room to go to the kitchen however, the gossip begins. The contestants discuss how they didn’t like the food or the service. Most of the times they find ridiculously exaggerated flaws on every point. These verbal assaults continue in one-to-one after interviews with the contestants. The same theater of gossip goes on with another fashion reality show, “*Bana Ne Giysem Yakışır*” (I Look Great in Whatever I Wear), where every contestant judge and grade each other, this time, on their attire. In “Survivor”, aggression is adopted as a strategy for winning the competition (Callister, Robinson, and Wilson, 2012). “*Müge Anlı ile Tatlı Sert*” (Kind but Bitter with Müge Anlı), is a program which frequently discusses cases of murder or missing people which probably resulted in death, with the relatives of the peoples involved. Apart from the violence of the subject matter, the guests frequently quarrel with each other, increasing the tension of the show. The display of their negative emotions awakens curiosity and adds drama to the show.

Mark Sayers, in a post entitled “The Pornography of Violence,” discusses the phenomenon of the rise of violence in media in the twentieth century and quotes journalist Christ Hedge, stating that “the violence, cruelty, and the degradation of porn ... is about reducing other human beings to commodities, to objects” (Hedge, cited in Sayers, 2011).

When one party becomes the perpetrator and the other becomes the victim, this is where objectification and commodification begin. It is what happens in *Yemekteyiz* which turns the host into an object of scorn. It is what happens in “Survivor” where indirect aggression is much more common than direct confrontation (Callister, Robinson, and Wilson, 2012). It is what happens in *Bugün Ne Giysem* during the humiliation scenes. Victims become commodities, and commodities sell. This is the first rule of capitalism.

People do not always voluntarily offer their subjectivity for consumption. If voluntary self-commodification does not occur, or is insufficient, or just because it is possible to turn people into objects of consumption by also other means, capitalism does not miss the opportunity. But being a victim, also, can put one into circulation in the economy of attention. Many things are possible in the world of self-display.

The Pornography of Desire

Dubrofsky in her study, “Fallen Women in Reality TV: A Pornography of Emotion,” studies “The Bachelor” series. Before proceeding, it would be helpful to remember this thesis’ argument that display of extreme emotions stigmatizes the person who demonstrate them, and that this display is pornographic. This is exactly what happens in the Bachelor series.

Dubrofsky, following Grindstaff, uses the analogy of “money shot” for the display of extreme moments of emotional outburst, which originally was a term used by the scholars of film pornography.¹⁸ These outbursts of emotion construct the female body as dangerous, but

¹⁸ “To describe the culminating moment in a pornographic film were the ejaculating penis occupies center stage” (Dubrofsky, p.355).

dangerous to the male, as these women are “unable to contain intense bodily responses” (p. 353). The women, who perform their money shot, are shortly after selected by the bachelor for elimination.

Why are these women being punished for engaging in a very common strategy of RTV, in displaying extreme emotions? In fact, the women in this show are doomed to lose from the beginning. This is because of the very structure of the show. The protagonist is the male bachelor and all the women are the villain, potential threats ready to destabilize him, potential emitters of “money shots.”

It is uncommon to see that extreme emotions get stigmatized in a reality show, where usually they can find expression without being punished by the public, and are, on the contrary, rewarded. But “The Bachelor,” by its structure and implementation, manipulates the act of self-display of the participants for its own purposes. By the use of special camera angles and the inclusion of one of the other members in the scene as spectator and commenter, the show turns the money shot into an event displayed by the show rather than by the contestant herself. The show appropriates self-display from the participant and transforms it according to its goals.

Enframing

Marriage shows continue to be popular in Turkey, and are increasing in number, including “*İzdivaç*” (Marriage), “*Biz Evleniyoruz*” (We Are Marrying), “*Ersa Erol’da Evlen Benimle*” (Marry Me With Esra Erol), “*Kaynanam Olur Musun?*” (Would You Be My Mother-in-Law?), “*Gelinim Olur Musun?*” (Would You Be My Daughter-in-Law?).

In these shows, people present themselves in order to find a suitable mate from among the spectators (or rarely among the people present at the studio). This individual then applies as a candidate for marriage. The participants are presented the primary information on the following items: the age of the participant his/her number of previous marriages, his/her number of children , the age of the children if existent and whether or not they live with the candidate/participant, whether or not the candidate/participant has a house, whether or not the candidate/participant has a car, and his/her level of education.



Figure 2. An example of the presentation of a participant.

These are among the important criteria for a spectator to furnish when applying to the show to be a candidate. The candidate and the participant talk and then spend time together outside, if the participant agrees to. They might decide to marry or not at the end of these encounters and the remaining bachelors (bachelorettes) may continue to stay in the show in the search of a suitable mate. This is a modern form of match-making, but now under the public eye. The social, the familial and especially the economic position of the participants/candidates are spilled out with the hope of marriage, but not unwillingly. The participants are very happy and

proud of being on the show, which presents them as a plate inscribed with few words. What the show describes is all that matters. This selective self-display enframes them in new ways.

Enframing is what self-display does. When one draws a picture of oneself and hangs it on the wall, this picture locks him/her forever in that representation. But in fact, the person who is depicted continues to live, and to exist independently from this representation, so he/she is not locked into that representation. However, this is not the case in Reality TV or in SNSs.

A commodity needs to have clear boundaries; it is necessary to know where it begins and where it ends. The content must be known before the purchase. A commodity is not a living thing; it needs to remain still in the market in order to be sold. A commodity circulates but does not move. And a commodity is always on display. What makes a commodity a commodity, what fixes a commodity to its representation is *self-display*. A commodity is nothing but its representation. A commodity is dead after it is sold, after which it becomes a belonging. And it is the same with human commodities.

Self-display fixes people to their representation. This is how it turns people and things into commodities. One gets a clear, bounded picture of what to consume, in the safety of knowing with what one is faced. The above marriage shows are the clearest examples of this process. One is labeled by a few words containing little information and becomes the label itself, locked into that representation. However the person in RTV does not continue to live, like the person in the picture. Yes, he/she does continue to live in his private world, but no longer in the world of RTV. The viewer is offered a still picture, which he/she can consume in enjoyment. The RTV persona is born with self-display and dies to remain forever an object of display in the market. It becomes outdated, falls into disuse, is forgotten, but nevertheless, it is a commodity.

Makeover

A glance at the literature makes visible the extent of the popularity of make-over shows in American culture. For instance, the show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, through redoing people's houses selected on the basis of their dramatic life stories perpetuates the belief that external change will bring internal transformation, just as in the case of cosmetic surgery shows that will be discussed below. Here, two articles on makeover shows in America will be referred to, to scrutinize once again the difference between U.S. and Turkey in terms of Reality TV.

It has been said that the postmodern age was characterized by a new insecurity, mostly stemming from the erosion of social security nets and the new position of the individual put under the burden of being responsible for the possible calamities of the neoliberal order. This is also a psychological and ontological insecurity, which Alison Hearn, in her article "Insecure: Narratives and Economies of the Branded Self in Transformation TV" discusses. She writes that insecurity is an ontological category, experienced by all human beings when faced with what she calls the "radical difference of the other" (Hearn, 2008, p. 495). It should be underlined that Hearn is not solely referring to ethnic or racial differences, but rather to a philosophical question, and understands reality as a scarce resource, set by power. As today's power, the neoliberal discourse sets the reality, imposing on the ones who deviate from its own truth. It is these deviants, these radical others that constitute insecurity for the neoliberal reality.

Hearn says that to overcome this insecurity, the radical other is usually excluded from political rights as well from cultural representation. Their access to reality and cultural legibility is limited. This is the condition of precariousness, which "is not evenly distributed across the population; certain kinds of individuals are purposefully and systematically excluded from

‘reality’ more than others” (p. 496). This precariousness is not only related to race and poverty but in a broader perspective, is about being excluded from certain kinds of reality. Thus, according to Hearn, Reality TV takes the task of transforming those individuals who fail to conform to the neoliberal normativity; hence the name, transformation television.

Hearn then explores the precarious workforce that rose with the post-Fordist regime of accumulation, which exacerbated the conditions of insecurity for a greater part of the population. Then she proceeds to her main argument, that to the ontological, psychological and labor insecurities discussed above, self-branding is offered as a palliative.

Self-branding is a practice of relating to oneself as a commodity to be improved regularly in order to be put in “competitive circulation,” particularly in the job market (Hearn, 2008, p. 201). It embodies the values of the corporate culture which its practitioners strive to exhibit, and is part of a promotional culture. According to Hearn, self-branding is an actual form of labor, through which the self “positions itself as a site for the extraction of value.” (p. 201)

Hearn analyzes three reality shows where self-branding is offered as a solution for acquiring recognition in the job market and social market in general. She makes the content analysis of three reality shows, built on the theme of transformation. The first, “What Not to Wear” is a show adopting a pedagogical stance that claims to “teach” the participant how to shop in order to “sell” herself better in the job market (p. 499). The second show, “Ten Years Younger” features housewives who participate in the show in order to look ten years younger through careful makeovers and shopping tips. In the third show, the participant is judged by anonymous jury members on the basis of his/her ability to make a good first impression.

All three shows follow the same plot: First the insecurity of the participant is established through ritualized acts of humiliation. For instance, in “Ten Years Younger,” the participant is

put in a box on a busy street and passer-bys are asked about her age which on the average is significantly above the participant's real one. After this careful establishment of the insecurity, the experts of the show guide the participant on his/her way to build an effective self-brand. In this way, the participant is "normalized" and massaged back into the codes of legibility of the dominant culture. Self-branding emerges as a palliative to the insecurities of the post-Fordist era.

In "Bugün Ne Giysem, humiliation-transformation/normalization-recognition trope does not seem to exist. First of all, it is a competition where the contestants present themselves once and for all to the jury members, who judge them based on their attire and decide whether or not they are eliminated. Although there is a theme of transformation, it is the responsibility of the contestant to carefully watch the program and learn from the experts in order to apply in her private life what she have learned.

What is the significance of this difference between the American style of makeover shows, where the transformation of the participant is the responsibility of the show crew, and the Turkish shows, where the participants are charged with their own transformation? For instance, self-branding in "Bugün Ne Giysem" is not a process guided by a set of benevolent experts who carefully watch over the "normalization" of the participant, as is the case with the American makeover shows. Every contestant is "responsible" from creating her own self-brand which then they submit to the judgment of the jury members. Whereas in the American makeover model, the participant is always rewarded with recognition, in Bugün Ne Giysem, humiliation and recognition are the two equally probable end results of the process, and not two steps following each other in a repetitive trope. The responsibility of the contestant for her own self-branding is a key to the functioning of the show.

In the shows described by Hearn, normalization is built into their narrative structure as an end result achieved by all of the participants. The process pretends to alleviate the insecurities of its participants by incorporating them into the dominant cultural modes of representation.

Normalization in *Bugün Ne Giysem?* works in more subtle ways. The contestants are drawn into the neoliberal norms, but at the same time it is stressed that “one can be chic with a small amount of money,” which must be read as “one must be chic even with a small amount of money.” Here, the contestants are held responsible for their compliance to neoliberal norms no matter what their means are. However, the contestants can never be chic enough to reach the standards of high society. It is a realm beyond their confines, fixing the playground of the contestants once and for all.

There seems to be a key cultural difference here, between Turkey and United States. The juries of the *Bugün Ne Giysem?* take the role of the punisher more and more as the season progresses, whereas in the American style the crew members strive to make their participant happy through transforming him/her. The theme of transformation is also present in *Bugün Ne Giysem*, but it is all the responsibility of the contestant. Why is transformation TV in Turkey not a well-established genre and why is it abundant in the United States?

One can suggest the role of the American dream in all this process. Hollywood and other cultural artifacts such as personal development books or personal development videos available on the Internet sell the American dream where material and therefore spiritual well-being is possible through hard work and determination. The Turkish dream, however, of making money, is to hit the jackpot through whatever means possible. This American dream has little currency in Turkey, and the people seldom buy it. This is why the cultural difference between United States and Turkey emerges in reality shows. To conclude, Hearn’s article once again shows that the

phenomenon of self-branding and self-display is a part of a larger phenomenon, and not confined to Turkey.

Hearn puts the insecurity of the dominant culture in the face of the radical other as the primary drive for the dominant power to transform the radical other. Cressida J. Heyes tells a similar story in her article “Cosmetic Surgery and the Televisual Makeover: A Foucauldian Feminist Reading” analyzing the televisual cosmetic surgery shows in United States (2007). Accordingly, the show she analyzes operates through defining its population of participants in terms of their deviance from, or conformity to white middle class beauty norms. Normalization and the creation of “homogeneous bodies” through surgery are presented as the personal transformation of the participant and his/her achievement of inner self finally finding its expression in his/her appearance.

According to Heyes, plastic surgery today has come to be presented not in its instrumentality in achieving beauty or even normalcy, but in her words, “as a vehicle for self-transformation” (p.17). This is the main discourse on which plastic surgery shows draw. Intrinsic motivations such as finding one’s his/her authentic self are stressed against external motivations such as acquiring better job prospect within an age-discriminating job market. Within this scenario, choosing to have plastic surgery means deciding to take one’s destiny into one’s own hands. The feminist values of autonomy and self-realization are taken over by the discourse of plastic surgery, tacitly rendering “resistance to cosmetic surgery ... a lack of character” (p. 26).

What the shows such as “Extreme Makeover” do is to erase through plastic surgery low class status as well as years and experiences, and to create heteronormative bodies. Significantly more feminine women and more masculine men emerge from the patient’s room. The show, according to Heyes, operates through establishing hierarchies based on class and disability

which, she says, must be “flattened without overt comment” according to these shows’ ideology (p. 22). This is how normalization works in “Extreme Makeover.”

The author concludes by stating that a new solution must be found to meet psychological needs that are offered a solution by this normalization in order to fight this new discourse of cosmetic surgery.

The theme of normalization is one of the principle themes in “Bugün Ne Giysem.” In fact, the show never hides its pedagogical stance as the jury members repeat again and again their dedication to educate the Turkish public on the subject of clothing. They ask the contestants whether or not they have watched the show, rebuke them for not having learned enough after so many episodes have been shown, and are very satisfied to see how a contestant has “improved” following their lessons. In fact, the process of normalization goes one step further in “Bugün Ne Giysem”: One is responsible from her own normalization; in other words the show does not hold their hands, is not in charge of the process from beginning to end, but holds the contestant responsible for doing this on her own, as discussed previously.

The show draws its contestants to neoliberal norms through its discourse. Those who successfully normalize themselves are rewarded, whereas ones who fail are rebuked. In the show, the juries repeatedly state that they expect the contestants to express their difference by having a personal touch in their style. However, under this call for differentiation and personality operates the same mechanism of standardization, which approves only that clothing that adheres to the show’s standardized norms.

Like in the cosmetic surgery shows in the United States, “Bugün Ne Giysem” builds on class hierarchy. Whereas “Extreme Makeover” tries to erase class status through surgery, “Bugün Ne Giysem” thrives on blatant exposure of these class hierarchies. There is a clear

distinction among the contestants and members of the high class, this latter having the prerogative of really being chic, where the former can only be chic relatively, on their own terms.

It is important to note here that neoliberalism is an ideology which primarily addressed upper middle classes and to which lower classes are gradually being incorporated. “Bugün Ne Giysem” has a low middle class profile in terms of its participants. The average age of my sample was 27 and more than one third of the participants were students, with the second largest group being composed of housewives. Refer to the Appendix A in order to see the distribution of occupations of the sample, and Appendix B and C to see the price graphics of the contestant’s dresses and shoes accordingly. The average price of dresses was 281 TL, and that of shoes, 158 TL, modest amounts for a contest participation. It might be suggested that through this show, these aspiring members of the lower middle class are drawn into neoliberal normativity of which at the same time they volunteer to be a part. This is a fight to be approved of as a member of the new neoliberal middle class.

Voyeurism

The subject of voyeurism is the private lives of the people, as in self-display. Does what is self-displayed appeal to the voyeuristic drives of the people? Baruh’s article “Mediated Voyeurism and the Guilty Pleasure of Consuming reality Television,” helps answer this question.

