

THE CONSTRUCTION OF GENDERED SUBJECTIVITIES
OF FEMALE BROADCAST PROFESSIONALS
WITHIN TRT (1964 – 1989)

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF GENDERED SUBJECTIVITIES OF FEMALE
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Title: The Construction of Gendered Subjectivities of Female Broadcast Professionals within TRT (1964 – 1989)

This dissertation studies the construction of gendered subjectivities of the women who worked as broadcast professionals for the Turkey Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), during the period of state monopoly on air between 1964 and 1989. The primary aim of the research is to make visible these women's agency in the development of radio and TV broadcasting in Turkey, which is usually neglected in conventional accounts about media history. Besides this overall aim, the research particularly attempts to find out the ways female broadcast professionals were incorporated into the state ideology as agents. It pursues this objective by situating these women's personal narratives within the historical context of the socio-economic, political and cultural transformation through which Turkey passed from developmentalism to neoliberalism as the dominant state ideology.

The research first describes the development of radio broadcasting in Turkey under the state monopoly before the establishment of TRT in 1964 and women's involvement in this process. Then it questions the influence of the definition of radio and television's social role as citizen education in the developmentalist period of the 1960s and the 1970s on the women TRT recruited as broadcast professionals, with a focus on these women's negotiation with the dominant gender ideology sponsored by the state. After that, it examines the implications of the transformation in the state hegemony to neoliberalism as aligned with conservatism in the 1980s both for the discourse on womanhood circulating on the state-governed air and for female broadcast professionals' participation in the creation of this discourse. The final focus is given to the changes and continuities in the imagery of female broadcast professionals as depicted in the popular culture from the 1970s to the 1980s.

The research analyzes women's engagement with the professional field of broadcasting with an emphasis on their agency in the creation of mediated texts in both time periods. Drawing mainly on female broadcast professionals' personal narratives, it accepts them not as passive conduits whereby the state ideology was transmitted to audiences, but as active and critical mediators of this ideology. In this way, the study sheds light on the historical interaction between these women's participation in media production and the circulation of mixed and/or conflicting meanings about womanhood on the state radio and television.

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Başlık: TRT'de Kadın Yayıncıların Cinsiyetlenmiş Öznelliklerinin İnşası (1964 – 1989)

Bu tez 1964 ve 1989 yılları arasında yayıncılıkta devlet tekeli döneminde Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu'nda (TRT) çalışan kadın yayıncıların cinsiyetlenmiş öznelliklerinin inşasını incelemektedir. Tezin öncelikli amacı kadınların Türkiye'de radyo ve televizyon yayıncılığının gelişimindeki, bilinen medya çalışmalarında genellikle görmezden gelinen, failliğini görünür kılmaktır. Bu genel amacın ötesinde tez, özellikle yayıncı kadınların devlet ideolojisine onun temsilcileri olarak dahil edilme biçimlerini açığa çıkarmaya çalışmaktadır. Bu hedefin peşinden ise yayıncı kadınların kişisel anlatılarını Türkiye'de hakim devlet ideolojisinde kalkınmacılıktan neoliberalizme doğru yaşanan sosyo-ekonomik, politik ve kültürel değişimin tarihsel bağlamına yerleştirerek gitmektedir.

Çalışma ilk olarak 1964'te TRT'nin kuruluşundan önce Türkiye'de radyo yayıncılığının gelişimini ve kadınların bu sürece katılımını tasvir etmektedir. Ardından 1960'lar ve 1970'lerdeki kalkınmacı dönemde radyo ve televizyonun toplumsal rolünün vatandaş eğitimi olarak tanımlanmasının TRT'nin yayıncı olarak işe aldığı kadınlar üzerindeki etkisini, bu kadınların devlet sponsorluğundaki hakim toplumsal cinsiyet ideolojisiyle müzakeresine odaklanarak sorgulamaktadır. Daha sonra, devlet hegemonyasında muhafazakarlıkla işbirliği halindeki neoliberalizme doğru yaşanan dönüşümü hem devlet tekelindeki radyo ve TV'de dolaşımda olan kadınlık söylemi hem de kadın yayıncıların bu söylemin üretimine katılımı açısından incelemektedir. Son olarak üzerinde durulan nokta ise, 1970'lerden 1980'lere uzanan süreçte kadın yayıncıların popüler kültürde tasvir edildiği haliyle imajlarında görülen değişiklikler ve sürekliliklerdir.

Çalışma kadınların mesleki bir alan olarak yayıncılıkla kurduğu ilişkiyi her iki dönemde de medya metinlerinin yaratımındaki failliklerine odaklanarak incelemektedir. Ağırlıklı olarak yayıncı kadınların kişisel öykülerinden yararlanarak, onları devlet ideolojisinin izleyicilere ve dinleyicilere aktarıldığı edilgen kanallar olarak değil, bu ideolojinin etkin ve eleştirel araçları olarak kabul etmektedir. Böylelikle, kadınların medya üretimine katılımıyla devlet radyo ve televizyonunda kadınlıkla ilgili üretilen söylemin çatışmalı doğası arasındaki tarihsel etkileşime ışık tutmaktadır.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Mass media forms of radio and television have been among the critical socio – cultural sites where people produce, reproduce, negotiate and transform gender. The relation between women and these media has been determined by the contested nature of the boundaries between the public and private spheres. As cultural modes, radio and television reproduce the discourse of separate spaces, with home as a space of femininity and of leisure on the one hand, and the public world as a space of masculinity and work on the other.

