

## THE RELATION BETWEEN TELEVISION AND POWER AND THE SITCOM'S REFLECTIONS OF THIS , IN THE PROCESS OF MANUFACTURING POPULAR CULTURE

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### Popüler Kültürün Üretim Sürecinde Televizyon İktidar İlişkisi ve Durum Komedilerine Yansıması

Günümüzde popüler kültürün merkezinde yer alan televizyon, üretim ve dağıtım aşamasında, kitlelerin bilincinde en etkili kitle iletişim aracı konumdadır. Mizah programları da, özellikle kitleleri eğlendirme işlevleriyle televizyon ekranının vazgeçilmez renklerindedir. Mizah Programları arasında Batı formatlı olan durum komedilerinin, yıllardan beri önemli bir yeri vardır. Bu çalışmanın temel tezi, “durum komedilerinin hem ideolojik, hem de biçimsel açıdan sınırlandırıldığı ve medyadaki hakim söyleme eklenmek zorunda kaldığı”dır.

Televizyona komedi dizisi yapabilmek için, mizahçılar, öncelikle ideolojik ve biçimsel sınırlamalar dahilinde düşünmekte, bu da mizahta olmazsa olmaz koşul olan, bağımsızlık ve özgürlükten ciddi ölçüde feragat etmeyi beraberinde

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getirmektedir. Bu vazgeçiş ve itaat, komedi programlarının söylemlerinde kendini açıkça ele vermekte ve tarihte muhalifliğiyle bilinen mizah ürünlerinin, kitleleşmesiyle söylemlerinin nasıl değiştiğini gözler önüne sermektedir.

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### **In The Production Progress of Popular Culture Role of Television**

The rapid and massive production industry reflected as "massive culture" to the culture area. Massive culture cope with reflection of whole events. In addition the traditional progress of art. In this respect, the process of production and creation had been separated from each other, they had been new specific fields and the producer/creator had been lost the dominance of it's art.

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century a new concept had been come the cultural productions three functions that creative, production and the new concept is distribution. The distribution had been the various provision that tries to artwork with massive in the media century. Mass communication mediums, especially television had been the most significant power that modify the function of distribution. The most important medium that television not only the mass culture products but tried to receive the popular culture products with to society.

In the process of creation of the popular texts the medium that transfers these message is also determinant on the ideology of the texts. In contemporary world the most various production orient of popular culture. Mass communication especially, the

power of TV on society reveals that television is the most important mass medium of communication.

In modern industrial society television had been the most prominent and contemporary medium and television reflects the casual life experiences. But that point the world, i.e. television, reflects to us, must be perceived as rightly. Television can not be thought dependent from politic-economic and cultural atmosphere. It is apparent that, television plays an important role as an instrument of culture and social control.

### **The Analyze of Television Ideology**

The modern mass communication medium must be conceptualized in social structures, in current the communication organizations has and relations identify the social area; help to constitute the political area. They had been the power in modern social organizations and dominate the cultural area. The product of meaning is a part of modern social relations. The huge capital, behind the mass communication is the most important power that use the politic and economic structure is important power of television. That's why this hegemonic relation between television and politic economic superstructure is dominated the structures of media firms. It called as the culture industry.<sup>1</sup>

The most hegemonic power beyond the television is economic. That's why, the important purpose of media firms,

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<sup>1</sup> Stuart Hall, "İdeoloji Ve İletişim Kuramı", *Medya, Kültür, Siyaset*, Ankara, Ark Yayınevi, 1997, .84-93

especially the television have been watched by much audience and have been preferred from advertisements.

The first side of media firms is entertainment and television is a medium to have been spent good time for mass. That's why from news to music, in different kind of cultural area managers of media firms decide to have been spent good time in whole programs.

According to the Neil Postman, "The entertainment is the discourse of superideology. It's not important to show different overviews from the television. The most important thing only to have been spent good time."<sup>2</sup>

When media motivates involvols as cosumers at the same time it uses such a discourse that consist of the senses of "freedom and happiness". The dominant discourse and the mass communication reshape the popular culture again.

Stuart Hall indicated that what gives ideological power to the media is "the ability of describing the situation"<sup>3</sup>. According to the figure 1, ideological influenences on media content in the hierarchical model.