Whether or not Reality TV satisfies the voyeuristic drives of people has been a common discussion since the establishment of the genre. The different versions of “Big Brother is Watching You” are a perfect example of this. In these shows, a number of people are confined to the same house and are videotaped all day long in almost all their activities. The audience

consumes their lives as lived in the Big Brother house, which is under complete surveillance. It is the subjectivity of the people that is consumed in this show. But can it be said that all voyeurisms constitute a consumption of people's subjectivity? Maybe one should begin with the definition of voyeurism.

Baruh, distinguishes among three different definitions of voyeurism, which are all worth mentioning because they show the historical evolution of the concept, which metamorphosed from being a pathological condition to being a trait enjoyed by all human beings. The evolution of this concept would also illuminate us on the history of self-display. The following are Baruh's three definitions:

(1) Pathological voyeurism: As a psychiatric illness, "defined as an exaggerated tendency to enjoy observing stealthily the erotically preferred gender" in erotic situations (p. 203).

(2) Voyeurism not necessarily involving sexuality, and rather than being an illness, as "a trait enjoyed by all 'normal' individuals, voyeurs looking for what they otherwise cannot see" (p. 203).

(3) Trait voyeurism, as characterized by the practice of seeking safe (and often reciprocal) ways of having access to information and or experience that would be otherwise (and normatively) inaccessible and something enjoyed opportunistically (rather than compulsively) by individuals (2010, p. 216).

Among these three concepts, Baruh analyzes Reality TV using the concept of trait voyeurism as what is in display in reality shows is in open air. His definition of trait voyeurism is important in terms of predicting a relationship between voyeurism and RTV consumption, as he states that previous studies have given mixed results, for lack of an agreed-upon conceptualization of the term. Using his concept, Baruh conducts a survey and finds a correlation between trait voyeurism and Reality TV consumption. And considering other forms of media consumption, he concludes by quoting the name of Clay Calvert's book: *The Voyeur Nation* (2010, p. 218).

What about “Bugün Ne Giysem?” Because no survey has been conducted on the viewer perception of this program it is not possible to propose a satisfactory let alone a definitive answer based on this study. However some suggestions might be made based on the content and structure of the show. Some questions might be of some help. Is there any content otherwise inaccessible that the viewers might enjoy opportunistically? Do the contestants reveal any information that they would keep otherwise private?

One of the instances where “Bugün Ne Giysem” crosses the line between what is public and what is private is the asking of the prices of every item that the contestants bring with them, a question which they respond to without surprise. Another instance is the humiliation scenes in which the contestants are pushed to exhibit feelings from which they then are embarrassed and which they want to keep to themselves. In some of the instances, contestants may cry or reveal personal information that they might want to keep secret as is the case with one of the contestants who was pushed to confess an extreme medical condition.

To sum up, although not totally structured around the concept of voyeurism as with Big Brother series, humiliation scenes which push the contestants into revealing what they otherwise might want to keep private have a voyeuristic appeal.

However, there is some intricacy with the concept of voyeurism. Voyeurism has a history. It has not been the same throughout time. Did the culture of the reality TV, which itself is an outgrowth of neoliberalism breed its own brand of voyeurism?

In fact, it is dangerous to forget the historicity of the concept of voyeurism, as witnessed in the three definitions given by Baruh. Voyeurism was first pathological, where people wanted to intrude into the intimacy of other people, then, it became a trait enjoyed by all human beings but still engaged secretly; but today, there is no need to hide while looking.

Today's capitalism thrives on privacy waiting to be devoured in the bazaar of RTV and social media. It is a common argument that the boundary between the private and the public has become blurred. The fact that there is a blurred line between the private and the public is maybe not a sufficient description for today's situation. The private remains private; otherwise, there would not be a question of voyeurism. Its parts get cut off from the realm of privacy to be displayed in the public arena, for hungry eyes. And this is done by the very individuals themselves, who put their privacy on public display. We put our pictures in Facebook, we announce our private moments in Twitter, we spill out our economic situation on marriage show. Once we have found the market, it is us who impatiently cut off our privacy in consumable pieces as if we were waiting for this moment. As if striving for to satisfy each other's' voyeuristic drives.

Self-display could not exist without voyeurism. There would be no one to look at. However, voyeurism today has become so common that we do not even realize that we are engaging in it. If we are swimming in self-display, we are also swimming in voyeurism. Voyeurism is no more forbidden. We don't say "Mind your own business" anymore. We rather say, maniacally: "Look at me!"

Even the different definitions of voyeurism that Baruh gives bear witness to this change. Baruh needed to coin a new concept to describe today's condition that he calls "trait voyeurism."

In fact, Baruh does not discuss the implications of his definitions in terms of consumption and commodification. However, trait voyeurism is built upon the consumption of self-commodified subjects who present themselves in the shop windows of the social markets. Pathological voyeurism and its normal version not involving sexuality do not thrive on the consumption of subjectivity because for consumption, there needs to be a commodity. The

subjects of these two kinds of voyeurism are unaware of their being watched, they are not displaying themselves, they are not engaging in self-commodification. The consumption of subjectivity is only applicable to trait voyeurism. This is why Baruh needed to invent a new concept to analyze today's situation, which dramatically changed voyeurism as a phenomenon. To sum up, today's voyeurism thrives on self-display. The subject of voyeurism is in open air, and there is no longer the need to look secretly through the keyholes.

Conclusion

Reality shows are all about self-display. They select what to show and what not to show to confine their participants to a selected frame. Reality TV turns the raw material of reality into what it needs. Self-display deconstructs people and reconstructs them. The fame brought about with reality show does not make the participant famous. What is famed is the fiction of the show, of the person as represented by the show, of the slice of that moment of fame, of the particular passage as caught by RTV. RTV seems anchored in reality, on the same footing with reality and as an open space. However, it is a closed one which creates its own images in a closed world with its own rules. It is the perversion of truth. It is Reality TV.

CHAPTER IV

THE ANALYSIS OF “BUGÜN NE GİYSEM?”

*“Are the mass media on the side of power in the manipulation of the masses,
or are they on the side of the masses in the liquidation of meaning...?”*
Jean Baudrillard¹⁹

Bugün Ne Giysem? is a fashion reality show and a competition that began on the Turkish TV channel Show TV in 09.05.2011. The show completed its first two seasons and continues to be aired on the same channel. It claims to choose “the most chic woman of Turkey” (of the year). The procedure is as follows:

The contestants get prepared and present their outfit in front of a jury composed of three members (four in the third season) who judge their outfits according to (their own) fashion standards. There are 5 to 12 contestants who compete on each show. Each show lasts for three to three and a half hours. Four stages await the contestants before competing for the last time. The first is before the show, when the contestants are selected from among the applicants. The next one is the quarterfinal, the following the semi-final, and the last one is the final. The contestants must have at least two votes from the jury members in order to proceed to the next stage. The last step, after the final, is the Gala Night organized for the 30th December of the year, a big event with a number of well-known guests from the fashion world and specially prepared staging, where this time, the remaining contestants compete for the public vote in order to be crowned as “The most chic woman of Turkey” and win the grand prize of 100,000 Turkish Liras.

¹⁹ Baudrillard, J. (2006).

The average age of the sample used in this study was 27. There were 106 contestants in the sample, 39 of whom were students. The second largest group consisted of contestants who defined themselves as housewives or as non-working, with a number of 13. The contestants came mainly from the lower middle class, with few exceptions. *Bugün Ne Giysem?* mostly appeals to young people who are just about to take the responsibility of their own lives. What is the meaning of that?

The answer to this question lies in the fact that neoliberalism is an ideology which primarily addressed the upper middle class and to which the lower classes continue and seek to be incorporated. *Bugün Ne Giysem?* has a lower middle class profile in terms of its participants. The average age of my sample is 27 and more than one third of the participants are students. It might be suggested that through this show, these aspiring members of the lower middle class are drawn into neoliberal normativity of which at the same time they volunteer to be a part. This is a fight for being approved as a member of the new neoliberal normativity.

The jury members included Nur Yerlitaş, a well-known Turkish designer known for her work for celebrities like Bülent Ersoy and Seda Sayan. She made her entrance into the fashion world through the suitcase trade, selling garments from Paris and Italy to high society ladies. She then opened her own atelier and continues her life as a designer. İvana Sert, of Serbian origin, received an education of ballet and piano. She worked for a while as a model in Turkey and now is known as a designer and a “fashion icon.” She owns her own boutique. As for Hakan Akkaya, he studied in architecture but chose a career in fashion, starting working for influential brands. He continues to design for one of these brands today. Uğurkan Erez is a choreographer and also owns a model agency. He began his career as a statistician, then an accountant, eventually finding his vocation in the fashion world. He has choreographed many of the significant fashion

shows in Turkey and is claimed to be an internationally recognized choreographer. Barbaros Şansal started his career in the fashion world in his university years working for important Turkish brands. He had to leave the country after the 1980 coup and finished his studies after his return. He now is an associate member of the Yıldırım Mayruk Fashion Design Limited Company performing the job of designer among many others. He calls himself a “tailor apprentice.” Özge Ulusoy (first in the backstage, then becomes a jury member.) is a Turkish model and a retired ballet dancer and also an occasional actress.

My analysis is based on the first two seasons, excluding the third one still on air. There are a total number of 232 episodes in these two seasons, as the show is aired every weekday. I have composed a sample of 20 episodes with 15 episodes intervals and also including the first 4 episodes, and transcribed the relevant parts. The following is based on an analysis of this data.

The Consumer's Duty

The means to selling clothes is seduction, says Rebecca Arnold in *Fashion, Desire and Anxiety*, quoting from Martin Harrison. Once, you had to pull the consumer towards consumption through seduction in order to make her consume (2001). Today, conspicuous consumption is a must and seduction leaves its place to obligation, changing the respective places of desire and need. In the twentieth century, women were drawn to what Arnold describes as “construct selves based on desires rather than needs” (Arnold, 2001, p.3). Today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, definitions of need and desire are blurred. Once, desire replaced the need in directing consumption, today need again takes the lead, but metamorphosed. Needs are fabricated, conspicuous consumption is a must.

Baudrillard, however, saw that the needs were produced by the system of production itself in his book *La société de consommation* almost a half century ago, in 1970. He saw no basis for distinguishing real needs from artificial ones. According to him, consumer society is based on a system of differentiation where the need is a desire for differentiation through commodities within society. How can a claim for a difference be built between desire and need as determining the consumer behavior within this framework? Is there any real distinction? If there is no distinction between real and artificial needs, is there any distinction between desire and need?

The difference between the “need” of Jean Baudrillard and the “need” of today lies in their relationship to desire. Baudrillard’s argument states that need is a desire for differentiation within society, today the search for hierarchical differentiation is not driven by the desire for differentiation but by the imperative for social differentiation. And desire more and more becomes a shadow, only hiding the constraining mechanisms of today’s consumption system. Bugün Ne Giysem? should be analyzed as a mechanism of evaluation to which people subject themselves in order to be assigned a certain social value within this context of compulsory differentiation, where the desire of subjecting oneself to this mechanism is often blended with a sense of duty and reverence. The following is an example revealing this process:

(The contestant brings a wedding dressed she designed)

Hakan Akkaya: And why did you bring this dress?

The contestant: Well, for you to see it.

Hakan Akkaya: Do you want comments?

The contestant: It is because... I am asking for your comments because I watch you inevitably, in the day and in the night...

...

The contestant: Well... Mister Akkaya. Some people may find your comments offensive. I think that they are all correct. And I say this to my friends and to my acquaintances; without hesitation; and with pride.

...

The contestant: "They are right." (To Uğurkan Erez) After all, you are a person who is right. Your language, your style, your opinions... Well, I agree with you on every point.²⁰

What is remarkable in this episode is the contestant's peculiar attitude towards the show. The contestant submits herself to the mechanism of evaluation as a duty. This is a duty which she fulfils not only by joining the competition, but also by promoting the show and the jury members. This, she realizes in a spirit of new-found mission that she embraces with pride. The contestant thinks that the comments and statements of the jury members are "all correct," her respect towards them is infinite, İvana Sert is her idol in dresssing and she watches her with admiration, Uğurkan Erez is a person who is "right" and she agrees with the jury at every point.

Accepting altogether every single aspect of this reality show is, however, a self-imposed enterprise of the contestant. It is a part of her life narrative in which Bugün Ne Giysem? fits in as a new-found mission. Here, the crucial value with which the contestant identifies is being open to criticism. Hence, the contestant states that she is open to all kinds of criticism because according to her, "the one who is open to criticism is the one who finds the truth." In such a way,

²⁰ Hakan Akkaya: Peki neden getirdiniz gelinliği?

Yarışmacı: A görmeniz açısından

Hakan Akkaya: Yorum mu istiyosunuz?

Yarışmacı: Çünkü... Yorum istiyorum ayrıca sizi ben... Iıı... Kaçınılmaz... Gündüz... Artı gece de izliyorum.

...

Yarışmacı: Eeee Hakan Bey. Sizin eleştirileriniz, belki bi kaç kişiye ters gelebilir. Bana çok doğru geliyo. Ve ben bunu göğsümü gere gere de arkadaşlarıma çevreme çatır çatır da söylüyorum.

...

Yarışmacı: Haklılar. Siz zaten haklı bir insansınız. Konuşmalarınız tarzınız düşünceleriniz yani sizlere tam anlamıyla katılıyorum.

Bugün Ne Giysem? emerges as an arena in which “the truth” is sought. Being true to fashion also means finding the truth in life. The show, within the narrative of the contestant, not only passes judgments about the attire of the contestants, but also becomes a guiding spirit for one’s life.

In one of her statements, the contestant admits that if she received a similar critique from somebody else, she would probably not pay attention to it. This statement shows that in fact, the contestant is not open to all kinds of criticism: She is open to that of the jury. This is a framework in which critique is accepted only within the space opened up by Bugün Ne Giysem? The show acquires a special authority and a prerogative to criticize. Therefore, here, the show becomes not only a mechanism of evaluation, but also a mechanism of intervention into one’s life. This, it achieves through a pedagogical discourse. These two aspects of the authority of the jury and the show’s pedagogical stance will be explored in detail below. Another question should be answered before: Why would a woman of 47 years old show so much reverence to a jury of three members two of whom are much younger than she?

First of all, it must be underlined that the contestant is not a passive victim. She is as much responsible as the show in her own subjection. This is a voluntary submission from which she derives joy, satisfaction and pride. Her sentence “...being criticized myself pleased me very much,” is a clear statement of this. However, it is a fact that every contestant voluntarily submits herself to the authority of the show, as each of them voluntarily comes to display herself in front of the jury. Nobody is forced. What is the different about this contestant?

There is a set of behaviors which the jury members expect from the contestants. These are getting properly dressed, submitting to the authority of the jury, watching the show and learning from it, and improving one’s style accordingly. The particular contestant here goes beyond these

duties assigned by the show and adopts new ones. She not only watches the show, but she watches it twice a day. She not only submits herself to the authority of the jury members, but also invites other people to the same submission and this, with pride. She not only tries to get properly dressed and receive affirmation for her quotidian clothing, but also wants to receive affirmation for her professional designs.

In this way, the contestant enlarges the space that *Bugün Ne Giysem?* has opened up, in the spirit of a duty. This difference between the authority that the show assumes for itself and the authority that the contestant ascribes to it results even in a misunderstanding. Ivana Sert thinks that the contestant has brought her design to the podium in order to advertise her work. She cannot conceive of for what other purpose the contestant might have brought the wedding dress for their appraisal. The contestant objects by stating that she only wants their critique. For the contestant, it is not sufficient to display what she wears and how she is in her private life. She also brings into display her professional life. In this way, *Bugün Ne Giysem?* takes hold of all aspects of the contestant's life.

In the Democratic Republic of Fashion

Rebecca Arnold relates the intertwined stories of status and fashion in the twentieth century. The twentieth century was a period of rapid transformation, where the previous notions of gender, status and ethnicity came to become obsolete and changed under the fashion's challenge. The old markers of status lost their validity and fashion became an important actor in the determination of status and identities. Different groups therefore tried, and still try, to use the power of fashion in order to achieve status and recognition. Can we say, therefore, that fashion has a

democratizing power, if people can manipulate their image? Is it possible for everybody to craft a successful image and to achieve the status he/she deserves? Does one only need hard work for a powerful identity? What about Bugün Ne Giysem?

