

An evaluation about tv dramas media essay

[Media](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Ş. C. BEYSANOĞLU - 1481621 Television is something more than "home cinema". Considering each technology functions a role at its own social context, television takes a crucial role at development and expansion of popular culture. Maybe it is not its essence, but the conditions that generates TV entertainment sector uses television at this important role; in other words, television such like each technology borns as more convenient to function at some contexts. Also each technology gives birth to the new sociocultural conditions, inside of its related social contextual frame.

According to Kocadaş (2004), television is a technologic facility which expands the borders of human's daily life experience determined by time and place. Also it causes important changes at qualitative and quantitative pattern of this experience. It can be asserted that television is the biggest cultural production tool at our age. TV represents "real world" outside our sitting room, and constructs an imaginary reality. Oktay (1994) mentions that the mass-communication tools and the popular culture plays a role of rationalization of power and manipulation of opponent opinions. This makes us to ask about the relationship between the media ownership and the ideological base media broadcasts. What media products is dependent with media's class-based structure? Surely media has been turning into a sector recieving much more capital from big holding companies. On the other hand, this capital-intensive character of television may be claimed as a necessity: The democratic public sphere creator effect of mass-communication tools has been changing. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas mentions about "public sphere" - the sphere in which the subjects participate as equal sides to the rational conversation. This was only an ideal because, in fact, the participation into public sphere inside of reading clubs,

<https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

coffee houses and newspapers-journals during 18th century was possible for small uneducated groups: The majority of poor and uneducated people (and also women) was bar out. Ownership and education are two factors required for participation. So the idea of public sphere remained as an egalitarian utopia. However, later, the expanse of newspapers and journals made them big capitalist firms' extensions, and the idea of public lost its both critical function and autonomy: The mass-communication tools became commercial metas and the preventors of emancipation (Finlayson, 2007). Critical public turned into passive consumer public. So the changing character of mass-communication tools into a " filler of spare time" structure prepares the suitable conditions of television: It needs more capital than publishing a newspaper, thus, establishing TV channels are constructed as an occupation of big capitalist firms or state. By contrast with Western European countries in which state embarked a job of establishing TV channels in accordance with an approach of public function, the US visual media existed as private capital's enterprise. And television broadcasts supply in a one-dimensional structure: Viewers (consumers) do not hold an outer place to the representations of media; in other words, radical aspects are rasped. Viewer becomes an inner element of this representation relationship. This is a passive position: Viewer's preferences are taken as consumer demands, but sitting in front of this box makes him/her a part of system. Popular culture absorbs popular demands and shapes them, gives o form of easily-consumable meta, and supplies on masses. This character of television is determined by its technical facilities; and technical facilities are related with mass culture's expansionist base. More expanse needs more centralization and more capital; and the form of TV broadcast holds a character of serial

<https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

production. In this manner, the mass production of media overlaps with capitalist mass production logic. Nevertheless not only the formal structure of media product relates with capitalism, but also the ideological content is related with capitalism: Form and content accomodates. The visual dimension of television, functioning as " big eye" and creating a perception of watching/observing " real world", claims reality can be observed objectively. The viewer is constant on his/her seat, the image-picture is moving. Indeed the eye of the camera is moving, but the viewer is prepared to perceive this indirect and constructed representation as direct image of reality. Here the power and dominancy are held by the organ who decides which image will be shown. In other words, the passive position of viewer strengthens because of this illusive perception: The discourse of free and various broadcasts of TV, at first glance, gives oppurtunity to the viewer to choose whatever he/she wants or demands. However in fact the viewer watches what he/she is given, because the freedom of choice means only selecting one of the given options. The viewer accepts the character of consumer by sitting in front of the television: Since watching TV is the cheapest and the least drudging way of filling spare time, the individual usually accept this " agreement" and sit in front of this machine. This acception contains the espousal of being isolated from people: By contrast with cinema, TV broadcast is not watched with people. This isolation, in fact, means being an element of a huger TV watcher mass, but is perceived as a situation of dominancy, because he/she has TV remote control in own hands which indicates the freedom of choice. However this trust relationship between TV and viewer causes a mental preparation for viewer of watching reality on screen: The feeling of control and command creates an illusion of