Still, with their companionate nature, these personalized mass media act as a bridge between the domestic sphere and the world outside it. They render the world outside home more accessible to women, who are otherwise excluded from the public political arenas. On the other hand, some have seen in these media a potential to stem the tide of women's empowerment, making women's desire to "break out of the chains of domesticity" unnecessary by bringing the outside world home.¹

This is only part of the story of the relationship between women and mass media forms of radio and television, however. These mediums not only have functioned as a channel whereby the public penetrates into the private sphere. Women also have benefited from radio and television to achieve and maintain a public identity. Besides consuming mass mediated artifacts in the domestic sphere, they have found a route to public existence and influence in the field of radio-TV

¹ Kate Lacey, *Feminine Frequencies: Gender, German Radio and the Public Sphere 1923 – 1940* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1996), p. 13.

broadcasting since its inception both in Turkey and in other parts of the world, with their changing roles, experiences, expectations and ideals.

Radio and TV constitute a distinct public sphere in which intellectuals are able to articulate, discuss and negotiate norms, policies, and the future of their communities, and women have been involved in this sphere as part of the intelligentsia. Yet, women have ventured into a sphere the discourses and practices of which are informed by the gender ideology. Their participation in this field has generated reactions both at the level of the audience and at the level of other actors playing in it. In fact, their employment as radio and TV professionals is one of the major factors that have turned this field into a contested site. While particular practices and discourses constitutive of the field of radio-TV broadcasting have confined women back in their “femininity,” they have also provided women with incredible opportunities of agency which they have exploited to affirm themselves as self – developed individuals in the public sphere.

This thesis scrutinizes the construction of gendered subjectivities of female broadcast professionals in the state radio and television in Turkey from the mid-1960s to the late 1980s, between 1964, when TRT (Turkey Radio and Television Corporation) was established, and 1989, when Turkey’s first private television channel, Star TV, was founded. Focusing on the experiences of those women who were employed by TRT in that time period, this dissertation seeks answers to the following questions: What strategies did these women employ to open up a space for themselves in this field? How did they react to the roles expected from them as professional women? What were the instances that made them discover their womanhood, and what did their gender identity mean for them in making sense of

their professional roles? Last but not least, how did they deal with the double burden on them as professional women?

Asking these questions, this dissertation situates the personal narratives of female broadcast professionals within the institutional framework of TRT and within the broader socio – historical and cultural context Turkey lived through from the mid-1960s to the late 1980s. Its main objective is to demonstrate how the historical practices of radio-TV broadcasting influence female broadcast professionals' lives by both reproducing patriarchal patterns and yet providing opportunities to contest the dominant discourses on gender. This dissertation has also a broader aim. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the attempt at restoring agency to women in the mass media in Turkey, a group whose participation in media production is usually ignored or downplayed at best.

Women and the Development of Broadcasting in Turkey

This dissertation follows a chronological order of organization in its examination of women's participation in broadcasting. Although its time span mostly covers the period between the mid-1960s and the end of the 1980s, when radio-TV broadcasts were monopolized by the state, the first chapter is devoted to the historical development of the state radio before the foundation of TRT, for it is believed that the way the state radio evolved during the Republican period and in the 1950s had profound implications both for the construction of broadcasting as a professional field and for women's involvement in it.

Radio and TV in Turkey were under either direct or indirect state supervision until the introduction of private radio and TV broadcasts in 1990. Even in the period

between 1927 and 1936, when a private radio broadcasting company called *Telsiz Telefon Türk Anonim Şirketi* (TTAŞ) (Radio Telephone Turkish Incorporation) was granted a monopoly over radio broadcasts, the state both supervised radio through government-appointed inspectors and controlled all of the operations of this company.

In the authoritarian climate of the second half of the 1930s, the state assumed radio broadcasts under its own monopoly. Radio was defined as an instrument of national education and propaganda; it was expected to dissolve various socio-cultural and ethnic differences into a modern/national identity. Nonetheless, the Republican radio failed to establish the state's cultural hegemony. The government's attempts to improve radio's coverage capacity and to increase rates of listening remained insufficient, and radio's overtly didactic broadcasts failed to incorporate social groups with divergent needs and tastes to its audience.

The number of radio receivers per 1000 people was 1.4 at the end of 1937. At the end of 1938, the transmitting power of the Turkish state radio, 140 KW, was only 1.7% of the total radio transmitting power in Europe. A striking increase was observed in the number of radio receiver owners between 1938 and 1940 since radio gained in importance towards the Second World War as a means of communicating to the world. Its coverage capacity also expanded with the implementation of a new transmitter station in Ankara.

During the Republican years, radio remained a luxurious item used mainly by upper middle and high income groups in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, where 70.2% of all the registered radio receivers were available in 1938. Despite the developments in radio technology, even in 1940, the number of radio receivers per 1000 people did not exceed 4.3, which was still behind many countries like Cuba, Morocco, Egypt,

Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Sales of radio receivers were strong during that time period when a receiver cost nearly three-fourths of the average monthly salary of a civil servant married with two children.²

Failing to make diverse groups of people imagine themselves as members of a unified national community mostly due to its limited audience profile and weak coverage capacity,³ radio did, however, loom large as a school whereby its employees were socialized into the national identity. Radio technology enabled them to create and transmit what Ahıska describes as a “phantasm of being modern and national” and to identify themselves as the representatives of this modern/national whole.⁴ What the construction of the state radio as a school for radio professionals implied for the women employed by it is covered in the first part of the chapter on the pre-TRT period.