İzzet Çapa²¹: Ok, but you can buy a sleeveless t-shirt for 10 million, wear it and combine the bottom properly.

...

Hakan Akkaya (*To İzzet Çapa*) : But we say the same thing every now and then. It has a priority for us.

Nur Yerlitaş (*To the jury members*) : Just a minute. She can buy this romper for 20 liras. But having seen that it has sewing defects, very bad ones, she can go to her mother, or someone else, make it done by a sewing machine, make it fix... In that case, she doesn't have that spirit. A-aaa! She doesn't have the spirit. (*To the contestant*) Come on! You don't have the creative spirit, for nothing you have a spirit! And what's more, you are a ceramics student.²²

What is the stance of Bugün Ne Giysem? towards purchasing power? What can we infer from the dialogue above? What is going on here?

First, İzzet Çapa remarks to Nur Yerlitaş that there is a problem with the side stitches of the contestant's romper.

Nur Yerlitaş thinks that the romper is "awful," whereas İvana Sert and Hakan Akkaya are more positive.

²¹ İzzet Çapa is a guest known for his night clubs.

²² İzzet Çapa: Yani on milyona bi tane atlet tişört alırsın, giyersin, altını kombinlersin.

...

Hakan Akkaya: Ama onu zaten her zaman söylüyoruz. Bizim için zaten önceliği var bizim için.

...

Nur Yerlitaş (*Jüri Üyelerine*): Bi dakika. 20 liraya alabilir o tulumu bakar ki dikiş hatası var çok kötü. Gider annesine, birine bişi bi makina çektirttirir düzel... demek ki ruhu yok a- aaaaa ruhu yok. (*Yarışmacıya*): Ruhun yok. Yapma. yaratıcı ruhun yok. Hiçbir şeye ruhun yok. Bir de sen seramik öğrencisisin.

Therefore, Hakan Akkaya asks the price of the romper, guessing that they are cheap and having been confirmed, states with İvana Sert that for that amount the romper is good.

Nur Yerlitaş argues that the contestant should have made something in order to fix the stitches of the romper and declares that the contestant is “without spirit.” She insists that very good brands might have such sewing defects, which Hakan Akkaya confirms.

This dialogue is a clear example of the contradictory stances of the jury members towards the economic status of the contestants. It would be more appropriate to say that their and the show’s discourse contradicts the jury members’ own attitudes which they involuntarily reveal during the show. The discourse, as stated above, is: “One can be chic even with a little amount of money.” This trope is found again and again during the different episodes of the show. For instance, in the dialogue above, İzzet Çapa argues that the contestant could have made a much better combination with the same amount of money, to which Hakan Akkaya replies that being chic on a small amount of money has a priority for them. In fact, this discourse is one of the founding stones of “Bugün Ne Giysem,” as the main argument on which the show builds its legitimacy. Before proceeding with the implications of this discourse, it would be appropriate to see how the jury members reveal their own attitudes about the economic status of the contestants.

In the first instance, Hakan Akkaya meaningfully asks the price of the romper implying that they are cheap. Then he and İvana Sert state that for the cited amount, the romper were good. This means in fact that the romper “were not good” in absolute terms (in the terms accepted by the jury members), but only in relative terms, “good for a certain amount.” This stance towards the contestant places her outside the reach of the proper taste, because she doesn’t have the economic means to join the circle of proper taste. She can only be chic within her own standards.

A second instance is when Nur Yerlitaş makes a slip of the tongue about the manufacturer of the contestant's romper. She realizes the inconvenience of her expression just in the middle of the word "miserable." This word belies her subsequent claims about the equal standing of small manufacturer's with world-wide known brands in the face of sewing defects. The difference between the two worlds of ordinary clothing and high couture implied here will be further explored. Before that, we return to Hakan Akkaya and his question about the price of the romper.

Asking the price of something, especially of a garment, may be against social decorum according to the social context, and in this conversation, takes on a humiliating aspect. Under the guise of an evaluation of taste, or in fact of a performance in a show, the social milieu of the contestant is judged and humiliated. Asking a price seldom conjures up the weight of the economic status from which people living together can detach themselves even if partially. This is why it is against social decorum. However on Bugün Ne Giysem? it is perhaps the most important activity of the show. The price of every piece of clothing from top to toe including that of the accessories, are asked for. What is surprising however is that every amount is met with the same exclamation of appraisal. For example:

The voice over: Although your garment is unique and it might be rather inappropriate to estimate a price for it, can you say how much it cost?,

Contestant 1: Although used in small quantity, gold dust is gold dust. I mean it cost around 1500-2000.

Voice effect: Wooooow!

...

The voice over: How much did they cost?

Contestant 2: These cost 269 TL.

Voive effect: Wooooow!

...

Özge Ulusoy: Let's begin with your hat. How much did your hat cost?

Contestant 3: My hat is 10 liras.

Wooooow!²³

Bugün Ne Giysem” s discourse of “You can be chic even with a small amount of money,” should be read as “You must be chic even with a small amount of money,” and also simply, “You must shop even with a small amount of money.” So, according to the show, financial capital has nothing to do with one’s capacity for being chic: Everyone is equal in front of fashion.

This assumption resonates perfectly with the neoliberal ideology of individualism, according to which every individual in the search of his/her proper interest is equal and gets his/her proper share based on his/her abilities and hard work. The logic is the same for the democratic republic of fashion of Bugün Ne Giysem: Everyone is equally capable of manipulating the power of image in order to get her proper share, the result hence acquired is

²³ Dışses: Kıyafetinizin bir eşi daha bulunmadığı için belki de fiyat biçmek uygun olmaz ama, ne kadara mal olduğunu bize söyleyebilir misinizi?

Yarışmacı 1: Ne kadar az miktarda da kullanılsa altın tozu altın tozudur. 1500-2000 civarında tuttu.

Ses efekti: Vauuuuv!

.....

Dışses:Ne kadara aldın?

Yarışmacı 2: 269 lira.

Ses efekti: Vauuuuv!

....

Dışses: Şapkandan başlayalım. Ne kadara aldın?

Yarışmacı 3: Şapkam 10 lira.

Ses efekti: Vauuuuv!

being nothing but her own responsibility. This is one of the main blocks on which the legitimacy of the show stands.

There is some truth in Bugün Ne Giysem? s claim for the insignificance of financial means, which makes the claim tenable in the first place. For instance, in an extreme example, the first outfit of the contestant who then ultimately won the contest had a cost of three Turkish Liras (not because the contestant couldn't afford a more expensive garment). What steps in here is the cultural capital, the know-how of the contestant about middle class taste and where to find garments suitable to this taste at astonishingly low prices. Financial capital without cultural capital is rebuked on Bugün Ne Giysem, but the absence of both is what is despised the most. The ideal is to have a good cultural capital with a proper amount of financial capital. It is a matter of class status, which of course is determined both by cultural and financial capital.

The Quick Guide to Become an Authority: Step One

In her thesis Gülseren Aksop, “*Türkiye’de Reality Show’lar*” (Reality Shows in Turkey) shows that in the reality shows of the 1990s figures like doctors, academics and engineers were summoned to the programs as experts. These reality shows were based on real-life stories on the style of third page news, where the shows stepped in as self-declared establishers of justice. Today, the authority figures seem to have become fashion experts.

Arnold writes that “the desire to create a visual simulacrum of status through dress was to have become a defining feature of fashion by late 1980s” (p. 7). Bauman argues in his book *Liquid Modernity* that in the postmodern world, solid authority figures have disappeared, not dissolving authority altogether but leaving instead a plurality of authorities among which

everybody is free to choose (Bauman, 2000). In fact, argues Bauman, it would be more proper to speak of counselors than authorities in the postmodern world. What happened to the authority today?

Power as Pedagogy

Hakan Akkaya: In fact we are going to have an informative aspect. We are going to discuss what we need to make attention while getting dressed, will try to transmit that.²⁴

The show adopts a pedagogical stance. It is the knowledge of getting dressed that it purports to transmit. The Turkish people are constructed as an entity who are deficient in the knowledge of dressing themselves and therefore are in the need of pedagogical intervention. Thus, the jury members, on the basis of their expert knowledge in the fashion industry construct an authority over the public through the show: By judging the contestants, who supposedly represent a microcosm of Turkey, they are, by proxy, judging the public itself.

The jury member's claim of authority over the Turkish people strengthens their authority over the contestants and their authority over the contestants generates authority over the Turkish public. When the show was first aired, the jury members were not as famous as they are now. Considering that fame is in itself a source of authority in today's world, it can be seen how Bugün Ne Giysem? has turned into a machine generating authority for itself. The show started with a low capital of fame and authority and has built upon it to expand in terms of both.

²⁴ Aslında öğretici bi tarafımız da olacak giyinirken, nelere dikkat etmemiz gerektiğini de burda tartışıyo olucaz, aktarmaya çalışıcaz.

As touched upon above, Bauman argues that the solid authority figures have been replaced by a plurality of authorities, in other words, to a culture of counseling (2000). In this thesis, it is argued that the new mediums such as social media, reality shows, or the job market discussed above have become the new source of authority. Today, the new mediums structure the process interpellating the persons to the spaces they open up, and make themselves compulsory. The logic of these mediums does not give space to subversive identities, but do function on a centripetal logic pulling people towards the same ideals and identities. This mechanism is similar to the mechanism through which consumption is made compulsory in our consumer society. The new mediums open up spaces invading the previous modes of existence opening up their own fields of power. They are the new authorities to which people adhere.

Power of Knowledge, Power of Fashion

Hakan Akkaya: Well, what kind of pretension is that? How can you be, like that, the most chic woman of Turkey?

The contestant: Well, I like simplicity. I wanted to look unsophisticated.

Hakan Akkaya: Well, not being sophisticated can mean completely different things. Putting on a plain dress like this does not automatically mean simplicity. Because, your dress and your shoes do not match at all. If you want to be simple, you need to have the same style on the whole... Your hair is not simple but careless; you look like you have

just woken up now. Make-up, there is none on your face. I am kind of looking at you in amazement.²⁵

The exchange is a typical example showing that Bugün Ne Giysem is not only a competition.

A competition in fact is a well-defined activity taking place among rivals striving to win a specific prize or title by fulfilling special criteria. Although spectators can make inferences about the competitors based on their behavior or the results of the competition may affect the competitor's life after it, in theory a competition is a game and takes place in a realm purposefully differentiated from life. It is a realm with its own rules and the lines between the game and the life are clear. However, the exchange above shows that the realm of Bugün Ne Giysem does not have a clear-cut differentiation from life. Most of the times, the judgments of the jury are not framed as a neutral evaluation of the contestants' performances. What is judged under the guise of performance is the very individual herself.

The comment "You are the most careless person I have ever seen to this day," is a good example. The second part of the sentence is also remarkable in its wording, it sounds as if the contestant is the most careless person the jury member has ever seen in his lifetime. The question is not only about the performance of the contestant in Bugün Ne Giysem, but more about her conduct in life in general. The authority of the jury exceeds well beyond the confines of the competition, it establishes itself over the person and the life of the individual.

²⁵ Hakan Akkaya: Peki bu nasıl bir iddia böyle? Türkiye'nin en şık kadını sence bu halde nasıl olabilirsin?

Yarışmacı: Ya ben sadeliği seviyorum. Sade olmak istedim.

Hakan Akkaya: Sade olmak demek hani bambaşka anlamlara da geliyo. İlla böyle dümdüz bi elbise giyip gelmiş demek sade demek olmuyo. Çünkü elbisenle ayakkabının hiç alakası yok. Eğer sade olmak istiyosan tamamen o tarzda olman gerekiyo. Saçların sade değil özensiz. Yataktan kalkmış gibişin. Makyaj hiç yok suratında. Böyle bir şok içinde bakıyorum sana. Yani, bugüne kadar benim gördüğüm en özensiz insan sensin.

The question “What kind of pretention is this?” carries with it the assumption that everybody who comes to the show is pretentious, claiming to be the most chic woman of the year. So Hakan Akkaya’s question: “How can you be, like that, the most chic woman of Turkey?” can be translated as “How dare you come in front of us like that and how dare you, in that attire, pretend to be able to become the most chic woman of Turkey?” By the very fact that her looks do not conform to the canons of fashion, the contestant deserves disapproval. But by bidding for the position of the most chic woman of Turkey, without even demonstrating an elementary knowledge of or care for fashion that could give her a place in the lower echelons of the fashion world, the contestant has stepped out of line and is guilty.

The comments of the jury members about the contestant’s attire unfold as a blend of expert knowledge and emotional reaction, making the authority of the jury all the more powerful. Comments like “I am shocked,” “I couldn’t believe it,” “I am kind of looking at you in amazement,” show how the jury members assumes an emotional position in front of the contestant.

We see the jury members relating to the contestants and their clothing in an emotional way throughout the show, and using the language of emotion to magnify the dramatic effect. Significantly, one member of the jury manifests fewer emotional reactions. She basically gives her opinion based on her “expert knowledge.” If we are to return to our analogy of the game as an arena purposefully differentiated from life, her behavior does shape *Bugün Ne Giysem?* as a place with its own rules without a bearing on life. But this is not to say that she never relates to the contestants via emotions. It is this interplay and intermeshing of the two languages, one of the emotions and the other of fashion expertise, that makes the discourse of *Bugün Ne Giysem?* so powerful.

We can here examine separately the language of fashion expertise and the language of emotions for analytical purposes. The language of fashion expertise is the language of the game, if we are to use this analogy again. It establishes an impersonal sphere in which the competitors' application of fashion rules is judged. The language of emotions, on the other hand, establishes an inter-personal space with one-to-one bonds of emotion between the jury members and the contestant. This is where the very person and life of the contestant as inferred from her podium attire are judged.

Of course, the comments of the jury do not conform to this clear-cut separation. In the majority of the cases, the comments are both emotional and demonstrate expertise like: "Well, not being sophisticated can mean completely different things. Putting on a plain dress like this does not automatically mean simplicity."²⁶ It is this twofold tactic that makes Bugün Ne Giysem to function as a show and also as a technology of subjectification. Without expert knowledge, there would be no basis for legitimate competition. Without the emotional aspect, the judgments would stay within the game without further implications. Their intermeshing results not in the parceling out of a new space out from life but in a direct intervention into it.

Rituals of Humiliation

Nur Yerlitaş: Where are going to with this attire?

The contestant: A dinner, a cocktail...

²⁶ Sade olmak demek hani bambaşka anlamlara da geliyo. İlla böyle dümdüz bi elbise giyip gelmiş demek sade demek olmuyo.

Hakan Akkaya (*Sarcastic*): Well, do you go a lot to this kind of places? (*Referring to the information sheet of the contestant*) You were saying that you don't even go to grocery in an unkempt fashion. Well, do you go there with long gloves like this?

The contestant: (*Nervous*) It is the kind of characteristic feature that I got from where I grew up.

Hakan Akkaya (*Sarcastic*): Does everybody around you wear long gloves like that?

....

Hakan Akkaya: Well, it has been kind of too much for me, I am asking myself whether the fault is with those who buy these clothes and wear them, or with those who put them on the market.²⁷

In this exchange, there is a clear antagonism between the jury and the contestant, mainly provoked by Hakan Akkaya. He behaves as if reacting to the air of arrogance of the contestant. In fact, it is Akkaya who constructs the contestant as an arrogant person and pushes her in such a position by his offensive comments, through using the information sheet, the attire, and the words of the contestant.

He first looks at the information sheet and reads the statement of the contestant about not going anywhere in an unkempt fashion. Hakan Akkaya treats the sentence as an arrogant statement and retaliates mockingly: "You were saying that you don't even go to grocery in an unkempt fashion. Well, do you go there with long gloves like this?"

²⁷ Nur Yerlitaş: Bu kıyafetle nereye gidiyorsunuz?

Yarışmacı: Davet, kokteyl...

...

Hakan Akkaya: Bakımsız bakkala bile gitmem diyomuşsunuz böyle eldivenle mi gidiyorsunuz?