<https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

having power of controlling, reaching and observing objective reality. The machine lends power to TV viewer. The "powerful" viewer feels himself enable to look for reality, or maybe the remote control becomes an instrument of escaping from reality. Both two option contains an assumption that TV constructs its ownself as the area of reality. This is the technical gaining of the machine causes the modernist ideologic gaining of knowing, observing and controlling reality. On the other hand, the "reality" given by TV is still a show and entertainment area. Eye of the camera functions like eye of the viewer, and all "real" elements shown by TV are broken from their social context; they transform into an entertainment object, a consumable meta. Media sector makes serial production; the different objects from various contexts are collected by television, then are purified from its aura, and are flattened. Such like ironing the wrinkles of clothes, the objects are uniformized in accordance with the suitable forms of market consuming; so the "reality" watched by TV viewer is that kind of "reality" image. This uniformizing process is the character of television: Since the only concern is finding the most suitable form of easily-consuming of viewer, the television converts the objects into most manipulating possible form for obtaining the biggest mass consent. According to Belge (1997), commercial TV series like soap operas can carry an opportunity to product some kind of reality image: At the traditional literature like epic sagas and tales, the listeners already knew the ending. From the classical novels, instead of mythologic or religious traditional stories, then private and individual stories of fictional persons were started to be told, so that the issue of how would the story end became significant. Reader was not knowing the end until finishing the novel; however the writer had been knowing during writing. In other words, the <https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

teleologic structure could not fully broken while passing from traditional story to novel. Because the writer was planning and designing the fiction of his/her text in accordance to the pre-planned ending. Here the commercial TV series gives a more "realistic" logic: Such like the life's uncertainty and incalculability, these series' mechanism are not limited in a constricted fiction, but obtain unlimited possibilities. This is a "realism effect". The serie's final point must not necessarily be the "only and compulsory" point. For example, in the extended series like Dallas, the screenwriter makes Bobby a senator at the late episodes: Bobby is not a man who had been created for being senator since the beginning, but because of his previously-committed characteristic, nobody finds strange him becoming a senator. Drama is one of the most varied, complex and popular kind of television programmes. The term "drama" means action or enactment and here the notion of performance is an essential element. The enactment of the "real" through symbolism contains the drama factor. Drama usually has been related with the idea of imitation or representation of reality. Today the generally-agreed opinion is that drama should be eclectic, constantly changing, challenging and innovative, says McLeish (1993). Also Casey (2002) states that the partnership between theatre-based drama and television broadcasting became evident from the earliest days of TV in 1930s. Now the drama may be a serial, miniseries or a single play. According to O'Donnell (2007), drama series tend to be formulaic, whereas miniseries and single plays are formatted to fit the allotted time in the schedule. Series consist of 22-26 episodes per season and they broadcast weekly. Since the huge cost of each episode, the plot should be self-contained with a resolution at the end of the episode: This is convenient because viewers do not have to

<https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

know or remember what had happened in the previous episode. However not all things at the episode are concluded; something should be intriguing for next episode, and viewer must wait for next week suspensefully. O'Donnell classifies some sorts of drama: For example, in workplace drama, the subject is about professional people inside of a hospital, law firm, government office, casino, army, or a prison. The work-related action and the characters' personal affairs are synthesized. At these kind of series, usually, several events occur simultaneously with work-related crises or conflicts that settled within a 60 minute episode, during the personal affairs' continuation...

Another drama sort, family drama, can be qualified a melodrama; and it depicts ordinary daily sufferings as special and meaningful. Extraordinary conflicts and catastrophes are dominant, and also close relationships at personal life is at the center of melodramatic story. Additionally hybrid drama can be counted in drama sorts: These are police or family dramas including elements of science-fiction or supernatural things. O'Donnell remarks Jericho, a hybrid drama about what happens when a nuclear mushroom cloud suddenly appears on the horizon, and is hurtling people of a small Kansas town into chaos. All communication and power are shut down, so they do not know whether they are only people who stay alive in the country. This serie is about people's feao of terrorism, but also about nation rebuilding as the citizens of Jericho provide a fellowship in order to defeat this tragic situation. There is no doubt that, in Turkey, upwards from the middle of 1970s, TV series have been holding a bigger place at ordinary man's life. The ones imported from the United States marked their prints on the early terms of Turkish television broadcasting: Dallas, The Roots, Little House, Charlie's Angels, Bonanza, Falcon Crest, The White Shadow etc...