The second part explores the transformation of the radio in the multi-party period, particularly under the Democrat Party’s reign. Along with the transition to a multi-party order after the Second World War, radio was located right in the middle of political conflicts between the opposition and the government. During the Democrat Party (DP) years, radio acted as an instrument of the government propaganda and was mobilized to assist the government’s populist policies amidst a remarkable expansion of the radio audience.

² Uygur Kocabaşoğlu, *Şirket Telsizinden Devlet Radyosuna: TRT Öncesinde Radyonun Tarihsel Gelişimi ve Türk Siyasal Hayatı İçindeki Yeri* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1980), pp. 142, 146 – 7, 153.

³ In his work on the development of nationalism, Benedict Anderson stresses that nations are communities imagined through various forms of communication within the framework of the capitalist production relations. For further details, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).

⁴ Meltem Ahıska, *Radyonun Sihirli Kapısı: Garbiyatçılık ve Politik Öznellik* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2005), p. 147.

An additional factor was that the first “Republican girls” generation graduated and started to seek employment as professionals in the 1950s, particularly in the cities of Ankara and Istanbul, and the state radio was one of the professional fields into which they ventured. The last part of the chapter looks at the inconsistencies involved in the socialization processes of these “Republican girls” both in the family and at school, as revealed in the written autobiographies of two women employed at Ankara Radio in the 1950s, Jülide Gülizar and Adalet Ağaoğlu as well as in the self-narrative of Ü.G., who was interviewed for this study. It also discusses the gendered dynamics of their working life.

As the chapter demonstrates, these women saw a professional post in the state radio as a means to self-empowerment. Nevertheless, at the radio station, they worked within a patriarchal framework that operated in a Janus-faced manner as regards women’s professional development. These women were encouraged to move up the career ladder by their male superiors at the radio house, on one hand, but on the other, male radio directors and chiefs assumed the role of “father” who disciplined their “daughters” about the boundaries of their public existence.

The third chapter analyzes the complex ways women were integrated into the developmentalist drive of the state as radio professionals during the initial years of TRT in the second half of the 1960s. In this decade, a developmentalist discourse established almost hegemony over the intellectual-political environment of Turkey as in many other parts of the world. The question of how Turkey could develop was the issue intellectuals, both on the right and on the left of the political spectrum, mostly contemplated.⁵ According to Dicle Koğacıoğlu, the Republican institutions showed

⁵ M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, “Bağımlılık Kuramı, Dünya Sistemi Teorisi ve Osmanlı/Türkiye Çalışmaları,” *Birikim* 91 (Winter 2002), p. 101.

ongoing success in normalizing themselves by repressing diverse oppositional groups since the 1930s because they were incorporated into this developmentalist drive.⁶

As a state institution, radio was also restructured on developmentalist premises in the 1960s. It was defined as a public educator and tasked with mobilizing the people on behalf of national development. The redefinition of radio's role against society as an educating apparatus created an urgent need for enlightened intellectuals. The newly established TRT compensated for its shortage of staff specialized in media production by welcoming high school and college graduate women to its ranks.

This chapter demonstrates that women felt excited to work for TRT as radio professionals, which seemed to fulfill their desire to serve the public. They believed that everyone was there to work together for the common good. They viewed TRT as a congenial place where they could work within the spirit of ambition and self-dedication. This atmosphere imbued the institution with a strong sense of egalitarianism, which was absent in many other public institutions that had deep-seated discriminatory practices against women. Actually, a powerful sense of TRT as a community runs through the memories and memoirs of those women employed by it in the second half of the 1960s.

The definition of radio's role as a public educator created opportunities for these women to challenge the gender norms both in the public and in the private domains, however contested these opportunities were. Having abandoned the policy of secluding its female staff in the radio station, the TRT administration expected and encouraged the women on its professional staff to be physically mobile so as to produce lively programs that addressed the whole society. Also, these women made public the problems that had been pushed into silence before and discussed the woman

⁶ Dicle Koğacıoğlu, 12 December 2007, "Gelenek Söylemi Örneği ve İktidarın Doğallaşması: Namus Cinayetleri Örneği," <http://research.sabanciuniv.edu/5862/> [23 November 2011], p. 15.

question on radio from a pattern-breaking angle. Although they might have denied the label “feminist,” they were concerned with women’s problems and with advancing their status. They contributed to the formation of public opinion about gendered inequalities, and the manner in which they articulated this on radio was considered a threat to the family order and hence censored either by the political elites or by the TRT authorities themselves.

Notwithstanding their attempts to introduce the woman question to air, theirs was what Abu-Lughod calls “feminism co-opted by developmentalism,”⁷ which idealized education, progress and modernity within a national framework. They adopted the elitist mentality of the developmentalist ideology to a large extent. They regarded themselves as missionaries whose duty was to enlighten the ignorant mass on behalf of social development. Their approach to the woman question was also shaped by this elitist mentality, as this chapter on the initial years of TRT exhibits.

The fourth chapter covers the decade of the 1970s, when the crisis of import substituting industrialization deepened amidst rapid urbanization and a high population growth rate. TRT entered this decade as a prestigious public institution which also incorporated television. The patterns of TV ownership were shaped by the particular sociopolitical structures and the redistribution relations of the developmentalist era. From the mid-1960s to the late-1970s import-substituting industries passed beyond the consumption demands of the dominant groups.⁸ Increases in the real income levels of the labor and middle classes resulted in the expansion of the use of various consumer durables.⁹ This phenomenon was most

⁷ Lila Abu-Lughod, *Dramas of Nation: The Politics of Television in Egypt* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p. 83.