...

Yarışmacı: Benim yetiştiğim yerden aldığım karakteristik özellik budur.

Hakan Akkaya: Çevrende herkes böyle eldiven takıyor mu?

...

Hakan Akkaya: Bana da böyle bi fazla geldi. Acaba bu kıyafetleri alıp giyenlerde mi yanlış yoksa bu kıyafetleri piyasaya sürenlerde mi yanlış?

The contestant is thus pushed into a defensive position and states that being well kept is a characteristic feature she got from where she grew up. Akkaya continues his offense: “Does everybody around you wear long gloves like that?” In fact Hakan Akkaya consciously manipulates the inputs from the contestant to put her in the position of “the arrogant” and himself that of the one “bringing her in the line.” Through this strategy, a dramatic effect is built and increased, making the show more appealing to the audience. And he finishes his attack, by questioning whether the fault lies with those who buy clothes like those of the contestant’s or with those who sell them. In this way, final blow is delivered.

In this way, the jury members take the “raw” contestant and process her into an object of attack. This creates a dramatic situation which they can exploit both for improving their ratings and re-establishing their authority. These ritualized forms of humiliation are for the most part arbitrary, and the one who will get the hardest blow is not easy to guess. This arbitrariness is another point of difference between the US transformation reality TV as analyzed by Hearn and Heyes and Bugün Ne Giysem? In the former, the plot of the story is fixed, with humiliation as the opening scene, and the closing one being its redress. In Bugün Ne Giysem?, the ritual of humiliation has different structural roles. To initiate the ritual is in the hands of the jury members, which gives them a much larger space of action within the plot of the show. It is a form of arbitrariness which shows that the jury members’ power and authority has no clear boundaries, contrary to the case of US transformation TV. Whereas in this latter the experts or the jury members act within the space drawn to them by the plot, the boundaries of the jury members in Bugün Ne Giysem? are much more flexible.

These rituals of humiliation for the most part take the form of a play within a play. The contestant and the jury member are respectively given the roles of the accused and the

prosecutor, and without exception, the accused is found guilty, against the founding law of the “Republic of Fashion.” The jury member sets up the stage, casts the play and performs his part with much exaggeration. Another contestant is rebuked as follows:

Barbaros Şansal: I can talk that way... What is more... paillettes, straps or zippers under your breasts... Whatever... Those shiny things... Like the LED lights of the Bosphorus Bridge... Have literally wrapped you like a salami, made you something out of shape. Why do you do such an injustice to yourself?²⁸

In these humiliation scenes, the jury members relate to the contestant as objects (of rebuke, of contempt, of punishment, etc.) and do not engage in a real dialogue with her. Although there is a conversation between the contestant and the jury member, the exchange, in the last analysis, ends up turning into an offensive monologue of the jury member. The following dialogue is another example:

Hakan Akkaya: And I am sure that backstage... well, as she is the last contestant today, I am sure... You saw all of the girls. You came here with the pretension that you are the best among them. I see that in your eyes. Well... Am I wrong? Please, tell me the truth.

Hakan Akkaya: Have you ever thought like that?

The contestant: No, I didn't Mister Akkaya.

Hakan Akkaya: Should I believe you?

The contestant: I leave that to your own consideration, really.

Hakan Akkaya: Ok I do...

²⁸ Barbaros Şansal: Konuşurum, artı... Göğsünüzün altındaki, payet veya straz veya fermuar... Her neyse o ışıltılar... Boğaz Köprüsü'nün LED ışıkları gibi... Sizi adeta macar salami gibi sarmış, yamuk yumuk bi hale getirmiş. Kendinize bu haksızlığı niye yapıyorsunuz?

The contestant: Well, that's all.

Hakan Akkaya: I believe you because I want to. You really came here in very bad shape.²⁹

In this dialogue, Hakan Akkaya casts the respective roles of the contestant and of himself. He is the clever mind reader whereas the contestant is the pretentious one proven to be ridiculous.

Akkaya pushes her to “confess” her pretentious thoughts about being the best among other contestants, a claim which the contestant constantly rejects. In the end, He says that he would believe the contestant, but only because “he wants to.” Everyone is guilty until proven innocent.

This example is the clearest manifestation of the power of the jury in establishing the truth about the contestants. It is a very common theme that reality shows manipulate reality through selective montage or other techniques. The meta-narrative within which a Reality TV event is presented is of course another very important factor on the way reality in TV is framed

²⁹ Hakan Akkaya: Ya ben sen eminim bi de içerde bi de en son yarışmacı ya. Bütün kızları gördü, herkes içinde en iyi benim iddiasıyla geldin buraya. Gözlerinden bunu anlıyorum zaten. Yanı.. Yanılıyo muyum? Lütfen bana doğruyu söyle.

Yarışmacı: O kadar yani, ahım şahım bi inan... Adı, Türkçesi nedir? İddiam yok yani. İşte budur! Diil.

Hakan Akkaya: Ama, ben bu kızlardan iyiyim demedin mi? Lütfen bak lütfen.

...

Hakan Akkaya: Bunu, aklından geçirdin mi?

Kız: Hayır, geçirmedim Hakan Bey.

Hakan Akkaya: İnaniim mi sana?

Yarışmacı: Size, size bırakıyorum hakkaten.

Hakan Akkaya: Tamam inanı...

Yarışmacı: O kadar...

Hakan Akkaya: İnanmak istediğim için inanıyorum sana. Gerçekten çok kötü geldin, yani...

and manipulated. What is interesting in Bugün Ne Giysem is the fact that the jury members are given an extensive space in the manipulation and framing of the TV reality in Bugün Ne Giysem?

The manipulation factory of Bugün Ne Giysem? is not systematic. It might strike any contestant at any time considered to be tasteless” and spare some others. Those who are hit go through a process where their own realities are broken and reconstituted according to the choices of the jury members. This theme will be explored below. This is a traumatic event on the part of the contestant. On the other side of the screen however, the spectators may partake in the power of the jury, identifying with it rather than with the contestant. The pleasure of power coupled with and increased by the colorful and witty language of the jury members is an important factor that compells the audience to keep watching.

Contrary to the transformation shows in the US, humiliation rituals in Bugün Ne Giysem? end up ostracizing the participant, rather than allegedly reintegrating him/her into the norms. Both types of humiliation serve the purpose of reinstating these norms, one through assimilation and the other through elimination of the deviants. Whereas in the first one the audience identifies with the participant, in the second one it may identify with the authority figures. These are two different strategies to make the audience keep watching.

In sum, through humiliation rituals, the jury members in Bugün Ne Giysem? establish a vertical relationship with the contestants taking a position from which they can manipulate her reality. However, the jury members equally may choose to establish a real dialogue with the contestant without giving up their authority, establishing this time a relationship with more horizontal qualities. The following section is based on the analysis of this type of relationship.

Welcome to the Club

Hakan Akkaya: ... Well, apart from these, I really like your bracelet. In fact, there is not much to say. You interpreted this in a very accurate way.

The contestant: Thank you.

Hakan Akkaya: I congratulate you.

The contestant: Thank you.

İvana Sert: Banu! Super!

The contestant: Merci!

İvana Sert: I like it. There is a style. I am seeing it. Well you have... I, I don't get tired. I mean I can see what you have tried to do in what style and it is clear. I am happy.

The contestant: Thank you.³⁰

The attire of the contestant is very much appreciated by the jury members, who form a real dialogue with the contestant and establish a horizontal relationship with her. There is no play within the play, and the jury members are not assigning themselves a new role in which they perform as the advocates of the contestant. They are treating the contestant as a human being and as a subject on her own terms rather than as an object of scorn. This intersubjectivity emerges in

³⁰ Hakan Akkaya: ... Onun dışında, cidden hani, bilekliğini çok beğendim. Sende zaten üzerine çok konuşulacak bişi yok. Sen bunu çok doğru bi şekilde yorumlamışsın.

Yarışmacı: Teşekkür ederim.

Hakan Akkaya: Tebrik ediyorum.

Yarışmacı: Teşekkür ederim.

İvana Sert: Banu. Süper!

Yarışmacı: Çok merci.

İvana Sert: Beğendim. Bi tarz var. Görüyorum. Böyle kendine, yo... yorulmuyorum yani ne tarzında ne yapmaya çalıştığın falan ve görüyorum netli, mutluyum.

Yarışmacı: Teşekkür ederim.

the cases of the contestants whose attire is appreciated or whom the jury members find sympathetic, or who have good energy, as the jury members put it.

In this way, the show moves along the axis of inter-subjectivity and objectification, which is another building block making the show attractive to its viewership. Basing the show entirely on the objectification of the contestants by a scornful and antipathetic jury would not work, as it would not be a show with a jury treating all of its contestants as subjects to be addressed in a gentle way. As the subjects strive to get recognition from the jury members, the ones who get recognition and the ones who don't are, of course, not treated equally. But it must first be explained what is meant by recognition in this context before proceeding further.

It has been stated that new mediums today open up new spaces interpellating people to new neoliberal subjectivities. Today's reality shows are among these new mediums which *Bugün Ne Giysem?* is an example. Almost all of the contestants on the show come with high self-esteem, believing that they will succeed. They aspire to get the confirmation of their belonging to the new neoliberal normativity and to get recognition in that respect. They do not anticipate that they might be cast out of the system violently, rejected from a club to which they apparently never belonged. This is why there is a huge difference between the way the successful and failing contestants are treated, apart from its being used as a dramatic technique for improving ratings. As like any club, the club of *Bugün Ne Giysem?* is harsh against aspiring candidates who fail to understand and apply its norms.

What is interesting about this whole process is the fact that some contestants judged to have "a good energy" or a "beautiful soul" but who are not chic at all may pass the jury even after receiving much negative criticism by its members. These are contestants, whom the jury

members personally like, and frequently who express their wish to learn how to dress properly.

The following dialogue is an example:

Hakan Akkaya: You are a woman with such a beautiful soul.

The contestant: Thank you.

Hakan Akkaya: But you are not chic.

The contestant: But I want to be. You are the experts. Make me chic.

...

Hakan Akkaya: I want to hand you over Handan. Handan...

The contestant: Honestly, hand me over...

Hakan Akkaya: For her to make you beautiful.

The contestant: Hand me over! Hand me over to her!

...

Uğurkan Erez: These are what I will say. You have a good energy. I believe that you will learn how to suit better. You said you came here to learn and that pleased me so much.³¹

³¹ Hakan Akkaya: Ruhu çok güzel bi kadınsın.

Yarışmacı: Teşekkür ederim.

Hakan Akkaya: Ama şık diilsin.

Yarışmacı: Olmak istiyorum ama. Siz uzmansınız. Beni yap...

...

Hakan Akkaya: Seni ben Handan'ın eline vermek istiyorum. Handan...

Yarışmacı: Verin ya vallahi.

Hakan Akkaya: Seni biraz süslesin.

Yarışmacı: Verin verin.

...

Uğurkan Erez: Yani benim söyleceklerim bu. Güzel enerjin var. Ben inanıyorum yani sen daha da yakıştıracan. Öğrenmeye dedin o çok hoşuma gitti.

In this dialogue, the contestant had applied everything she had learned by watching the show, although the result was not so successful. Hakan Akkaya and Uğurkan Erez openly say that she is not chic, whereas Ivana Sert abstains from commenting “in front of such a cheerful lady.”³² In the end, all jury members vote in her favor. There is no objectification of the contestant but this doesn’t mean that she receives full recognition. She, in fact, is accepted as an aspiring candidate to join the club.

In sum, there are two basic strategies which the jury members of Bugün Ne Giysem employ in dealing with the contestants, and the show navigates along this axis. The first is the ritual of humiliation which tears apart the contestant’s own reality and establishes upon her the “truth” set by the jury members. There is a vertical relationship between the jury and the contestants and the latter is objectified. It must be said, however, that the contestants do not always passively receive this process as discussed above. The second strategy is the establishment of a real dialogue, treating the contestants as subjects in their own terms rather than as objects at their mercy. The secondary ones are recognized by the jury whereas the first ones are not, and the club welcomes its new members outcasting the rest.

The Brave New World of Narrative

Narrative as Melodrama

The contestant has three children. It is one of them who encouraged her mother to join the show. Normally, she works as manager in textile business but not at the moment. The contestant exchanges a conversation with the jury members where it is revealed that she

³² Ivana Sert: Ya bu kadar neşeli hanım karşıda...

never saw her mother and that she was raised by her grandmother. The contestant also says that she recently saw her mother as a walker on, while watching a movie on television, for the first time, and states that she has always been unfortunate in life. She cannot pass the jury.

The contestant conceives of her life as a melodrama. She views it as a series of unfortunate events, the major one being her growing up without a mother. Details like her having seen her mother as a walker on in television for the first time magnifies the dramatic effect of the narrative. The contestant also treats *Bugün Ne Giysem?* as a once in a lifetime event with enormous bearing on one's life.

The life narrative of the contestant appears as a succession of misfortunes, of which *Bugün Ne Giysem?* is nothing but the latest. Although she will continue to strive to fend off its bad luck, the promise of happiness is passed onto the next generation.

But why should success on a reality show be that important, unfolding as a drama implicating a whole life story? Not all of the contestants go that far in assigning such an important place to the contest, so what is going on here? The answer of this question lies in the sentence that the contestant directs to her daughter: "... but I am sure that you will come to a better position."³³

One can have a social position, an economic position, a position in a career, but what does it mean to associate a position with one's good performance in front of a fashion jury? The contestant's regret is not about losing the chance to win the competition. She is not referring to the economic aspect of the show, which could bring her a fairly good prize, hence a better [economic] position. Where then, are we to find this "better position" in the show?

³³ ... ama eminim sen daha güzel yerlere geleceksin.

Like this contestant in particular, there are many contestants who treat the show as an experience much more important than a simple contest, and this fact is linked to the promise of recognition that the show distributes, which was discussed above. The show is an initiation ceremony, a ritual, almost a rite of passage. It symbolizes the passage to the neoliberal promise for which the contestants strive. However, unlike real rites of passages, the status of the contestant does not always change for the good. Most of the times, they leave the ceremony reduced in terms of this latter.

Narrative as Endeavor, Narrative Dismissed

The contestant: No. Believe me. I put a lot of effort into this. I so much worked on that.

...

The contestant: Hmm... I have changed four tailors. I had them sew four different dresses. Their stitches, all of them...

...

The contestant: I have realized that I was not getting dressed as a woman until this competition...

...

The contestant: My heart is really broken... I put in so much work; so much effort, and I had my goals. Hmm... I had so many hopes, but now, I am so disillusioned.³⁴

The contestant's story is one of endeavor in which she works hard to achieve her goals. This theme appears every now and then, and is presented in chronological order during the dialogue.

³⁴ Yarışmacı: Hayır inanın çok emek harcadım bunun için.

...

Yarışmacı: İııı... Dört tane terzi değiştirdim. İıı... Dört tane ayrı kıyafet diktirdim. Dördünün de dikişleri...

...

Yarışmacı: Ben... İı... Bugüne kadar aslında bi kadın olarak giyinmediğimi fark ettim. Ta ki bu yarışmaya kadar.

...

Yarışmacı: Şu an, aslında biraz, kalbim de kırıldı. İşin açıkçası...

...

Yarışmacı: Gerçekten kalbim çok kırıldı. Yani o kadar uğraştım, o kadar koşturdum ve hedeflerim vardı. İııı... Çok umutluydum ama şu an gerçekten büyük hayal kırıklığı oldu bende.

It is, however, the statements of the contestant about how she has learned to dress as a woman thanks to Bugün Ne Giysem? that reveals the reason behind the contestant's endeavor: In this narrative, dressing as a woman and improving on this subject is given a disproportional importance.

Unable to pass the jury, the contestant expresses her disillusionment, stating that she had her goals and hopes. She states that maybe her life would take a different shape. In this scenario, the experience of Bugün Ne Giysem? is a life changing event, as in the case of the previous contestant discussed above.

What is interesting in this exchange is the reaction of the jury members to this narrative. They are not interested at all in the narrative of the contestant. No matter how much she insists on sustaining her presence within the show, the jury members try to send her away. As the contestant tries to finish her narrative about Bugün Ne Giysem? and to round out the cycle in order to cope psychologically with the situation, the jury members behave as if they are oblivious to this fact.