<https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

Nonetheless some adaptation tryings from classic novels were done by TRT, including *Aşk-ı Memnu*, *Çalığışu*, *Yaprak Dökümü*, *Küçük Ağa...* Since 1990s, the start of foundation of private channels, the dominancy of foreign productions have been replaced by domestic drama productions, day by day. Here the significant dramas like *Süper Baba* (1993-1997) and *İkinci Bahar* (1999-2001) may be considered as standing points of Turkish drama productions. According to Kahraman (2003), *İkinci Bahar's* success is highly related with the survival of Yeşilçam's melodramatic aesthetic: Masses that have been being lustrated by the melodrama of Turkish films are ready to accept popular forms and genres produced by serie producers. Kahraman answers possible objections of " these films were left at past; the generations are renewed", and claims this is only a delusion: When the Turkish cinema changed its own content and ideology, this time TV channels underbought these films and started to televise them permanently. This caused a situation of continuation of Turkish cinema's traditional aesthetic and ideology at our society, several generations living together. Kahraman indicates that television dramas sustain the structural features of 19th century novel: Same understanding on adventure, same logic of intrigue, same dose of excitement. At the same time these series sustain the feuilleton approach, " to be continued", emerged in 19th century press. So this mechanism, first of all, must lean upon such kind of approach that encourage the curiosity. On account of this factor, it is difficult to make technical and structural changes at TV filming sector which is owing its attention to this " familiarity" feeling. Kahraman's evaluation on TV dramas interrelates between familiar expression techniques coming from classical novel and the ones of today's television dramas. In Turkish society, written culture weaker than modern

<https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

societies, Kahraman's analysis may be evaluated as "strange to our reality", and also it seems to conflict with Belge's above-mentioned thoughts.

However it can be said that two analyses touch different faces of reality: TV drama may lean upon a consistent logic, obtaining subject completeness like 19th century novels; but commercial TV series (like soap operas) can make completeness and consistency take a back seat, and grow longer like elastic. Turkish television dramas stay between two of these: Starts seriously and consistently, and continues like soap operas because of commercial concerns that make them continue by years. Turkish TV dramas of post-2000 period turns into an important issue to be evaluated: The discourses of them on family, individual, woman, richness, tradition, feudality, modernity, urbanization etc. must be seen as important factors at shaping the social culture of Turkey. For example, as Kahraman's thesis of familiarity, the Turkish dramas adopted from literature classics have got the advantage of containing familiarity. These productions carries the viewer everytime-seenable cliché incidents such like: Bad woman, sacrifice, regain the separated spouse or darling, wedding with somebody for his/her money or status, giving birth to a child without marriage, dilemma between being housewife or having-a-job woman etc. (Akçay, 2009). These TV adaptations purify the original social context among novel. Such as *Aşk-ı Memnu*, as Akçay states, the TV serie handles the issues like love, intrigue, individualist and vying relationships instead of Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's emphasis on moral problems rebounding over indoor relations, especially man-woman relations, and degeneracy of traditional values during Westernization and social transformation. In this wise the story turns into an easily-consumable form for viewer. On the other hand, settled traditional values are not wiped, but <https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

only adopted into a new context that does not conflicting with new values like individualism. For instance, family still holds an important place at these dramas, but at the same time, each member at the family must have his/her own life; parents should not interfere too much to their children's special life. Authoritarian father figure is insurance for his children's life, and protector from troubles that came from life; but his oppressive character can also cause unwanted bad results on children's life. Nevertheless this " autonomous child" representation is still dependent with the father's " authoritative wisdom": When the daughter goes to her lover to marry despite the father's refusal, then she absolutely repents of her decision. So the main idea presented to viewer is the wisdom of father is necessary and the only true guide, but the mode of him must not be harsh; he must sign the true way to his children by a persuasive language. The family and father discourse of Turkish TV dramas faces with some conservative objections. One of them, Karabiyik (2012) questions these dramas' subjects as if they are family stories or individuals under-family frame stories. According to her, traditional solidarity between family members are camouflaged by these dramas, and are replaced by clash, intrigue, betrayal, immoral relationships. Solidarity and sacrifice for the relative are forgotten values; individually behaving family members are actively seen, and they pull on themselves all the troubles because of this behaviour. Furthermore the authoritative role of father is abnegated: He loses his natural power inside of his family. This factor makes side slip of family members easier (2011)... By contrast with this view, Gedik (2008) mentions that traditional and patriarchal discourses are reproduced via women (and women body). Even moving one step forward they sign today's man and woman situations as degenerate forms in <https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