⁸ Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908 – 2002* (Istanbul: İmge Kitabevi, 2005), p. 120.

⁹ Ibid., p. 121.

particularly symbolized by the TV antennas sprouting up from the roofs in *gecekondu* (shantytown) areas.¹⁰

In 1968, when the first TV broadcasts started, the coverage capacity of the single TV transmitter in Ankara was 1276 square km, reaching a population of 1,070,000.¹¹ By the end of 1972, the total coverage capacity of the transmitters in Ankara, Izmir, Eskişehir, Edirne, Kırıkkale, Balıkesir, Istanbul and Izmit rose to 19,449 square km, reaching a population of eight million.¹² The number of registered TV receivers showed a parallel increase, from 101,916 in 1971 to 157,226 one year later.¹³ In 1973, it was 269,000.¹⁴ By the end of 1977, there were 2,500,000 registered TV receiver owners.¹⁵ This number would rise to 3,450,000 three years later.¹⁶

As TV and radio receivers were introduced to an increasing number of households, both in urban and in rural areas, the professional staff of TRT became known by a large number of people. Being from TRT guaranteed not only prestige and glamour, but also generous economic and social opportunities. Thus, many

¹⁰ Özden Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumun Tarihi: TRT 1927 – 2000* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2003), p. 120.

¹¹ Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1968 Yılı ve 5. Hesap Devresine Ait Çalışma, Bilanço, Kar ve Zarar Durumu* (Ankara: TRT Yayınları, 1969), p. 7.

¹² Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1972 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bünye Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Yayınları, 1973), p. 16.

¹³ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁴ Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1973 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bünye Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Yayınları, 1974), p. 20.

¹⁵ Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1977 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bünye Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Yayınları, 1978), p. 50.

¹⁶ Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1981 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bünye Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Yayınları, 1982), p. 39. For further details, see the graph in the appendices about the development of registered and operating TV receiver ownership between 1970 and 1984.

university graduates, particularly in the cities of Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, whose number was on the rise,¹⁷ were keen on finding a post in it.

TRT, which was deprived of its constitutionally guaranteed autonomy after the military intervention in March 1971, became the foci of the political authority's staffing attempts. Especially in the second half of the 1970s, the Nationalist Front governments tried to weaken the prevalence of left-leaning intellectuals in the institution by use of staffing and censorship mechanisms. As the bureaucratic structure of TRT grew like a giant, intensive political struggles and conflicts became everyday phenomena inside it. As a result, the sense of TRT as a community seemed to vanish in the personal narratives of its female members. Instead, they used the metaphor of struggle to describe the TRT's working atmosphere in the 1970s, as this chapter demonstrates.

As television became more popular, another factor was added to the stories of female broadcast professionals: tension between the ideal of serving the common good and the need to appeal to a wider yet diversified audience. This tension came to light in negotiations about whether the primary function of TV was to educate or to entertain. The women employed as broadcast professionals by TRT put their faith in the public service ideology and criticized the emergent populist elements in TV broadcasts, as they thought that the definition of television as an instrument of entertainment instead of education posed a threat to television's role in advancing women's status in society.

The fifth chapter analyzes the implications of the transition to a neoliberal path of development for the state radio-TV, especially for the female professionals

¹⁷ The ratio of higher education graduates, both male and female, increased around three fold, while the entire population went up from nearly 35,605,176 to 44,736,937 between 1970 and 1980. For further details, see State Institute of Statistics, *Statistical Pocketbook of Turkey 1980* (Ankara: DİE, 1980), p. 23; and also, State Institute of Statistics, *Statistical Yearbook of Turkey 1985* (Ankara: DİE, 1981), p. 49.

employed by it. In the 1980s, Turkey entered a new era of economic liberalization after a military coup which crushed almost all political activities. According to Keyder, in the military interventions of 1960 and 1971, the military had to resort to the service of the Republican elites, who self-identified with the state, for the purpose of the restoration of the state order. On the other hand, the military coup of 1980 occurred at a time when there was a widespread belief in the need for a restructuring of the state. Keyder writes, “What was demanded was not restoration but a radical change.”¹⁸

In economic terms, the prolonged crisis of import substituting industrialization was solved by applying the prescriptions offered by the IMF specialists. These “ready-made prescriptions,” as Keyder calls them, suggested reducing wages in order to increase profits, restricting allowances to social policies, subsidizing exports and devaluing the domestic currency.¹⁹ All these meant that the development-centered populist economic policies of the 1960s and the 1970s, at the center of which lay the state, were substituted with an export-oriented and liberal approach to the economy in the 1980s.

In the 1980s, the state’s understanding of public service also changed. As developmentalism as a political ideology and state practice was undermined by structural adjustment and economic reforms, citizens were more regularly addressed as consumers.²⁰ In accordance, public enterprises started to be regarded as a “burden” on the tightened state budget and were required to follow a policy of financial self-sufficiency.

¹⁸ Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye’de Devlet ve Sınıflar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007), p. 262.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 263.

²⁰ Abu Lughod, *Dramas of Nationhood*, p. 194.

One of the most profound implications of this change for TRT was the high rate of increase in the number of its contracted staff against the salaried ones. Those young women who were employed by TRT as contracted staff with almost no employment security experienced crushingly discriminatory practices, unlike the previous generation of the salaried female staff, who had already established a stronghold in the institution. On the other hand, as the state power was no longer justified in terms of providing a “paternal hand,” the women who had become broadcast professionals in the developmentalist era also felt pains in coping with the break-up of the paternalist relation between them and the state.