This is maybe surprising, considering that Bugün Ne Giysem? also thrives on feeding on the narratives of the contestants. The show's import is built by the contestants as much as by the show itself. It presents a framework which pulls the contestants towards investing different meanings in the show. Not all of the contestants ascribe the same importance to it, as a life changing event, but almost all of them give it a meaningful place within the span of their life narratives. Bugün Ne Giysem? becomes an event, having consequences in one's life.

This character of event is not special to Bugün Ne Giysem? and can frequently be found in other reality shows such as transformation TV as narrated by Hearn and Heyes or in shows like Big Brother is Watching You. For example, some of the contestants in Nick Couldry's

article “Big Brother as Ritual Event” profess to view the show as a confrontation with one’s own life (2002). However, this invested meaning finds its expression outside the confines of these reality shows in question, either in the minds of their participants or in other outlets if they ever come to be voiced. The narratives in these shows are imposed from above unlike in the case of Bugün Ne Giysem?

For example, on the U.S. makeover show *Extreme Makeover*, the story of a female soldier who wants to have a more “feminine” look is fixed by the show crew from the very beginning : “An extreme makeover transforms this tough soldier from captain to captivating!” (Heyes, 2007, p.25). In all episodes, the plot is set and everybody knows the happy ending. Both in the cases of *Big Brother* and transformation TV, the meanings invested to the shows by the participants do not partake in the principal narrative structure of the shows. Bugün Ne Giysem? is different in that respect. The contestants bring in their own narrative, to which the jury members have their own reactions. They might remain oblivious to it, violate it or exploit it depending on the situation. The narratives of the contestants bring additional content and drama to the show, sparing the show crew from additional labor.

Why do the contestants behave as if they were waiting for Bugün Ne Giysem? to invest meanings on? It has already been said that the show is a rite of passage to the new neoliberal field, which supposedly grants everybody equal access to the riches of neoliberalism no matter what his/her economic class. Neoliberalism pretends to invite everybody to the same dream but it is only the upper classes which live it (Camaroff, and Camaroff, 2000). But the meanings and the place that the contestants ascribe to it cannot be explained solely by that.

We live by creating our own universe of meanings. This is an ordered system in which human beings ascribe significance, importance, and meanings to objects, persons, and events, in

sum, to everything. Each item has a relationship to the others, either causal or hierarchical. This ordered system can be thought of as a three dimensional map of meanings, guiding human beings throughout their journey of life. It is a system of values without which we cannot have a reason to act and would not know what to do in front of a myriad of equally meaningless options. In short, human beings need to invest meaning in things in order to live.

This question of meaning is individual and social at the same time. Human beings do partake in the social value system of their own milieu, but this does not mean that their value system is a replica of the common social one. There is always room for individual differences within this dynamic system of values and meanings.

Today, it is a common theme in the quotidian language that contemporary society has lost its values and become corrupted with the advent of consumerism. It is true that the old value systems have lost their relevance. How should we fill the gap?

The contestants of *Bugün Ne Giysem?* have chosen to fill the gap through investing their meanings in this contest. The show becomes a most plausible candidate in today's world, holding the promise of new ideals, new purposes and new goals, becoming a value system of its own, a guiding spirit. This is the brave new world of *Bugün Ne Giysem?*

Narrative Assaulted and the Prerogatives of the Upper Classes

Barbaros Şansal: Well now, about her wearing polyester, satin... She is a girl working as a salesperson with known means. For the dress, it is not a work done by a tailor or something. It is baggy at the belly. It is baggy at the front. Well, about the dress... She too knows that she cannot be chic with that dress. She knows her own means. She is an intelligent girl.

Hakan Akkaya: This is why one shouldn't wear them.

...

Barbaros Şansal: Well, I make haute couture. I mean, I don't understand dresses sold by 48 installments on a credit card.

Hakan Akkaya: No. No. This is not what I am talking about. I mean while designing a new combination, don't you recommend our customers which shoes, what bag to wear?

Barbaros Şansal: How would we dare? Even as someone in that business, we are not such artisans who can afford, who have the means to buy, the bags, the shoes that are used by our customers.³⁵

In this episode, the preparations of the contestants before the day of the contest is filmed and presented, and in this way the audience can observe the contestants outside the ritualistic event of the presentation to the jury and in that way it is possible to observe the contestant in her everyday reality. Confrontation with the jury, in fact, means confrontation with another value system, potentially challenging the one embraced by the contestant herself and may be a destabilizing experience. It has already been said that humiliation rituals violate the reality of the contestants in order to intrude the show's own realities. This example is a clear manifestation of this process.

In the shopping section shot by the show's crew, but not included in the appendix, we view a young, beautiful lady who is excited about the show and who reserved 1000 Turkish Liras budget for her shopping, an average amount for Turkey close to the minimum monthly wage.

³⁵ Barbaros Şansal: Şimdi benim polyester saten giymesı... O bi satıř elemanı olarak alıřan belli imkanları olan bi kıız. Elbise iin, zaten bi dikiř deęil, terzi elinden ıkma deęil. Beli kırık yapıyo. Önü kırık yapıyo. Elbise iin... Bu elbise ile řık olamayacağını kendi de biliyo. Kendi imkanlarını biliyo. Aklı başında bi kıız.

Hakan: İşte onun iin giymemek lazım.

...

Barbaros Şansal: E ben haute couture yapıyorum. Ben kredi kartına 48 taksit elbiseden anlamam yani. Hakan Bey.

Hakan Akkaya: Hayır hayır onu demiyorum. Yani řimdi kombin ederken müşterilerinizin elbisesine, ayakkabı ne giyeceğini anta ne giyeceğini önermiyo musunuz?

...

Barbaros Şansal: Ne haddimize bizim müşterimizin kullandığı antayı ayakkabıyı... Biz bu işi yapan biri olarak bile bedelini ödeyebilecek, alacak güçte esnaflar deęiliz.

She is not pretentious, but says that she does not fear her competitors expecting everybody to make some mistakes. After her shopping, on the determined day, she is in front of the jury.

Here, she is humiliated along the low class/high class axis, reducing her to null in front of this latter. Her reality as a well-to do contented girl is attacked and replaced with that of the naïve low class member who, because of her very class position cannot even dream of being chic. This time, it is Barbaros Şansal who among the jury members violates the reality of the contestant to establish his own reality.

The contestant, and in the example of her and with her the Turkish public cannot be chic, as they know their means. Barbaros Şansal makes haute couture, not garments on 48 installments on credit card. In fact, he is even angry with such an inferior kind of shopping for contaminating the real world of shopping and fashion, where even its artisans are far from being able to afford their own products. The basic criteria for being chic and therefore for status, is, for Şansal, having enough money. Hakan Akkaya is not of the same opinion with him and argues that they, as designers, should guide their customers in terms of how to combine different pieces. For Barbaros Şansal, this is unthinkable.

In Bugün Ne Giysem's ideology, being chic is the prerogative of high society, which they jealously safeguarded because it confers them status. The rest, outside this circle, among whom the contestants of Bugün Ne Giysem, can only be relatively (not really) chic and play the game within their own confines. On the other hand, as previously explored, the show propagates the ideology that "One can be chic even with a small amount of money." In fact, Bugün Ne Giysem is built on the simultaneous confirmation and denial of the prerogatives of high society.

Low Class Values and the Prerogatives of the High Classes

İvana Sert: She might be a singer. All the singers would take her as an example. Well, as and example, I say “You are not with us.”

Nur Yerlitaş: Ok, I don’t say “Oh she is gorgeous; I need to make a duplicate for Seda Sayan (*A famous Turkish Singer*).” She is a singer, I say, we help her. I mean, maybe she will change her style, because, well, she makes money out of it.

Hakan Akkaya: I can’t be able to use such an initiative. Your job is intimately linked to visibility.³⁶

In this passage, the reaction of each jury member stems from discourses and rationalities that not only differ among each other, but also from the discourse of the fashion expertise on which the show’s legitimacy stands. For instance, Nur Yerlitaş builds her argument in favor of the contestant totally on a mixture of senses apparently originating from an unknown place. Thus she states that she “felt something,” that she “didn’t want her [the contestant] to go.” However, the only positive comment that she makes about the attire of the contestant is that her dress “is not bad,” on which she insists in order to convince her colleagues.

It must be stated here that the contestant appeared on the podium in the stage costumes that she uses as a singer at a restaurant in Bayrampaşa. This means that the attire of the contestant is legitimate and deemed appropriate in certain milieus. As a result, the judgments of

³⁶ İvana Sert: Şarkıcı olmuş olabiliriz bütün Türk şarkıcılar bunu örnek alıcak. Yani örnek olarak bizimle değilsin diyorum.

Nur Yerlitaş: Ben de aman çok müthiş, aynısını Seda Sayan’a yapıim demiyorum. Şarkıcılık yapıyor. Ben... Yardımcı olalım, belki stilini değiştirir. Çünkü para kazanıyor.

Hakan Akkaya: Ben böyle inisiyatif kullanamayacağım. Sizin mesleğiniz görsellikle içiçe.

the jury are addressed directly to the person of the contestant as a singer, this time much more so than the other contestants whose jobs are without special requirements for dressing.

For instance, in the following sentence, we understand that Nur Yerlitaş does want the contestant to stay because she wants to help her, that she “maybe will change her style” because “she makes money out of it.” Here, the contestant is not addressed at all as a competitor in a competition; she is rather constructed as a singer in need of help so that she can earn money from her job through changing her style.

This is rather ironic in that the contestant does not have a problem with her garments in earning money. Her application for the show has nothing to do with changing her job wardrobe, but is about winning a competition. However, her appearance on the show becomes a showcase for humiliating a stratum of lower class Turkish singers in general. The contestant is not judged as a person, she is judged as a restaurant singer, and all the restaurant singers are judged in her person. Her (their) “lower status” is sealed and mocked for well, by the assumedly well-intentioned sentence of Nur Yerlitaş: “I don’t say that ‘Oh she is gorgeous; I need to make a duplicate to Seda Sayan!’”

Although humiliation, ridiculing and rebuke are the order of the day in Bugün Ne Giysem the class dimension of the exchange above is striking. It is a confrontation between high class taste and lower class taste. All the jury members take a different stance. Nur Yerlitaş wants to “help” the contestant acquire good taste, which would supposedly help her in her job; Ivana Sert is appalled by this confrontation “with the taste of lower classes” and declares that “the shoes are disgusting,” whereas Hakan Akkaya is less moved by this confrontation but nevertheless ridicules the contestant’s stage costume as declaring that it looks like a disco ball, which implies a ridicule of the contestant’s job and social milieu.

We have discussed how Nur Yerlitaş based her judgments on the basis of an urge to help the contestant, who supposedly lacks critical knowledge of fashion necessary for her job. Ivana Sert, on the other hand, states that she eliminates the contestant as an example to all other singers. For her, this “low class taste” as exemplified by the contestant’s attire is unacceptable in the world of “high class taste,” and should be put in its place immediately.

But why is Ivana Sert so rigid against this particular contestant, even though she has seen many other contestants with similar styles from similar social milieus? This fact is understandable if we again take into consideration that the contestant came with her stage costumes to the podium, meaning that she came there as a representative of a milieu where her attire is legitimate, appropriate and even beautiful. She therefore appears as the holder of another discourse. This discourse (not the contestant) claims a legitimacy of equal standing to the discourse of style and fashion employed in Bugün Ne Giysem and it is this, which is unacceptable. And finishes the discussion Hakan Akkaya, stating that the contestant’s job is intimately linked to visibility. One by one the contestant is considered for being helped, put in her place, taught about her job, and ultimately eliminated from the show.

We should state that none of the jury members found the attire of the contestant as sufficiently fulfilling the required criteria to get a ticket to the semi-final. It is Nur Yerlitaş who pushes her colleagues to use their initiative, who exchange their views as we have seen above and eliminate the contestant based on different motives. This part shows how different considerations than fashion may be the basis for judging a contestant and the extent to which this judgment can become arbitrary in its unfolding.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This thesis started from the premise that neoliberalism hails individuals to new subjects positions following the regulationist insight that capitalism is a system always prone to crisis if not supported by an appropriate social basis (Nilges, 2008, p.27-28). Accordingly, new forms of subjectivity and of social relations are necessary for the functioning of this new phase of capitalism, as was necessary for the old ones. (p. 28). Hence, individuals are called by neoliberalism to new subject positions where they are required to be autonomous, individualistic, flexible, expressing themselves through consumption, and molding their identity through new technologies of subject formation. It is this latter on which this thesis focused to try to understand another aspect of neoliberal subjectivity. This new form of neoliberal subjectivity is promoted as a harbinger of a new freedom, which in fact is the transmogrification of new forms of neoliberal exploitation (Harvey, 2007) which puts the burden of worsening economic conditions on the shoulders of individuals.³⁷ The aim of this thesis was to delineate the mechanisms through which individuals are being drawn into these new subject positions. One of these mechanisms, self-display, is the subject of this thesis. The study of the reality show *Bugün Ne Giysem?* was used as a case in order to understand the mechanisms in question.

Self-display was defined as the conscious or unconscious manipulation of one's image in order to put it into circulation in various social markets such as social media, the job market, or reality shows. Self-display results in self-commodification with the aim of acquiring a certain

³⁷ Self-branding, a specific form of self-display, consisting in relating to oneself as a brand to be improved in the job market is proposed as a solution to the individual under the new macroeconomic conditions.

quantifiable value of attention within the fields opened up by neoliberalism. These new fields, such as social media, the new reality shows, and the new job market have become together a new field in which the actors strive to enter into, which is a normativity that at this instance I call neoliberal. Furthermore, belonging to this field opened up by neoliberalism's different mediums and striving to improve one's relative position within this field has been conflated, and the fight for remaining within the field and for improving one's position in it has become the same thing. To improve one's position means to acquire more visibility, hence more attention in an economy of attention, in the pursuit of the desire to be recognized by the system embodied by individuals. This new field invades and even marginalizes the previous modes of social existence, expanding at a remarkable pace. The proliferation of the social sharing site Facebook and the place it assumes in people's lives, with 800 million active users, is an example that shows the importance of this culture today.

As was argued, there are two basic channels from which self-display emanates. These are the changes brought about by the advent of neoliberalism and the new developments in the culture industry. As mentioned above, new forms of subjectivity are necessary for the transition to a new phase of capitalism. Hence, these new forms of subjectivity are the result and the vehicle of the passage from Fordism to post-Fordism.

In Fordism, there was an agreement between the unions and capital through the mediation of the state, the first accepting the alienating working conditions in return for job and retirement security. The Fordist society gave its members the capacity to belong to and to be recognized through waged work, and the subjectivity in postFordism was based on the values of mass consumption, modernism, state welfarism and the adoption of the male breadwinner nuclear family model. In post-Fordism however, there is no job or retirement security or welfare state.

The individual is left to his/her own means and this new situation is presented as the dawning of a new age. There are a number of “solutions” offered to him/her, such as self-enterprising, self-branding, coaching and self-commodification. All these four treat the individual body as the source and the site of the resolution of global macroeconomic problems. What is more, individuals are no longer equal in front of recognition as in the Fordist model. Some get more and some get less. However, as was argued, this is not the only way that human subjectivity is put into use. It became also the material of the culture industry.

Adorno and Horkheimer distinguish between high modern culture and mass commercial culture, which they define as selling standardized cultural goods in order to manipulate the masses. In postmodernity, however, the line between these two has been blurred and high modern culture has started to use elements from popular culture. Today, however, after recycling the previous decades, the culture industry, short of creating new content, uses human subjectivity as its new material. It is the time of consumer generated media, and our very lives, narratives, subjectivities are consumed. The use of this media frees capital from the process of production and capitalizes on the attention of the consumers through advertisements without having the pains of producing anything (Beller, 2006). Not surprisingly, this material is constituted by the individuals themselves who display their privacy, their narratives, and their lives, hence their very existence for consumption. It is what exactly happens on *Bugün Ne Giysem?*

Bugün Ne Giysem? is a reality show on fashion. Reality TV was explored as a genre in order to better understand its mechanisms of functioning. It was observed that the definitions of RTV stress the unscripted and structured nature of RTV, which may seem contradictory at first glance, but which in fact are complementary, meaning that they do not have a preset scenario and instead have specific rules which set the conditions guiding the actions of the participants. It was

observed that definitions from the literature surveyed for this study do seem not to contain the fact that RTV uses human subjectivity as its material.