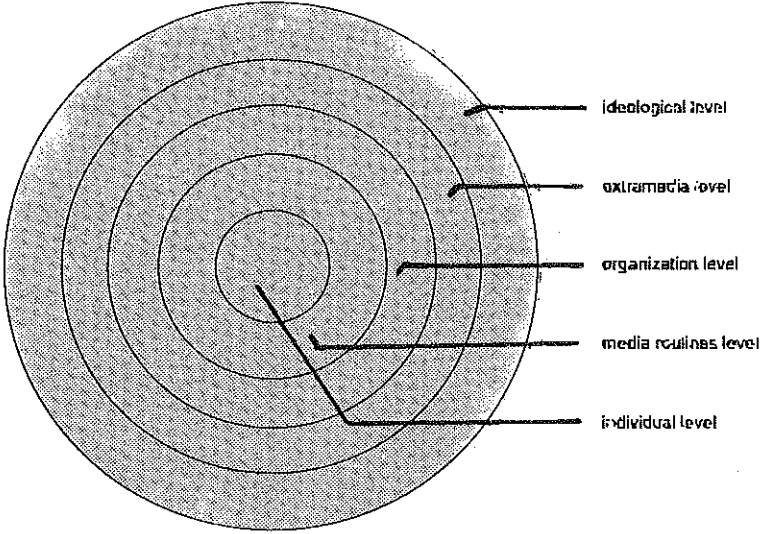
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2 Neil Postman, **Televizyon: Öldüren Eğlence**, Çev: Mehmet Küçük, İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1994, s.99

3 Stephen D. Reese, Pamela J. Shoemaker, "The Influence of Ideology", **Mediating the Message**, London – Melburn, Longman Publishing, 1996, s.222

**Figure.1.**

ideological influences on media content in the hierarchical model.



This ideological level subsumes all the others we have been talking about and, therefore, is the most macro of the levels in our hierarchy of influences model (see Figure 1). The ideological level differs from the previous levels in that all the processes taking place at lower levels are considered to be working toward

an ideologically related pattern of messages and on behalf of the higher power centers in society.<sup>4</sup>

The hegemony that is not reach the hopes and expectations intend of massive wouldn't be internalized. It's more easy for public to obey, the status qua. That's why, popular culture ant ascuitable to, has a signifnace af acceptable culture by dominance. TV hinders the threats of opposing ideas by making them the part of it's ideological discourse.

Sometimes television managers support the opposing ideas against the formel discourse. This is only explain us to gain more audience inpurpose. Opposing ideas/feelings are transformed, reficated by the culture industr and they loss their effective meaning.

According to the approach, television is not a only manipulation medium. People can find their expectations by meaning the popular context. But this process is deviant from the ordinary process of mean that is the part of hegemonic ideology. That's why television is a significant medium in popular culture. The meaning appears when the audiences place meet with discourse of context. By the way television is a cultural mosaic for all type of content inconflct.

### **Posibility of Humor in Television**

Humor is one of the unvaidable colors of the TV, especially by its speciaty that it entertains the mass media broadcasting. That's why the use of humor makes gain more

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<sup>4</sup> Reese -Shoameker. a.e., s.223

audience. The comedy programs in television had been dominated by the ideology of television also. The opposing ideas in humor on TV are determined or limited by the hegemonic ideology. The success of humor is not acceptable for systems to show the reality behind the appearance. Humor cannot be tamed, because its character depends on opposite to formal discourse.

By television, the humor is separated from the theatre, public area, taverns where the public is opposition is constructed. Hence, the humor is separated from its native. The foundations are more effective in detecting the media messages. In that content, television comedy, that is imprisoned in boundaries is tamed by the hegemonic ideology. Because of medium's native explains the situation. How humor is transformed to the tamed comedy. Because the process of creating/producing meaning is strictly detected in TV. The production of humor is adjusted according to this situation. "When formal experimentation insinuates itself into their familiar entertainments, working-class viewers protest, not only because they do not feel the need for these fancy games."<sup>5</sup>

The most important type of humor in television is sitcoms. Sitcoms indicate the family problems in thirty minutes. It has particular actors and actresses. It can be identified as a kind of family comedy that the episodes not follow each other.

Television situations comedies, center on a conflict or problem that is resolved neatly within a preconceived time period.

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<sup>5</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, **Media Culture & Society**, Ed: Richard Collins, London -New Delhi-Beverly Hills, Sage Publishing, 1989, s.177

This conflict/resolution model suggest that all problems can be solved within the existing society.<sup>6</sup>

Comedy provides the potential for subverting and discreding dominant cultural and social forms –yet it can also deride deviance and teach the renunciation of desire. These “emancipatory” and “conciatory” forms of laughter often coexist uneasily within the same series or even the same program. In some cases, the conciliatory aspects of comedy are clearly. Conciliatory laughter binds together television’s social role models into an idealized universe of good times and comfortable conformity. Such laughter also involves laughing at the renunciation of desire and at oneself for conforming, and encodes rites of renunciation.<sup>7</sup>

In the language of sitcoms, the mechanism of presentation is positive to power relations in reality. The research has that made in various countries showed that, in television comedies especially the power is rebuilt in the in the consciousness of public.