The fifth chapter demonstrates that female broadcast professionals were also challenged by the impact of the liberalization drive on the state’s broadcasting policy in the 1980s. Although the state radio and television did not completely abandon its public service ideology in the 1980s, a higher number of political elites started to consider particularly TV a commercial medium and conduit that should be governed by the “aesthetic of capitalist realism.”²¹ Its role was redefined as transforming the population into an active consumer market. However, many female broadcast professionals continued to perceive their role as elevating society and believed wholeheartedly in the public service mission of TV.²²

The last chapter examines changes that occurred in the cultural landscape of the 1980s and their repercussions for the female broadcast professionals’ mediated imagery in the popular culture. Actually, the 1980s was a breaking point not only in socio-economic or political, but also in cultural terms. Nurdan Gürbilek defines the

²¹ Ibid., p. 193.

²² In his research on the professional tendencies of the TRT’s producers in the 1980s, Erol Mutlu comes to a similar conclusion. He demonstrates that the producers at TRT still saw broadcasting as a “public service,” however much the government attempted to reconstruct it on a commercial basis. For further discussion, see Erol Mutlu, “Karşılaştırmalı Televizyon Sistemleri ve Televizyon Yapımcılarının Mesleki Eğilimleri” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ankara University, 1986).

cultural atmosphere of this decade with the metaphor of “living on the showcase.”²³ According to her, in the 1970s politics had acted as a common platform for people from different social groups. People were able to meet on this platform with their “common dreams and struggles” on the condition that they left behind their private identities.²⁴

In the 1980s, these repressed identities came back on the scene as transformed in line with the prerogatives of the free market, which was established and maintained via the state mechanisms.²⁵ The popular press, which turned into a “profitable business”²⁶ in the 1980s along with a conglomeration process, was among the main instigators of what Gürbilek calls the “coming back of the repressed individuality.”²⁷ Especially heavy censorship on the press incited a search for novel news areas which resulted in the “discovery of the private sphere.”²⁸ Many issues, in particular sexuality, which had been considered private before suddenly burst onto the public sphere and became objects of a public discourse on individuality and emancipation.²⁹

During the 1960s and the 1970s, whereas the state ideology continued to provide a legitimate space for women’s social and political participation, a new anti-state ideology also gained ground with the development of a mass leftist movement.

²³ Nurdan Gürbilek, *Vitrinde Yaşamak: 1980’lerin Kültürel İklimi* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2009).

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 64 – 5.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

²⁶ Barış Bulunmaz, “Holdingleşme Ekseninde Türk Medyasında Tekelleşme Sorunu,” *Öneri* 9, no. 6 (July 2011), pp. 237 – 8.

²⁷ Gürbilek, p. 11.

²⁸ Ahmet Oktay, *Türkiye’de Popüler Kültür* (İstanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2002), p. 120.

²⁹ Gürbilek, p. 11.

The humanitarian and egalitarian ideals of leftist ideology offered women a new venue for public political existence. Still, the main goal of the political left was the transformation of the overall societal structure, to which any other concerns such as women's rights were subordinated.

With the foundation of various women's organizations in the 1980s, particularly after 1983, women started to develop an autonomous political identity. Besides aiming to make women's presence visible, the emerging feminist movement of the 1980s challenged the reduction of the woman question to the issue of class domination. With their insistence on the political nature of the personal, they dealt with the specificities of the family structure in Turkey and brought to the public political agenda various issues related to women's subordination in the domestic sphere, which had been considered a matter of privacy until then.³⁰

Along with these socio-cultural and political developments in the 1980s, a change in the popular image of woman towards what Ayata describes as "modern individual who has a professional career and who wants to discover her body" occurred. This changing definition of womanhood invited women to be competitive and successful individuals in society, but it did not require them to deny their gender identities or to make their bodies invisible.³¹

As the last chapter demonstrates, this change also influenced the image of female broadcast professionals as depicted in popular broadcast magazines. While these magazines still featured female broadcast professionals in their domestic roles

³⁰ For further details about the emerging feminist movement of the 1980s, see Nükhet Sirman, "Feminism in Turkey: A Short History," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 1, no.3 (1989), pp. 15 – 30.

³¹ Ayşe Güneş Ayata, "Laiklik, Güç ve Katılım Üçgeninde Türkiye'de Kadın ve Siyaset," in *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, ed. A. Berkay Hacımırzaoğlu (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), pp. 240 – 1.

with motherhood being the first, these women were also invited to strike a pose for these magazines as career-oriented professionals.

Ayşe Saktanber has argued that women were mainly defined as objects of sexual passions in the popular press in the 1980s.³² Yet, the last chapter of this dissertation shows that the popular magazines of the decade did not evoke sexuality in the image of the female broadcast professionals employed by TRT except for ladylikeness and personal care. They seemed to have adopted an apparently ambiguous attitude to the visibility of women's sexuality. On one hand, they provoked sexual passions in their depiction of women. On the other hand, they occasionally criticized how television admitted sexuality inside the Turkish family.

The last chapter argues that this apparent ambiguity was not ambiguous at all since the 1980s was not only a decade when sexuality and private life were expressed within a discourse of individualization and liberalization, but also a decade when family was praised as the sound basis of a conservative society.

Women in Professions in Turkey

The period between 1960 and 1980 was one of massive social and cultural transformation both in Turkey and in other parts of the world. Eric Hobsbawm has stated that one of the most dramatic social revolutions of this era was the rising role of (especially married) women within the labor class. Illustratively, while not more than 14% of the women in the US were both married and employed in 1940, their rate nearly doubled between 1950 and 1970 and increased to more than 50% in 1980.