Windle's argument that Reality Shows are a vehicle of public pedagogy, which she defines as spreading the discourse of neoliberal learner-worker was also adopted. In fact, as was argued in this thesis, Reality TV teaches people how to become neoliberal subjects by intruding at the level of desire. Thus RTV was defined as a vehicle of public pedagogy, functioning on the basis of the consumption of the subjectivity of real people in a structured but unscripted format.

Another concept, which was called convention, meaning the repeating patterns of similar behavior by different participants throughout different episodes, also was treated, revealing a difference between the RTV in the US and Turkey. This concept was contrasted with Dubrofsky's concept of constructed fiction to understand this difference (2006). This latter means that personas and events in the show are being constructed through selective montage. The material provided by the participants is turned into a narrative by the show's crew, limiting the possibilities for the participants to manipulate their own images, mostly in terms of the disfavor of the participant. In Turkey, however, conventions seem to guide the actions of the participants, and rather than limiting self-display, are providing a map with which this latter can actualize.

A number of concepts drawn from the RTV literature were studied, namely narcissism, pornographic displays of emotions, makeover, voyeurism, and enframing. Narcissism was analyzed as a primary drive for self-display, another desire which neoliberalism puts to its own use. It has been argued that individuals do not act with the motivation of commodifying themselves, but that their narcissistic concerns can bear but this fruit. Some portrayals of extreme

emotions were defined as pornographic, based on their exaggerated and unrealistic nature, based on the insight that the place of extreme emotions is the private realm just like sexuality, which otherwise may stigmatize the person as dangerous (Dubrofsky, 2006), unstable or suspicious. It was observed that the display of pornographic emotions can be manipulated both by the participants for fame and by the shows. In the Turkish case, the first is more prevalent and in the U.S. the second. This difference between US and Turkish RTV corresponds to the difference between Dubrofsky's concept of "constructed fiction" and conventions in Turkey because in the US, in the case of pornographic displays of emotions, the self-display of the participant is much more manipulated and framed by the show team, whereas in Turkey, the manipulation is much more left to the participant, although not entirely.

Another important difference between RTV in the US and Turkey arises in the case of U.S. makeover shows. American makeover shows are based on the narrative of a happy ending, whereas in the Turkish case the result of the game for the participant is not certain from the beginning. In America, the participants (or their houses) are transformed by the benevolent show crew members according to the neoliberal fetishes of beauty, youth and consumerism, through changing their style, or through cosmetic surgery and so on with the ostensible aim of making the inner beauty of the participants externally visible (Heyes, 2007). This is a trope where the show content is manipulated to produce a happy ending favourable to the participant. In *Bugün Ne Giysem?* however, the jury is not responsible for the transformation of the participant. She is left to her own means. There is no established culture of makeover shows in Turkey. This has been explained by the salience of the American dream in United States which has little currency in Turkey, where instead exists a culture of hitting the jackpot through shrewd and luck.

As for voyeurism, it was discussed how the change throughout the history of the concept also bears witness to the change in the history of self-display and privacy. For this conclusion, Baruh's definitions of pathological voyeurism, defined as a compulsion to secretly observe the preferred gender in erotic situations, voyeurism as a normal trait to be observed in individuals seeking information that is otherwise inaccessible and trait voyeurism which is enjoyed opportunistically rather than secretly was discussed (2010). It was argued that this was more proof that the object of voyeurism is today in open air, as people cut off their privacy into consumable pieces to be displayed in public, like in the example of Facebook where people "share" their private moments with an online community. This means that the argument that the boundaries between the public and the private have been blurred is not sufficient to describe today's condition as in fact today, the private remains private, but it is displayed in the public bazaar. This is how voyeurism today has become an activity that we all engage in, voluntarily or involuntarily, as we are exposed to private material every now and then on the Internet or on television. Today, voyeurism is no longer forbidden, but encouraged.

As a last concept, enframing, which means that RTV participants are confined to the frame in which they have been presented in the show, was discussed. RTV participants get stuck in their own image and become commodified. RTV seems anchored in reality, but it is a closed space with its own reality where representations are animated like shadow puppets, which is the same as social media. A discussion of the broader picture of neoliberalism is necessary, in order to better situate Bugün Ne Giysem? which is a product of this milieu.

Neoliberalism has been an ideology which first addressed upper middle classe and to which now the lower classes continue and wish to be incorporated in order to become part of the neoliberal promise of endless consumption (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2000). Through the show

Bugün Ne Giysem? aspiring members of the lower middle class are drawn into a form of normativity, which at this point I have no other name for than neoliberal, of which at the same time they volunteer to be a part. This is a fight to win approval as a member of the new neoliberal field, to which Bugün Ne Giysem? operates as an entry point.

Bugün Ne Giysem? navigates between two strategies: rituals of humiliation and of recognition. Through the rituals of humiliation, the contestant is treated like an object and her own sense of reality is violated on which the jury members impose their own “truth.” The second ones are treated as subjects on their own terms and their entry to the neoliberal field, hence their recognition, is secured. In this respect, the show performs like a rite of passage. However, the participants are not passive victims of this process. They share the responsibility of their own subjectification with the show. They voluntarily submit to the show’s authority, by displaying themselves to the jury members. In this case, the authority of the system is embodied by the jury members who function as the gatekeepers to the field opened up by the show.

At this point, it is important to remember the question of authority addressed in this study. A decade ago, Zygmunt Bauman discovered that solid forms of authority had been dissolved with the advent of postmodernism, leaving itself to a culture of counseling (2000). Today, as is argued by this thesis, the mediums, or the structures have become the authorities, interpellating individuals to the spaces they open up, turning themselves into compulsory mechanisms for the actualization of this process.. The logic of these mediums does not give space to subversive identities, but does function on a centripetal modality pulling people towards the same neoliberal ideals and identities. These mediums themselves are the mechanisms which both open up and dictate their own fields of power, and this new form of authority has no face, as was argued in the chapter on Bugün Ne Giysem?

To consume also has become a dictate, as has been observed by scholars long ago. It was stated that Baudrillard argued that commodities function as signs, and that there is no basis for distinguishing real needs from artificial ones. It was argued that consumption today is neither driven by need nor desire, but by the compulsion to consume. Similarly, in the case of *Bugün Ne Giysem?* the desire to subject oneself to authority is often blended with a sense of duty and reverence. But it must be said that one has to believe in the legitimacy of an authority in order to voluntarily submit oneself.

Bugün Ne Giysem? builds its legitimacy on a discourse of equality. “One can be chic with a small amount of money” is the motto of the show. This discourse fits perfectly with the neoliberal ideology that a society is composed of individuals who according to their abilities and effort get the place they deserve within it. As *Bugün Ne Giysem?* argues that everybody is equal in front of fashion no matter what her means, fashion emerges as a democratizing force according to the discourse of the show. It is this discourse that is one of the building blocks on which the show’s legitimacy stands, and which makes the show appealing to a large public. However, this is not the only means through which the show builds its legitimacy.

To build legitimacy without losing their power, the jury members use two languages: one of expertise and the other of emotions. This twofold strategy respectively establishes an impersonal and an interpersonal relationship with the contestants. The first legitimizes the show as a fair game with set rules, and the second gives the jury the power to manipulate the content of the show according to the show’s requirements. These are the two ways to make the show legitimate in the eyes of the contestants and of the audience. However, contrary to the show’s discourse, we observe that the jury members are in fact distinguishing between upper and lower

classes, no matter how they try to stress equality, and in fact believe that it is only the upper classes that have the prerogative of being *really* chic.

A few words about the content of the show must also be said, which is the subjectivity of its contestants. Media studies have gone so far as to say that the consumer supply the content, but today, one step further, the subjectivity of individuals are consumed as individuals come to the show, and present their narratives, which are consumed by the audiences. These might be narratives of melodrama, narratives of endeavor, or narratives of a long-suffered illness. These narratives are sometimes dismissed by the jury members, sometimes welcomed, sometimes mocked or sometimes assaulted, in which case the show imposes its own truth on the individual. Whatever its form, these narratives become an object of consumption for the audience.

To return to the broader picture, so far it has been discussed how individuals display themselves in order to enter into circulation as commodities in the new field's economy of attention opened up by neoliberalism. This they do in order to acquire the recognition of the system embodied by the individuals and to join the neoliberal normativity. But recognition is not the only drive that pushes people to self-display. *Bugün Ne Gıysem* also offers meaning and belonging.

Human beings need to invest meaning into things in order to be able to live. Today, the old value systems have lost their validity. Therefore, *Bugün Ne Gıysem?* emerged as a candidate, holding the promise of new ideals, new purposes and new goals, and became a value system of its own.

Having analyzed self-display in such detail, there is a big question to be answered: What is being displayed? And this question brings with it that of authenticity. I argue that individuals, from the raw material of their selves, choose among the available elements and form an image

accordingly. In the example of Facebook , for instance, where the possibility of manipulating the content has reached extraordinary dimensions, people can choose what pictures upload to in their accounts, what activities they announce they will be attending, and what comments they make on their personal messages. This forms a representation which enframes them. As a result, what is being displayed is neither authentic nor inauthentic. On Bugün Ne Giysem for instance, not only do the contestants display themselves but also, maybe more than them, the jury members engage in self-display. They turn themselves into a performance, choosing among the material they draw from among their subjectivity. The questions of authenticity and of self-display are intimately related to the question of performance. It is what Caner Toygar does when breaking a glass on his head. The age of self-display is also the age of performance. We are all turning ourselves into a performance, through self-display, in RTV, in social media, or in the job market.

I have talked a great deal about self-display. It is maybe also because of my personal history. In the beginning of this project, I had in mind two instincts: The first was an urge to understand the neoliberal transformation and the second the unease I felt. All of the people projecting their activities, their pictures, their relationships were making me feel as if I was deficient, unable to produce and live satisfactorily. I was deluded by their presentation, which in fact was a craftily constructed image. It was when I read Nurdan Gürbilek, *The New Cultural Climate in Turkey: Living in a Shop Window* that the broader picture started to become clearer.

Gürbilek relates that during the neoliberal transition in Turkey, commodities filled the windows, where they were displayed after a history of scarcity. The 1970s was a decade when commodities were stocked by the capital in order to engage in black marketing in a country with a de facto embargo placed on it, in an economic and petrol crises (Doğan, 2010). I realized that it was now, the people, who were being displayed in show cases. It was on Facebook, it was on

RTV, it was in the job market. This is how I began to analyze Bugün Ne Giysem?, which is from a genre that is a prime area of self-display. I tried to understand the neoliberal transformation, being from a generation which lived the transition to neoliberalism in its most abrupt form, during our very coming of age where also we opened our eyes to a bigger world. This project had many unexpected turns throughout its journey, and finished with the discovery that self-display proposes recognition, belonging and meanings to the people who engage in it.

The Fordist and post-Fordist models offers strikingly different systems of meaning, belonging and recognition. It seems that Thatcher's project to change the human soul has been successful, as remaining outside the system has become almost impossible in a world where new fields of power structure not only our very lives but also our existence. However, one should never forget that capitalism builds on our drives more than changing them, and that change may always happen when new desires and motivations start to propose an alternative.

One of the shortcomings of this thesis is the number of case studies involved. As this study infers to make broader conclusions about the nature of the establishing of neoliberal subjectivities, it would be more appropriate to undertake more studies about other cases in which the same subject is explored. I tried to overcome this shortcoming with a survey of literature. It is hoped that this thesis will be another example for the exploration of subjectification technologies.

This subject of neoliberal subjectification has not been discussed before through operationalizing the concepts of self-display and fields, this latter, opening up by today's mediums such as RTV, social media, and the job market to form a single neoliberal field pulling people to their own power structures. It is hoped that this thesis contributes to the literature by bringing in a new framework and a new set of conceptual tools with which the phenomenon can

be analyzed. As said above, the social basis of neoliberalism is crucial to its functioning. Based on this insight, examining the mechanisms of neoliberal subjectification has double importance: First of all, it is important in terms of understanding the mechanisms themselves in order to be able to engender strategies to cope with them; secondly, in terms of understanding the social changes that result from these mechanisms. This thesis tries to make a contribution in terms of this agenda.

The theoretical model employed in this study brings a step further Shepherd's model, which explains personal branding as an attention-getting device in a crowded market (2004). This thesis' model both comprises the job market and the cultural sphere, and operationalizes self-display and self-commodification as the steps to the economy of attention. It is also enriched by the inclusion of the primary human drives for displaying the self, which are recognition, belonging, and the search for meaning in life.

This study also hopes to contribute to the literature of postmodern subjectivity. The question of postmodern subjectivity has not been addressed sufficiently in Turkish RTV literature and the author of this thesis hopes to pave way for future studies. RTV in Turkey is also an understudied area, to which this thesis hopes to contribute. Also a preliminary comparison between the U.S. and Turkish RTV was made that pointed to possible cultural differences through the lens of reality shows, which too, is almost a non-studied subject in Turkey.

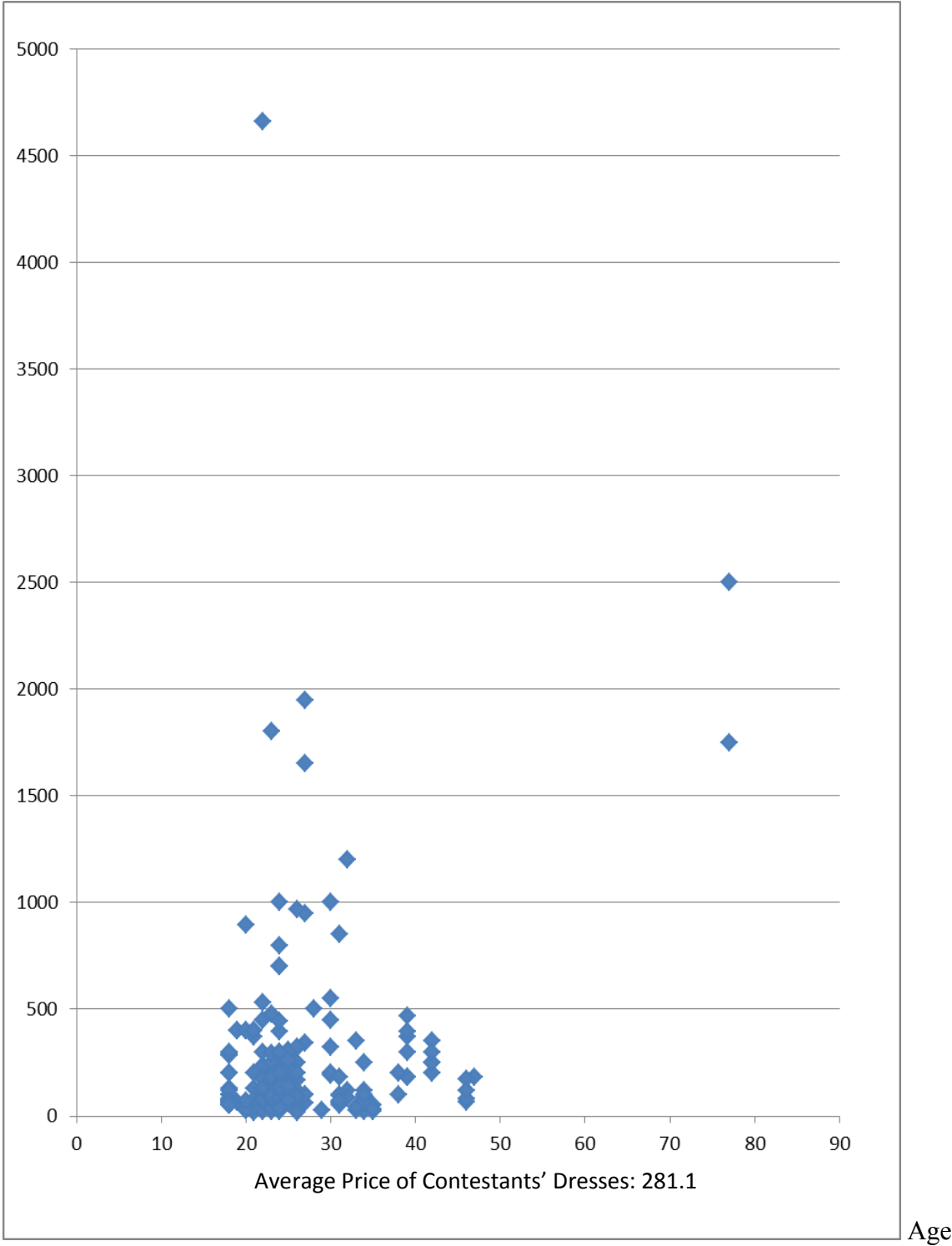
Considering all of the above, it can be said that the study has accomplished its intended purposes, and also came up with conclusions not foreseen at the beginning. It is hoped that this thesis' conceptual framework will be helpful for future studies.