In the world of U.S. sitcom, most of the limited numbers and types of characters are attractive and reasonably prosperous; people with unresolvable social problems (such as the extremely poor) are rarely featured. Neither are people from specific parts of the country. Most sitcoms have indefinable settings and no particular local accents, although one or two, such as Seinfeld,

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<sup>6</sup> Douglas Kellner, “Tv, Ideology, And Emancipatory Popular Culture”, *Television*, Edited By: Horrace Newcomb, Oxford University Press, New York – Oxford, 1987, s. 477

<sup>7</sup> Kellner, a.e., s.496



make a feature of being set in a particular place like New York City, despite being shot, like nearly everything else on American TV, in Hollywood. Sitcom problems are usually personal and have to be resolved happily within the space of one 24-minute episode; events have to be structured to allow three commercial breaks, each following a comic climax; there is always laughter on the soundtrack, either from a live studio audience or canned. Within this tightly artificial formula, real originality of characterization, writing, and performance can sometimes be achieved, and the rules can also be broken.<sup>8</sup>

The situation is similar the Turkish sitcom. The dual relations (man-woman, parents –child, villager-citydweiler) the little problems in casual life or false understanding are the main sources of comedy. But the conflicts in the reality cannot be shown from this foundation. The real sources of confliction in the society isn't revealed or mentiened. In this sitcom the class boudriess is protected and the most important problematics in current aren't shown. The life is shown as light pink.

The most famous sitcoms in nowadays, "Dadı, Çifte Bela, Yeni Hayat" in this sitcoms main characters aren't influenced from economic slump, they live in huge places and the most important problems are, personal conflicts. It is apparent that the humor in this sitcoms is successful in their limits, but in ideological form. İndicating the media's role;the reality that is reprentented sy these sitcoms is internalized to the hegonomic discourse.

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<sup>8</sup> Maire Messenge Davies, *Fake, Fact And Fantasy*, New Jersey, Lawrance Earl Associates Publishing, 1999, s.101

In that content, comedy, especially is a struggle area against the hegemonic ideology, by the way it's a control mechanism of the power. Only identifying the humor as a control mechanism or contrary prevents us to see the differences in comedy. But, the medium verifies the humor products opposite and that's why it couldn't be define as an opposite product.

In Turkey, various fields, holdings own a television station. That's why it is impossible to think of holding broadcasting policies without their business activities. Holdings that are interested in media, have so many sensational events. That's why, like other programmes, comedy programmes must define their situations and verify their boundaries and in work they have to ignore the problems. The most important danger in front of the press liberty is the market's censor itself rather than the state censor.

The art must form it's free agenda and discourse, The artist couldn't promote a contrary discourse against the power. In this context opposition is just a slogan.

The main purpose of popular text's in television, is to reach more spectators. Televisions are commercial organizations and the most important purpose is, to have been watched. That's why the advertising industry determine the programmes in television.

The nature of television is that, it doesn't give permission to produce an alternative discourse against the formal discourse. The political and economic elite refuse the contrary discoursecomplex out of the system.

In general, the comedy programs only appear according to ratings they get. Messages and discourse contained in the programmes came second following their ratings. Televisions are commercial organizations and producing the programme is a commercial work too. The controlling the watching measures by rating, is the most important thing to verify the continuity of televisions firm. They try to catch the audience old approaches. That's why a lot of products had been left, because of their high quality.

The purpose to find new ways, in humor is a difficult way light of the audience's politic-social foundations. But this way, to find new approaches in humor, could be shortened by producing successful, and original products.

## **Conclusion**

Today television stand at the heart of popular culture. In the production and distribution television is the most effective/prominent medium in mass awareness. In this context, it is possible to define the TV as a cultural mosaic that contain various different kind of texts.

Humour programmes is one of the unavoidable colors of TV, especially through their ways entertainment function. The main argument of this thesis the fact that "sitcoms are limited in ideological and formal context, and they have to be added to dominant discourse in media.

### **Ideological Limitations**

In media, a significant institution in dominant construction, the ideology of medium has a direct impact on the discourse of work and must keep works opposite to the power, from appearing. The nature of humor (free spirit which must necessarily exist) cannot leak out the TV ideology, and the dominant discourse is absolutely approved in these serials.

### **Formal Limitations**

TV companies which take as basis not specific spectator group kept the mass dreter. Wine more rating a prior target and prefer a production mentality directed towards normal like.

A good sitcom is considered successfully only the basis of the fact it is easily understood, make laugh and get much ratings. So TV firms try to capture a much greater mass through ordinary dishes of comedy instead of taking risks by reviewing the structure.