³² Ayşe Saktanber, "Türkiye'de Medyada Kadın: Serbest, Müsait Kadın veya İyi Eş, Fedakar Anne," in *1980'ler Türkiye'sinde Kadın Bakış Açısından Kadınlar*, ed. Ş. Tekeli (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1993).

While many women sought employment as a second source of income for their families, the demand for autonomy also played a role in encouraging them to work, particularly as professionals.

In addition, during this era women started to have access to university education in increasing amounts. As of the Second World War, women had been somewhere between 15% and 30% of all university students in many developed countries; they still equaled less than 50% in 1960 both in Europe and the North America. However, in only four European countries, which included Turkey, was the proportion of female university students less than 40% in 1980.³³

Such dramatic increases in women's labor participation rates and educational attainment levels occurred along with the tremendous growth of the services sector in the West. Nevertheless, women working in the services sector were usually employed in secondary positions and earned less than their male counterparts.³⁴ They continued to have low levels of representation in prestigious professions such as medicine, law, the sciences and engineering.³⁵

The concept of profession is itself a gendered one, Anne Witz has suggested, since "it takes what are in fact the class privileged male actors... to be the paradigmatic case of profession."³⁶ Women's admission to and career opportunities in professions are much more restrained than for their male counterparts. Researchers have also shown that women are predominantly employed in the kind of professional

³³ Eric Hobsbawn, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914 – 1991* (London: Abacus, 2003), pp. 419 - 30.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 418 – 9.

³⁵ In 1973, Epstein wrote that although women constituted one-third of the labor force in the US, the category of working women was primarily composed of poor women employed in the least prestigious jobs. See Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, *Women's Place: Options and Limits in Professional Careers* (California: University of California Press, 1973), p. 2.

³⁶ Anne Witz, *Patriarchy and Professions* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 37.

posts regarded as a continuation of their traditional feminine roles in the public domain. Teaching is one of these professional fields, for example, where a relatively high number of women have been employed in many countries since much earlier than the twentieth century. As Cortina and Roman have argued, the demand for female teachers has resulted from “the glorification of the so-called feminine nature that made a woman a suitable candidate to be put in charge of young children in her role as a social mother.”³⁷ This perception has been detrimental to the levels of professionalization available to women since the demand for maternal like behavior has not advanced female teachers’ technical-pedagogical knowledge. It has limited them to preschool and primary school grades and restrained their participation in the decision-making mechanisms of the educational field.³⁸

Women’s career opportunities in professional life depend not only on the dominant image of a profession, but on the particular socio-historical conditions of the country in which they live. Researchers have demonstrated that in underdeveloped countries, a group of “enlightened women” who are mainly composed of the wives or the daughters of elite families are quite powerful in social and political life, particularly as professionals, while the majority of lower class and uneducated women are exempted from the public sphere.

In these countries, class privileges result in the establishment of the dominant classes’ monopoly over higher education and professional training. The encouragement of elite women to enter the professional ranks serves the maintenance of these class privileges. Therefore, in many underdeveloped countries, women have reached higher levels in terms of professionalization than their “sisters” in the West.

³⁷ Regina Cortina and Sonsoles San Roman eds., *Women and Teaching: Global Perspective on the Feminization of a Profession* (Gordonville: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 5.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

Turkey has been one of these countries where women are “lucky” in terms of opportunities for professionalization. Many scholars have demonstrated that women in the professions in Turkey have much higher status than their counterparts in many developed countries. In addition, it has been observed that they have high levels of representation in prestigious professions such as medicine, law and engineering, which are thought to be reserved for men elsewhere.³⁹

In Turkey, as a result of the deficit of the male population due to the military campaigns from the nineteenth century onwards, a low sex ratio between men and women was observed until the Second World War. Since a high value was attached to women in a society deprived of its manpower to a large extent, not only was the village woman made into an “idol” of the regime, but urban, educated women’s responsibility for national development was strongly emphasized in the dominant ideology during the Republican era. For example, on the popular magazines of the pre-Second World War period, images of the Turkish female peasant sacrificing herself for the cause of the national struggle and of the educated Turkish girl in modern dress codes appeared next to another.⁴⁰

Due to high mortality rates, the national population grew slowly between 1927 and 1945, but improvements in mortality conditions after the end of the Second World War resulted in the rise of the national population growth rate. With the deficit in the male population having been removed, the regime’s emphasis on women’s contributions to public life started to fade, and women were invited back to the private domain so as to carry out their roles as modern housewives and mothers. In fact, the labor force participation rate of women aged over 15 showed a decisive

³⁹ Oya Çitçi, *Kadın Sorunu ve Türkiye’de Kamu Görevlisi Kadınlar* (Ankara: Türkiye ve Ortadoğu Amme İdaresi Enstitüsü, 1982), p. 114.

⁴⁰ Oktay, pp. 63 – 4.

decline between 1950 and 1970, from 72% to 51 %.⁴¹ According to Gülten Kazgan, the high rate of fertility⁴² accompanied by a decline in women's labor force participation level meant, "The main occupation of women appeared to be taking care of children and of the house in the 1960s and the 1970s."⁴³

Ironically enough, the post-war era brought in a high incidence of urban women in the most prestigious professions like law and medicine. This phenomenon started to bear its fruits especially in the second half of the 1960s and in the 1970s. According to Ayşe Öncü, the high rate of women in these high-skilled professions was an "intriguing puzzle"⁴⁴ in a country where women composed only a small part of the urban labor force⁴⁵ and where the majority of women were deprived of opportunities for education.⁴⁶

Researchers have explained this "puzzle" with a number of factors. The rapid rate of rural-to-urban migration and the emergence of a large pool of unskilled

⁴¹ This figure mostly resulted from the decreasing number of women engaging in agricultural activities amidst high rates of rural-to-urban migration. For further details about the statistics of women's labor participation, see Gülten Kazgan, "Labor Force Participation, Occupational Distribution, Educational Attainment and the Socio-Economic Status of Women in the Turkish Economy," in *Women in Turkish Society*, ed. N. Abadan Unat (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), p. 135.