APPENDIXES

A. TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF OCCUPATION OF THE SAMPLE DRAWN FROM BNG

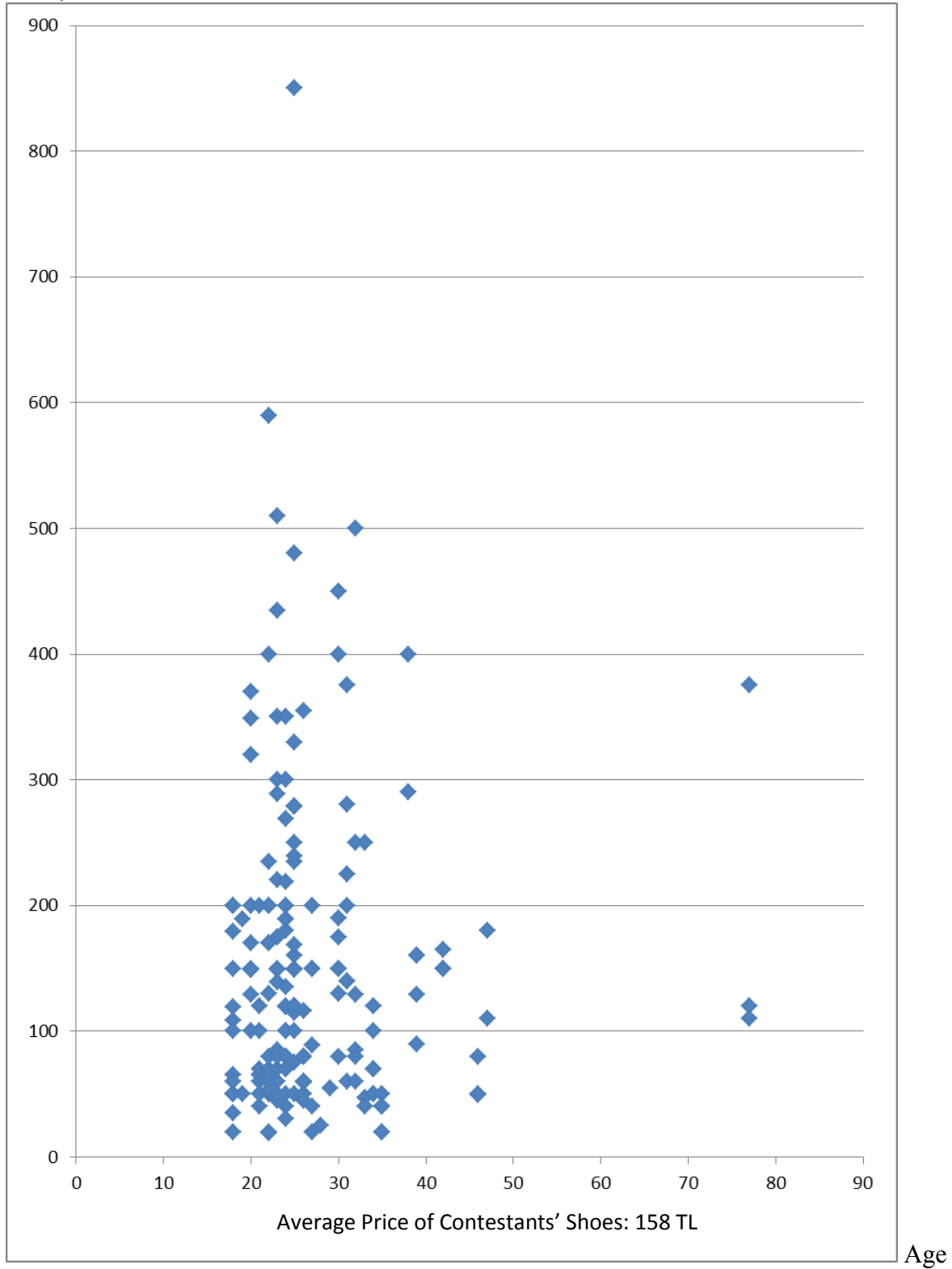
Doctor assistant	2
Salesperson	1
Law apprentice	1
Basketball player	1
Hairdresser	5
Call center representative	1
Not working or housewife	13
Painter	1
Editor	1
Estate agent	1
Shopkeeper	1
Aesthetician	1
Guardian	1
General coordinator in advertisement sector	1
Graphic designer	2
Public relations specialist	2
Nurse	2
Hostess	1
Decorator	2
Manager	1
Cabin attendant	1
Public servant	2
Microbiologist	1
Fashion designer	4
Model	1
Designer	1
Customer representative	1
Teacher	3
Student	39
Publicity agent	1
Sales representative	3
Secretary	1
Insurer	1
Singer	2
Interpreter	1
Tourism professional	3
Volleyball player	1
TOTAL	107

B. PRICE GRAPHIC OF THE CONTESTANTS' DRESSES



B. PRICE GRAPHIC OF THE CONTESTANTS' SHOES

Price, TL



D. EXAMPLES OF DIALOGUE FROM BUGÜN NE GİYSEM

The ages and the occupations of the contestants are given accordingly.

1) Contestant 1, 47, Designer

(The contestant is a wedding dress designer and she brings one of her designs on the podium and present it to the jury members. The dress is modelled by a young lady from the channel team.)

Hakan Akkaya: And why have you brought out this dress?

The contestant: Well, to show it to you.

Hakan Akkaya: Do you want me to comment on it?

The contestant: It is because... I do want your comments, because I follow you...

....

The contestant: Let me put it this way. I have deep respect for you.

Hakan Akkaya: Thank you.

The contestant: I really do respect you. Here, I am open to receive all kind of criticism. Because you only find truth once you are open to criticism.

...

The contestant: Of course, I respect. Of course... Miss Sert... After all, you are my fashion idol.

I mean...

İvana Sert: Thank you.

The contestant: I admire you.

Hakan Akkaya (*To İvana Sert*): You criticized her so much and look what she's saying!

İvana Sert: But what? I was just telling my...

The contestant: I follow you with admiration.

Uğurkan Erez (*Incomprehensible*): ... Ok, it's my turn.

Hakan Akkaya: Ha-ha! It's going to be hard for the next contestant.

The contestant: Well... Mister Akkaya. Some people may find your comments offensive. I think that your comments, all of them are correct. And I say it to all friends and peers; without hesitation and with pride.

Hakan Akkaya: Thank you very much.

The contestant: "Your comments are correct." (*To Uğurkan Erez*) After all, you are a correct person. Your language, your style, your opinions... Well, I agree with you on every point.

Uğurkan Erez: Thank you.

Hakan Akkaya: Thank you very much.

İvana Sert: Thank you.

The contestant: And I will take all of these into consideration. Well...

İvana Sert: I'd see you more decent. I want to see a lady.

The contestant: In that case, it shall be what you will see.

Hakan Akkaya: Why then? One cannot be a lady with that dress?

İvana Sert: It's for younger people.

The contestant: Ok and this has been for me... Maybe, if it wasn't you but somebody else who told me this, I wouldn't listen to them. But I will listen to you.

(*Laughs...*)

The contestant: Really. It is because I really do love you a lot. I've learned so much from you.

This, I tell you.

Hakan Akkaya: Closer to the microphone, please.

The contestant: I never used to examine a dress in detail before buying. Yesterday I went shopping and I started to examine the clothes. Up to the smallest detail...

The after-interview:

The reporter: It's been a little hard, but you got the ticket to the semi-final.

The contestant: Yes. Yes. What they've said, of course, is all true. After all, I entered this contest taking these into consideration. In order to learn something, at least being criticized pleased me very much. What they've said was all true.

The reporter: Especially, İvana, did she say that your dress is...about the... well, is a little bit more...

The contestant: Well...

The reporter: ...more appropriate for younger girls?

The contestant: Yes. Yes. That's true. That's true. I respect her. Of course, I do. But the next time, I am sure that I will leave no reservations, among the three of them.

2) Contestant 2, 19, Student

İvana Sert argues that the contestant's romper could have been chic with the right accessories.

Nur Yerlitaş: For God's sake, it doesn't even fit her! Look at it...! It is weird... What?

İzzet Çapa: Well, the stitches are stretched out.

Nur Yerlitaş: Well, they are stretched out! Look at... What does İzzet Çapa know about sewing?

He asked me, he said, "What happened to the side stitches?"

İvana Sert: A very...

Nur Yerlitaş: An awful romper!

İvana Sert: Yes.

İvana: Well, of course, I keep the issue of sewing out of consideration. Looking at you, like that, your romper is quite good. It fits you well.

Nur Yerlitaş: I can recognize a fabric from a mile away.

The contestant: Because the romper is readymade...

Hakan Akkaya: Well, how much did you pay for your outfit?

The contestant: Well...

İvana Sert: Closer to the microphone.

The Contestant: Probably 33... Well, 33.90.

İvana Sert: Well, for that amount...

Hakan Akkaya: Well, for that amount you can only get such stuff.

İzzet Çapa: Why would that be the case? It could have been much better with some accessories.

Hakan Akkaya: That's something different. You point to the sewing problems; this is why I say that.

Nur Yerlitaş: But that's so defective. One needs to take care of the quality of the sewing in readymade clothes.

İvana Sert: A thousand rompers could have been made out of this.

Nur Yerlitaş: But look...

İzzet Çapa: Ok, but you can buy a sleeveless t-shirt for 10 million, wear it and combine the bottom properly.

Nur Yerlitaş: But no... Listen to me. Listen to me.

Hakan Akkaya (*To İzzet Çapa*): But we say the same thing every now and then. It has a priority for us.

Nur Yerlitaş: Just a minute. She might have bought this romper for 20. But having seen that it has sewing defects, very bad ones, she can go to her mother or someone else, have it done with a sewing machine, and have it fixed... In that case, she's got no spirit. A-aaa! She doesn't have the spirit. Come on! You don't have the creative spirit, you have spirit for nothing! And what's more, you are a ceramics student.

The contestant: Yes, I'm into design.

Nur Yerlitaş: Well, have I read it wrong?

The Contestant: Ceramics design...

Nur Yerlitaş: Fine... Fine Arts....

Hakan Akkaya: Fine Arts.

Nur Yerlitaş: Ceramics student? Well, you design ceramics?

The contestant: Yes.

Nur Yerlitaş: Well, I am very curious about your ceramics.

The contestant: In fact, I also wanted to study fashion design, but there were no programs in the cities that I wanted, I did not apply for their examinations. And I mean, it is very different to come here with a readymade garment.

Nur Yerlitaş: My darling, you still don't understand...

The contestant: No, no you are right. You are telling me that the combination of the clothes doesn't work.

Nur Yerlitaş: ... or don't want to understand. Your romper may belong to a world-wide known designer, or be one from a miserab... ehm... manufacturer. This is not the point. First of all, you didn't even take a look before putting on them, to see where the problems are. With a very good brand you may have such sewing defects, no?

Hakan Akkaya: Yes, you can. There are.

Nur Yerlitaş: But you don't have that spirit. I mean by making a good use of this... You should have made use of such a thing so that neither I nor İzzet Çapa should have seen the sewing defects at the sides.

(The contestant passes the jury with two votes from İvana Sert and Nur Yerlitaş.)

The contestant *(To the reporter)*: I have serious doubts about my taste now.

3) Contestant 3, 27, Works in tourism

Hakan Akkaya: I am shocked by looking at you! Are you sure coming to this podium... It's kind of... I can't believe it...

The contestant: Yes... I am so nervous.

Hakan Akkaya: You didn't forget your clothes? Have you?

The contestant: No, no, it's like that. Like that...

Hakan Akkaya: Well, what kind of pretension is this? How can you be, like that, the most chic woman of Turkey?

The contestant: Well, I like simplicity. I wanted to look unsophisticated.

Hakan Akkaya: Well, not being sophisticated can mean completely different things. Putting on a plain dress like that does not automatically mean simplicity, because your dress and your shoes do not match at all. If you want to be simple, you need to have the same style in the whole...

Your hair is not simple, but careless. You look like you have woken just up now. Make-up, there is none on your face. I am kind of looking at you in amazement. You are the most careless person I have ever seen to this day.

Nur Yerlitaş: What? The most careless..? Are you mad? We have seen such kind of people here...

4) Contestant 4, 30 Manager

Nur Yerlitaş: ... Where are you going to with this attire?

The contestant: A dinner, a cocktail...

Hakan Akkaya (*Sarcastic*): Well, do you go to lot of these kinds of places? (Referring to the information sheet of the contestant...) You were saying that you don't even go to grocery in an unkempt fashion. Well, do you go there with long gloves like this?

The contestant (*Nervous*): It is the kind of characteristic feature that I got from where I grew up.

Hakan Akkaya (*Sarcastic*): Does everybody around you wear long gloves like that?

....

Hakan Akkaya: Well, it has been kind of too much, I am asking myself whether the fault is with those who buy these clothes and wear them, or with those who put them on the market.

5) Contestant 5, 24, Doctor's assistant

(*Hakan Akkaya presents the contestant. She comes.*)

Hakan Akkaya: Edibe. Do you know what would I like? Well, I wish that you get on the podium, came here, walk round and straightway go and walk out.

İvana Sert: Yes. Go back...

Hakan Akkaya: Well, you are the person who deserves this podium the least today.

...

İvana Sert: Probably you thought that you matched your shoes with... well and though by yourself that you became really pretty.

Hakan Akkaya: And I am sure that backstage... well, as she is the last contestant today, I am sure... You saw all of the girls; you came here with the pretension that you are the best among them. I see that in your eyes. Well... Am I wrong? Please, tell the truth.

The contestant: Well, not to that point that I think "Oh, I am so excellent." Believe me... How can I say it? What is the word for that? I don't have such pretensions. I don't say: "This is it!" No.

Hakan Akkaya: But didn't you think: "I am better than these girls!" Please do say it. Please.

The contestant: No... No...

Hakan Akkaya: Please.

The contestant: I don't have such snobbish...

Hakan Akkaya: This is not about being a snob.

The contestant: No, I didn't think.

Hakan Akkaya: Such a thing...

Ivana Sert: This is self-confidence.

The contestant: Of course, I do have self-confidence, but I didn't think "Well this is it! I've made it!"

Hakan Akkaya: This is natural. I will just ask for something.

The contestant: Yes?

Hakan Akkaya: Did you ever think like that?

The contestant: No, I didn't, Mister Akkaya.

Hakan Akkaya: Should I believe you?

The contestant: I leave that to your own consideration, really.

Hakan Akkaya: Okay, I do...

The contestant: Well, that's all.

Hakan Akkaya: I believe you because I want to. You really came here in very bad shape.

The contestant: I'm sorry.

Hakan Akkaya: Me too. I am really sorry.

The contestant: Me too.

6) Contestant 6, 18, Student

(The contestant's has a wet spot at her dress' back. Some comments.)

Barbaros Şansal: They've plotted against you!

The contestant *(Joking)*: Yes. They've been jealous of my beauty.

Barbaros Şansal: They've been jealous.

The contestant *(Laughs)*: Certainly.

Barbaros Şansal: We are facing a very serious... a fatal provocation. The Middle East will be torn asunder thanks to you.

