

Chapter 5

The Effect of Popular Culture on TV Program Genres Within Globalization Process

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ABSTRACT

In the process of globalization, popular culture has spread all around the world far more easily via television. Following 1980s, commercial televisions increasing together with the dominance of liberal economy have operated in accordance with commercial logic, and therefore, television programs have been produced for upper ratings, accordingly for getting high advertisement profits. Together with globalization, television programs have rather focused on entertainment. Popular culture has influenced programme genres both in terms of making existing programs entertaining and emerging novel amusing program genres. In this chapter, following the discussions on popular culture, the increase in entertainment in television programs is generally discussed, and then, the increase in entertainment in television programs in Turkey in the process of globalization is analyzed.

INTRODUCTION

The number of studies on popular culture, the culture of daily life that gets more complex with industrialization and urbanization, increases gradually. Popular culture has been considered mass culture provision by some authors and also been criticised asserting that it has been generated with commercial purposes (Adorno, 2005; Aydođan, 2004; Bektaş, 2000) but for some authors, popular culture has the power to transform the society, also it has been justified that people have the right to choose whatever culture they would like to choose (Gans, 2005; Fiske, 1999). In the negative approaches on popular culture, “culture industry” concept of Frankfurt School, stemming from Marx’s “false consciousness” concept, is considered as a fundamental. Within “culture industry” concept developed by Horkheimer and Adorno (Adorno, 2003; 2005), popular culture is evaluated as a mass culture that is produced pursuant to the norms of capitalism and that also ensures the perpetuity of capitalism (Arik, 2004: 334). Studies approaching to popular culture positively, with ideas such as its capacity for resistance possibilities

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and its constructive aspect, locate their sources from authors like Williams (1974, 1993), Hall, (1989), Hoggart (1972) who are already the pioneers of cultural studies and these studies have been flourished by academicians such as Fiske (2010) and Gans (2005).

“Popular culture”, which is one of the hottest topics among the academicians, has had an impact on almost all countries in the world with the developments in communication and globalization, and this impact mostly has taken place by means of television. Media, especially television, is empowering the products of popular culture, its ideas and lifestyle by “spreading it through a society and among the societies” (Bektaş, 2000: 128). The idea that popular culture has spread by means of television during globalization is widely admitted and there are numerous studies analyzing this from various aspects, but there are not many studies on how television has played this role as a tool in terms of broadcasting contents. This study is an attempt to raise the number of studies that ought to be carried out.

Do the contents of television channels take form by popular culture? Why is popular culture getting around via television? Are the contents of television in its early years, even before globalization emerged as a term, different from those today? As the contents of television channels are comprised of various programme types and television channels generate their broadcast stream according to the current needs and social demands, what sort of effects does popular culture have on the genres of television programmes? The responses to these questions have been tried to be given by examining the television programmes which have been broadcast throughout the history of television, have been popular within the society, have come forward in media channels, and have had high ratings. Not only the history of television broadcasting in Turkey has been studied but also a general framework has been defined by decades. The data until 1990s, when private broadcasting started, was gathered from TRT sources as well as other resources, SAYTEK resources, a software program which tracked the broadcasting information of TRT, ratings of TRT, archives of TRT, and popular television magazines of each corresponding to time. The data after 1990, when private broadcasting commenced, was collected from the ratings of the programmes which were broadcast by nationwide general audience channels, and the programmes which became popular in the media. As categorized and statistical presentation of all data is beyond the scope of this study, general trends by decade have been identified. The assumption of this study is that popular culture has an influence on the genres of television programmes; this influence has most of the time been observed as an increase in the number of entertainment programmes, and new genres of entertainment are emerging.

Along with globalization, liberal economy has gained dominance all around the world, as a result of this, the number of commercial television channels have accrued dramatically. In 1980s, commercial television channels gaining strength by the force of liberal economy operated pursuant to the norms of economy and most watched programmes gained most advertisement revenue. Being most watched has implied an increment in entertainment genre, as a reflection of popular culture. Television audiences have preferred entertainments that do not necessitate considering and do not harass but provide amusement, they linger with entertaining stories. Global culture echoes to television programmes as entertainment, even for news and documentary programme genres. Commercial logic of global culture has impressed television which is the transmitter and producer of popular culture in terms of two aspects: 1. Contribution of entertainment to existing programme genres, 2. Emerging of completely novel programme genres with totally entertainment contents.

The purpose of this study is not to discuss the impact of popular culture on television programmes within globalization process with a positive or negative approach; yet, it is to display changing trends in television programme genres in Turkey, from past to present, in a tangible way. In reference to the study,

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