⁴² Survey results from the early 1960s exhibited a high fertility rate, close to 6.5 on the average. The 1970 Population Census showed that national fertility fell only to 5. The Third Five Year National Development plan assumed that as a result of the continuous decline in the fertility rate, by 1995 Turkish women would be bearing children at the pattern of Istanbul on the average, which was around 2.5 then. For further details, see Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 1972, *Kalkınma Planı: Üçüncü Beş Yıl (1973 – 1977)*, <http://ekutup.dpt.gov.tr/plan/plan3.pdf> [4 July 2012].

⁴³ Kazgan, p. 138.

⁴⁴ Ayşe Öncü, "Turkish Women in the Professions: Why So Many?" in *Women in Turkish Society*, ed. N. Abadan Unat (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), p. 181.

⁴⁵ Various statistical surveys conducted in the 1970s showed that women still occupied a relatively peripheral place in the urban labor force by less than 15%. For further details about women's participation in the urban labor force, see Kazgan, p. 138.

⁴⁶ Despite the remarkable increase in the educational attainment levels of both men and women in absolute terms after the 1930s, around 50.5% of women in Turkey were still illiterate by 1975 whereas the rate of male literacy was 76%. For further details on women's education in Turkey, see UNICEF, 2004, *A Gender Review in Education, Turkey 2003*, <http://www.unicef.org/turkey/pdf/ge21.pdf> [9 June 2012].

female labor force in urban settings available for employment at home by the upper class working women might have paved the way for the high incidence of women in professions. Also, the mobilization of extended family networks for childcare responsibilities might have smoothed the way for urban women who sought employment in professions.⁴⁷

In addition, in contrast to many developed countries, professional associations in Turkey have not adopted policies that result in discrimination against women.⁴⁸ For example, in the USA, associations of medical doctors and lawyers were able to restrain the number and the characteristics of the students admitted to the related schools. These associations excluded women and minorities from participating in their ranks through various mechanisms. In a similar vein, professional press organizations in the USA continued to guard their gates against women and exempted them from the professional development opportunities they offered to their male members until as late as 1971.⁴⁹

Öncü claims that the above-mentioned factors partially explained the advance of women into these high-skilled professions in Turkey. According to her, because the growth of these professions was a rather recent phenomenon in Turkey, an

⁴⁷ Öncü, p. 185.

⁴⁸ Işık Urla Zeytinoğlu, "Constructed Images as Employment Restrictions: Determinants of Female Labor in Turkey," in *Deconstructing the Images of Turkish Woman*, Zehra Arat ed. (NY: Palgrave, 2000), p. 196.

⁴⁹ American women working in the press industry turned their isolated status into an advantage by establishing their own professional organizations, which happened to provide them with a sense of power, solidarity and identity they could rarely experience in mixed-sex organizations. These organizations contributed to women's acceptance as journalists both by the profession and by the public. Moreover, many of them were closely related to the broader women's movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and often put women's issues on their agenda. Yet, since the 1970s when barriers excluding women from male-only press clubs started to come down as women gained legitimacy in journalism and as the rising women's movement brought pressure and legal action, woman-only press organizations have either lost their previous zeal or readapted themselves to changing conditions of women's employment in journalism. For further details, see Elizabeth V. Burt, ed. *Women's Press Organizations: 1881 – 1999* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2000).

expansion in technical and university education occurred so as to meet the urgent need for “a trained elite.”⁵⁰ This became possible without the influx of the individuals from peasant origins to the elite circles, as women from the urban Republican families entered into the ranks of these professions.⁵¹ Öncü writes that women from elite origins were actually seen as “less threatening than upwardly mobile men from humbler backgrounds who [were] likely to be more competitive and achievement oriented.”⁵² That is to say, the fortification of the Republican elite circles was ensured “by keeping it a family affair.”⁵³

The Institutionalization of the Kemalist Female Identity

Despite the restrictive impact culturally assigned identities have on individuals, Arat writes that they may function “as points of departure and as opportunities for change.”⁵⁴ Likewise, despite being restrictive, the new form of femininity which developed during the Republican period as an urban educated woman active in public life acted as a dynamic of social change for women, which resulted in their high incidence in the professions.

⁵⁰ Öncü, p. 189.

⁵¹ Zeytinoğlu also has maintained that women’s ascribed status, being born into a high status family, made an important difference in their success in professional occupations. Most women in professional occupations came from families of a higher socio-economic status than those of men with the same occupational and educational level. The social capital of these women was also high, which smoothed the way for their admission into professional ranks. They found jobs easily through their family contacts. Data from the USA also indicate that managers from high-status families are promoted more frequently regardless of their gender as a result of the mentoring support offered to them at the workplace. Subordinates who share similar social values and skills with senior executives receive more informal and moral support, which manifests itself in greater performance. For details, see Zeytinoğlu, pp. 194 – 5.

⁵² Öncü, p. 189.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Zehra Arat, “Introduction: Politics of Representation and Identity,” in *Deconstructing the Images of Turkish Woman*, ed. Zehra Arat (NY: Palgrave, 2000), p. 5.