(The contestant laughs.)

Barbaros Şansal: Well... Yes, Mister Akkaya... I mean, I am now...

Hakan Akkaya: İvana... İvana...

Barbaros Şansal: ... waiting for AKUT³⁸ to rescue me.

(Some comments about the walk of the contestant on the podium. They make her walk again.)

İvana Sert: You don't have... You don't have to swing that much.

Barbaros Şansal: You are coming like a butter churn.

³⁸ Search and Rescue Team, a Turkish organization based on voluntary activism for finding and rescuing the victims of accidents and cases of lost in nature or of natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes.

İvana Sert: You don't have to swing. You are already... beautiful. You already show your beauty. When you do something in addition, this becomes somewhat exaggerated. Like those tights for example. What those shiny tights are for?

The contestant: Well I... I do love shiny tights.

İvana Sert: You do love...?

The contestant: I do wear.

İvana Sert: But it doesn't work.

The contestant: Always, I wear them, I mean.

Barbaros Şansal: Always?

İvana Sert: Shiny...

Barbaros Şansal: While swimming, while going to the beach, while going to the market-place...

The contestant: No.

Barbaros Şansal: ... you always wear shiny tights.

The contestant: Noooo... This is when I wear *ABIYE*.³⁹

Barbaros Şansal: *Abiye*... What does that mean?

Hakan Akkaya: Keep the microphone closer.

Barbaros: *ABIYE*... Mic... Microphone...

The contestant: Well, you see it on me..!

Barbaros Şansal: No. I think not. No offence, I am a simple tailor's apprentice, but... What is *abiye*?

The contestant: What do you mean?

³⁹ There are different connotations of *abiye*, the most common one in Turkey meaning "Chic evening dress worn by women on special occasions." Barbaros Şansal, on the other hand, implies the following definition, meaning "in a fashionably elegant manner; smartly dressed."

Barbaros Şansal: I am quite simply asking what it means in Turkish. Well, our people are 99 % Muslim, 100 % Turkish speakers... such geography... You came here to be the most chic woman of Turkey, to exhaust the screens in December 30th, at live broadcast. You dressed up, fixed up, you spent money, and well, you are very lovely, but...

The contestant: Thank you.

Barbaros Şansal: What is *abiye*?

The contestant: Abiye... Something made out of fabric, embellished...

Barbaros Şansal: What you are talking about is theater decor my friend! Abiye!

The contestant: Well, this, how can I know...

Barbaros Şansal: I have repeated that again and again! At least take the trouble of watching the show you are competing in.

The contestant: You absolutely cannot...

Barbaros Şansal: Abiye...

The contestant: ...cannot charge me with such a...

Barbaros Şansal: Abiye means uncommon. It means that one succeeded at going beyond the common, to wear what suits them, to be chic, to be different.

The contestant: You are right.

Barbaros Şansal: Why are you here if you don't know the meaning of what you wear?

The contestant: What? What does that mean? If I didn't know the meaning of what I wear, what I don't wear, I wouldn't come here wearing this dress.

Barbaros Şansal: Well, that's obvious, in that case, I...

The contestant: I think that err... My dress suits me well.

Barbaros Şansal: Yes, of course. That's right (!).

The contestant: Yes.

Barbaros Şansal: Well, anyway, I, we, do quit the job, you can continue.

The contestant: I do respect your job. You are the masters. Ok... So be it. But you cannot talk to me like that. No offence!

Barbaros Şansal: I can... What is more... paillets, straps or zippers under your breasts...

Whatever... Those shiny stuff... Like the neon lights of the Bosphorus Bridge... Have literally wrapped you like salami, made you something out of shape. Why do you commit such injustice to yourself?

The contestant: What do you mean by injustice?

Hakan Akkaya: To the microphone... To the microphone...

The contestant: I am aware that I got dressed in quite a fine way. Maybe in its sewing, maybe in its manufacture that's not something, but that suits me quite well. I come before you, and you make your comments accordingly.

Barbaros Şansal: Yes, it doesn't suit you, but it sticks on you.

The contestant: Ok. It might not suit me. If you put that in a proper way...

Barbaros Şansal: I put it in a proper way.

The contestant: No, you don't.

Barbaros Şansal: My young friend, I criticize you in a positive way. In a positive way... That much décolleté! The way that your breasts are that...

The contestant: I wear it if I can. And I can.

Barbaros Şansal: But you cannot! You are under wreckage!

The contestant: You may think that I am under wreckage. This is your opinion. My opinion is different. I can wear it and I do wear it.

Barbaros Şansal: You... If Ünal Bengisu, the deceased eye doctor, were alive, I would like to send you to him for a free consultation.

The contestant: Oh! Thank you very much! I don't need any eye examination.

Barbaros Şansal: What examination do you need?

The contestant: I don't need any. I am a quite healthy...

Barbaros Şansal: You are quite healthy.

The contestant: ...person.

Barbaros Şansal: You are super healthy.

The contestant: Yes. I am healthy.

Barbaros Şansal: Ok. Well. Ok. You please...

Hakan Akkaya: Well my dear Ayşenur. When I announced you, I said: "Here comes a very young and beautiful person." Yes you are very beautiful but you took away your youth with what you are wearing now.

(The contestant starts to cry. Close up.)

Hakan Akkaya: Err... You are right. Of course, you come here wearing what you prefer. We are right, in criticizing you... Are you okay? Would you like a tissue?

(İvana Sert gives her a napkin.)

İvana Sert: Don't be said. We are here to help you.

The contestant: I am not... That's not right... Being offended... I do not come here to be insulted.

Barbaros Şansal: I do not insult you. I am trying to show you what is right.

The contestant: If you want to show me what is right, you cannot talk to me like that.

Barbaros Şansal: How do you want me to speak?

The contestant: How to speak...

Barbaros Şansal: Do you want me to lie?

The contestant: Not at all. I do respect you and you too...

Barbaros Şansal (*Cries with anger*): Do not respect me! You don't have to respect me! But you have to show respect towards me!

The contestant: I am respectful!

Barbaros Şansal: No, you are not!

The contestant: I am respectful enough!

Barbaros Şansal: Crying, blubbering is not respect.

The contestant: ...well me... This crying... I am soppy as a person. I am not at all crying here because I am sad.

Barbaros Şansal: Nobody here expects an excuse.

The contestant: I... I am happy with myself. I don't care if I stay here or I don't. And from now on, no matter what you do, I am leaving this show.

(The contestant puts the microphone on the ground and leaves the podium. Shot from the backstage while the contestant cries and leaves the studio.)

7) Contestant 7, 21, Student

....

Hakan Akkaya: ... Well, apart from this, I really liked your bracelet. In fact, there is not much to say about you. You interpreted this in a very accurate way.

The contestant: Thank you.

Hakan Akkaya: I congratulate you.

The contestant: Thank you.

İvana Sert: Banu! Super!

The contestant: Merci!

İvana Sert: I like it. There is style. I am seeing it. Well you have... I, I don't get tired. I mean I can see what you have tried to do in what style and it is clear. I am happy.

The contestant: Thank you.

İvana Sert: Make your hair a little bit fluffier. (*Referring to the t-shirt of the contestant, which is written "Wild Cat" on it.*) Be more like the wild cat. This is your style in fact. And stay like that.

8) Contestant 8, 35, Graphic designer

...

Hakan Akkaya: Well! What is this posture? What kind of gait is that!?

The contestant: How should I stand?

Uğurkan Erez: Look at her! She is so sweet!

The contestant: How should I stand? How should I stand?

Uğurkan Erez: No! She is so sweet!

...

Uğurkan Erez (*To İvana Sert*): You don't say anything! Is she sloppy?

İvana Sert: Well... in front of such a cheerful lady...

Uğurkan Erez: Then?

İvana Sert: However how you stand, it will look beautiful on you.

The contestant: How should I stand?

İvana Sert: As you like.

...

The contestant: But after all, I came here to learn.

...

Hakan Akkaya: You need to start from the A of the alphabet.

The contestant: Yes. I came here to learn.

Hakan Akkaya: Well...

Uğurkan Erez: Not at all my child. Not A at all. It's from much further.

Hakan Akkaya: You are a woman with such a beautiful soul.

The contestant: Thank you.

Hakan Akkaya: But you are not chic.

The contestant: But I want to be. You are the experts. Make me chic.

...

Hakan Akkaya: I want to hand you over Handan. Handan...

The contestant: Honestly, hand me over...

Hakan Akkaya: To give her to a makeover.

The contestant: Hand me over! Hand me over to her!

Hakan Akkaya: For her to make you pretty.

...

Uğurkan Erez: This is what I'll say. You have good energy. I believe that you will learn how to dress better. You said you came here to learn and that pleased me so much.

...

Hakan Akkaya: And we start... You said that you came here to learn so sincerely that I promise.

You are with us.

(İvana Sert looks to the information sheet of the contestant and they talk about her dreams of marrying a Hollywood star and winning Oscar.)

İvana Sert: Well... Sometimes dreams look so beautiful. For that, you are with us.

The contestant: Thank you. I am with you.

...

Uğurkan Erez: Well, you're not chic. You're so adorable.

The contestant: Yes.

...

Uğurkan Erez: Yes. You are with us.

(The contestant leaves the podium with three votes in favor.)

9) Contestant 9, 34, Housewife

(The contestant has three children. One of them encouraged her to join the show. Normally, she works as manager in textile business but not at the moment. The contestant has a conversation with the jury members in which it is revealed that she never saw her mother and that she was raised by her grandmother. The contestant also says that she recently saw her mother as a film extra on television, for the first time, and states that she has always been unfortunate in life. She cannot pass the jury.)

In the after interview:

The contestant: What I believed to be style, what I believed to be design proved not to be so...

What I am going to say to my daughter? Well, it wasn't supposed to be...

The interviewer: Do you want to say something to your daughter?

The contestant: *(Starts to cry.)* My darling, I love you so much. I don't know what life will bring us tomorrow, but I am sure you will get to better positions.

10) Participant 10, 35, Wall painter

...

The contestant: No. Believe me. I put a lot of effort into this. I worked on it.

Hakan Akkaya: Work on what?

The contestant: This, well... The sides were straight. I made fixed the waist curve. Hem... I had it shortened. I much worked on these bags and shoes, believe me.

Hakan Akkaya: Just let me tell you something. Your having made the waist curve and having the dress shortened is just fixing. This is not work.

...

The contestant: Can I say something?

Hakan Akkaya: Of course.

The contestant: Hem... I changed four tailors. I had them sew four different dresses. Their stitches, all of them...

İvana Sert: A-a!

The contestant: ...Were not good enough to be presented here, to be presented in front of you.

And... this is why I opted for readymade. Believe me.

Hakan Akkaya: There is no problem with that. It's ok.

The contestant: I tried so many things. Well, if you'll excuse the expression, I spent fair amount of money. I worked for, I really worked for, but I see that if I come here in front of you wearing

one of those dresses, 100 % I will be eliminated. This is why I wanted to come here choosing such a dress and embellishing it with accessories.

...

The contestant: Of course, you are... It is clear that you are professional in this field and us, as the common people, wear what we like and present ourselves to you. In fact we are not really knowledgeable in these matters. Thanks to you, we are getting educated.

Hakan Akkaya: Thank you.

The contestant: I have realized that I was not dressing as a woman since today, since...

...

The contestant: ... But to be honest, sometimes you put us in contradiction.

Hakan Akkaya: Is it so? Why?

The contestant: Because there are differences in taste among you three.

Hakan Akkaya: Yes. This is right.

The contestant: And this might lead us into error.

(The contestant cannot pass the jury.)

Hakan Akkaya: We thank you a lot. Take care.

The contestant: Well... I do thank you. I really wanted to be with you. I really wanted to be there. In fact, I really believed in you. *(The contestant says that she really believed Hakan Akkaya and İvana Sert would vote in her favor.)* And I thank you. You made me come up to here. You gave me the honor. To my friends, to the circle of people that I...

Hakan Akkaya: Please, you are welcome. You came here deservingly.

İvana Sert: Yes.

The contestant: You've given me the honor... I thank you very much.

İvana Sert: That was a difficult decision.

Hakan Akkaya: A very difficult one.

The contestant: I am very sad.

Hakan Akkaya: You are one of the contestants about whom...

The contestant: Really... I am so sad.

Hakan Akkaya: ... about whom we had difficulty in deciding.

The contestant: I would like to... I'd really like to. In fact, now, my heart is a little bit broken, to be honest.

Hakan Akkaya: Don't be. We love you very much and thank you very much for the beautiful presents you brought us.

The contestant: My heart is really broken. I put in so much labor; so much effort and I had my goals... I had so many hopes, but now, I am so a disillusioned.

Hakan Akkaya: Take care. Thank you a lot.

The contestant: I do thank you.

Hakan Akkaya: Good luck.

The contestant: And I thank everybody working on the team.

Hakan Akkaya: You're welcome.

The contestant: Goodbye.

Hakan Akkaya: Bye.

In the after-interview:

The contestant: Maybe my life will take a different shape from now on.

11) Contestant 11, 24, Sales representative

(Fairly negative comments by Hakan Akkaya, especially about the contestant's wrong choice to wear satin, which is a very difficult fabric according to him ...)

Hakan Akkaya: What I unbelievably appreciate in you is your bag.

(There is a polemic between Hakan Akkaya and Barbaros Şansal about the bag, with the last comparing it to a dotty calf.)

Hakan Akkaya: What do you appreciate in her for example?

Barbaros Şansal: Well, now about her wearing polyester, satin... She is a girl working as a salesperson with known means. For the dress, it is not a work done by a tailor or something. It is baggy at the belly. It is baggy at the front. Well, about the dress... She too knows that she cannot be chic with that dress. She knows her own means. She is an intelligent girl.

Hakan Akkaya: This is why one shouldn't wear them.

(The polemic on the contestant's attire continues. Barbaros Şansal argues that the boots of the contestant are not out of fashion, which Akkaya finds so, and İvana Sert approves him.)

Hakan Akkaya: My friends... Everything continues [to be in fashion] but well... *(To Barbaros Şansal)* Have you used them, for example, in your collection?

Barbaros Şansal: Well, I make haute couture. I mean, I don't understand anything about dresses sold in 48 installments on a credit card.

Hakan Akkaya: No. No. This is not what I am talking about. I mean while designing a new combination, don't you recommend our customers which shoes to wear, what bag to carry?

Barbaros Şansal: How would we dare? Even as someone in the business, we are not such artisans who can afford, who have the means, to buy the bags, the shoes that are used by our customers.

Hakan Akkaya: Ah! Give me a minute here!

Barbaros Şansal: We are working with certain standards.

Hakan Akkaya: I do... I do... I do know that when someone orders you a dress, you don't make it in 48 installments.

Barbaros Şansal: Yes, this is what I am saying. A customer who buys a bag or a special-made ostrich bag... But look, there is something.

(Şansal argues that no proper dresses are made in Turkey. Further comments about the attire of the contestant, the contestant fails to pass the jury.)

12)Contestant 12, 40, Singer

(The contestant is given a second chance, comes again with a red dress.)

İvana Sert: The shoes are disgusting! I don't like this style.

Nur Yerlitaş: Of course, her lipstick doesn't work, those pink tones, etc., but I don't think that the dress is bad. A plain, strapless dress... Your jewelry doesn't work. Go put them in trash after all.

Hakan Akkaya: I think it looks like a disco ball, I didn't like the fabric of the dress.

Nur Yerlitaş: Well, I say, let her stay. Well, I don't know, I felt something, I didn't want her to go *(Referring to her job as a singer)*, we can help her.

İvana Sert: She might be a singer. All the singers would take her as an example. Well, as an example, I say "You are not with us."

Nur Yerlitaş: Ok, I don't say that. "Oh she is gorgeous; I need to make a duplicate to Seda Sayan *(A famous Turkish Singer)*." She is a singer, I say, we help her I mean, maybe she will change her style, because, well, she makes money out of it.

Hakan Akkaya: I can't be able to use such an initiative. Your job is intimately linked to visuality.

(Hakan Akkaya: No; İvana Sert: No; Nur Yerlitaş: Yes)

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