order to normalize their moral definitions. This normalization process make them unquestionable and unseen. For example, in *Yaprak Dökümü*, the daughter of house named Leyla gets raped; his father decides her to marry with her raper, Oğuz, to save her (and her father's) honour. Another moral and immoral woman representations are seen at Fikret and Ferhunde characters: The first one is a calm and mature housegirl, and no one understands but only accuses her. However the second one is the ambitious and enticing bride of the family, and contrarily with Fikret the family-girl, she is a " free" woman, has a free sex life with men before wedding with Şevket, and after wedding, she is unfaithful to her husband. Related with the representation of morality at Turkish television dramas, Atay (2012) sums up the narrative schema of another popular drama, *Bir Çocuk Sevdim*: 17 year-old teenage girl who gets pregnant after her first sex, an authoritative but conscientious father who are meeting with honour trouble, and a Yeşilçam-style melodramatic cliché: Rich and bad father of our " main guy" sends his son abroad in order to save him from the girl, and then, a " second man" enters the story for wedding with the pregnant girl in order to " rescue" her. This schema poves Kahraman's critical right: Yeşilçam's story-telling methods and ideology are living under the form of TV dramas nowadays. This structural base of Turkish dramas causes a dual and conflicting condition: There are lifes which are demanded to be reached under a physical perspective, but are not demanded to be reached under a moral perspective. This situation makes masses praise for their traditional and humble lifes. At the other face of the medallion, free market capitalism's consumptionist and vying ideology are enjoined over masses. Although the economic modernization is demanded, the side effects which are observed in <https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

sociocultural sphere are being faced doubtfully: " Modern life" destroyed traditional norms, values, relations and networks according to these dramas' discourse; individual is getting alone. Traditional society's power and discipline organs like family are getting weakened, so the individual has no insurance for himself/herself to save him/her from daily life's chaotic complexity. However the fact of capitalism and consumption economy can not be rejected. In that case, individual can get strenghten with tying up with traditional norms and elements: Happy family members will bring a more healthy and long-life capitalism. These two, economic freedom and traditional culture, are necessitous within themselves. Nevertheless the traditional power organs must reformize themselves in accordance with today's conditions: Defending tradition by traditional ways are now invalid, so the tradition must be defended by modern ways. Individual can have a " relative autonomy" among the family, and the father figure must be considerate and persuasive in order to guide his children through " true way". This discourse is harmonious with both conservative and " modern" viewers: Conservative viewers watch the negative representation examples, and realize his favorite tratidional values' importance; modern viewers watch and enjoy the modern life style, but sees the potential " dangerous" dynamics of modern life, and take lessons. Both of two compromise at capitalist economic modernity, and the norm of " more stronger traditional connections are my necessary need at this uncalculable life for not losing the way". Maybe the conservative one gets annoyed from some " immoral" representations, but he/she again integrates into this discourse. Perceiving TV broadcasts, especially dramas, as reality is a usual approach for ordinary TV viewer: and taking lesson from what he/she watch is the proof of this.

<https://assignbuster.com/an-evaluation-about-tv-dramas-media-essay/>

Alayođlu, S. & Türkođlu, N. (editors); Karaelmas 2009: Medya ve Kùltür, Urban Kitap, İstanbul, 2009. Akçay, Zeynep Gültekin. Toplumsal Dönüşümler ve Televizyon: Günümüz Dizi Uyarlamaları Üzerine Eleştirel Bir BakışBelge, Murat; Tarihten Güncelliđe, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1997. Casey, Calvert, French and Lewis; Television Studies: The Key Concepts, Routledge, Oxon, 2002. Finlayson, James Gordon; Habermas, Dost Yayınları, Ankara, 2007. Kahraman, Hasan Bülent; Kitle Kùltürü Kitlelerin Afyonu, Agora Kitaplığı, İstanbul, 2003. Kocadaş, Bekir; Kùltür ve Medya, Uluslararası İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi, 2004. O'Donnell, Victoria; Television Criticism, Serge Publications, USA, 2007. Oktay, Ahmet; Türkiye'de Popüler Kùltür, YKY, İstanbul, 1994. Atay, Tayfun. [http://www. radikal. com. tr/Radikal. aspx? aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID= 1074158&CategoryID= 138](http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx? aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID= 1074158&CategoryID= 138)Gedik, Esra. [http://www. bianet. org/biamag/toplumsal-cinsiyet/106859-dizilerdeki-kadinlik-ve-erkeklik-halleri](http://www.bianet.org/biamag/toplumsal-cinsiyet/106859-dizilerdeki-kadinlik-ve-erkeklik-halleri)Karabıyık, Sema. [http://yenisafak. com. tr/yazarlar/? t= 05. 02. 2012&y= SemaKarabiyik](http://yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/? t= 05. 02. 2012&y= SemaKarabiyik)[http://yenisafak. com. tr/yazarlar/SemaKarabiyik/dizilerde-neden-gercek-bir-baba-karakteri-yok/29358](http://yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/SemaKarabiyik/dizilerde-neden-gercek-bir-baba-karakteri-yok/29358)