Ayşe Durakbaşa has called the new female identity that was institutionalized among the elite during the Republican period and that was transmitted across generations almost as a tradition, the “Kemalist female identity.”⁵⁵ She says that the Kemalist socialization process urban educated women lived through can be defined as a “cultural heritage inscribed on individual identities.”⁵⁶ Educated professional women were socialized within this heritage with the ideas of modernization and enlightenment.

Kemalism almost functioned as feminism for a new generation of elite women who were able to exploit the advantages and privileges of their new status institutionalized by the Republican practices. The most noticeable challenge that the Republican regime posed to women’s status in society was fostering their participation in the public domain as professionals.⁵⁷ Ferhunde Özbay mentions that especially before the 1950s, a period characterized by insufficient manpower in urban settings, attempts at “creating new urban elite loyal to the Republican ideology” paved the way for a remarkable increase in the social status of the urban women working as professionals for the public sector.⁵⁸

However a progressive ideology Kemalism was, the Republican elites did not bother altering the patriarchal norms of morality that reserved a socially constraining femininity for women. In fact, the Republican regime dealt with the woman question through an eclectic formula that combined a modernizing ideology with a

⁵⁵ Ayşe Durakbaşa, “The Formation of ‘Kemalist Female Identity: A Historical – Cultural Perspective” (MA thesis, Bogazici University, 1987), p. 4.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁷ Ayşe Durakbaşa, “Kemalism as Identity Politics in Turkey,” in *Deconstructing the Images of Turkish Woman*, ed. Zehra Arat (NY: Palgrave, 2000), p. 143.

⁵⁸ Ferhunde Özbay, “Woman’s Labor in Rural and Urban Settings,” *Boğaziçi Journal Review of Social, Economic and Administrative Studies* 8, no. 1 – 2 (1994), pp. 5 – 19.

conservative-puritan sexual morality. Women were invited to the public domain, yet informed that they should adopt a sexually modest posture that did not threaten the patriarchal morality.⁵⁹

The notion of female modesty acted as one of the main tenets of the new morality of Kemalist elites. Amidst changing gender relations in society, the Republican women learned how to compartmentalize their sexuality in their interactions within the male dominated domain of public affairs. In practice, this meant assumption of a “manly” public appearance by them.⁶⁰

Many revisionist feminist historians have long argued that the Republican women who were invited to exploit the potential spaces opened up in the public arena for them by the state did not question the dominant sex roles. Instead, they were said to assume “additional roles acted as duties assigned by the state,”⁶¹ which enabled them to enjoy their privileged status as professional women over the rest of the women in the population.

According to Şirin Tekeli, these women suffered from an “illusion of emancipation.” That is, the Republican women felt that they had already achieved the goal of equality with men since they had been emancipated from “the chains of tradition” by the Republic, which prevented them from developing autonomous identities and politicizing their particular concerns as women.⁶² That is why scholars

⁵⁹ Durakbaşı, “Kemalism as Identity Politics,” p. 48. Zehra Arat also argues that with the advent of modernist reforms, preoccupation with honor (*namus*) must have been deepened due to sexual desegregation and women’s participation in the public domain. See Arat, “Introduction,” p. 26.

⁶⁰ Durakbaşı, “Kemalism as Identity Politics,” p. 149.

⁶¹ Durakbaşı, “The Formation of ‘Kemalist Female Identity’,” p. 17.

⁶² Şirin Tekeli, “1980’ler Türkiye’inde Kadınlar,” in *1980’ler Türkiye’inde Kadın Bakış Açısından Kadınlar*, ed. Şirin Tekeli (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1993): 1 – 50.

like Deniz Kandiyoti have used the phrase “emancipated yet unliberated” to describe them.⁶³

In my view, the assumption about the “illusion of emancipation” portrays only a partial picture of the professional women, many of whom adopted the Republican ideology enthusiastically. These women usually are depicted as passive victims/beneficiaries of the state ideology who should be awakened from their long sleep, so to speak, so as to acquire an autonomous conscious of womanhood.

The major part of the problem is that this argument obscures how women construct themselves as active subjects in the making of history, although this subjectivity is shaped by the unique socio-historical and political conditions in which they find themselves. An actor has the ability to avoid acting completely in line with the patterns inscribed by power relations, as stressed by Dirks, Eley and Ortner:

... Such an actor is not only possible but normal for the simple reason that neither culture itself nor the regimes of power that are imbricated in cultural logics and experiences can ever be wholly consistent and determining. Identities may be seen as attempts to create and maintain coherence out of inconsistent cultural stuff and inconsistent life experience, but every actor always carry around enough disparate and contradictory stands of knowledge and passion so as always to be in a potentially critical position. Thus the practices of everyday life may be seen as replete with petty rebellions and inchoate discontent... Even if the subject cannot always be recuperated as a purposeful agent, neither can it any longer be seen as only the effect of subjugation.⁶⁴

Even if we claim that women’s identities are culturally and historically constructed, we do not need to assume that women are passive victims of this construction process. Not only do women participate in the (re)production of their subordination,

⁶³ Deniz Kandiyoti, “Emancipated but Unliberated?” *Feminist Studies* 13, no. 2 (Summer 1987), pp. 317 – 38.

⁶⁴ Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley and Sherry B. Ortner, “Introduction,” in *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, eds. Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley and Sherry B. Ortner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 18.

but they also develop various forms of resistance even if they are not always conscious and purposeful agents in either of these processes.

Even though the construction of the “ideal Turkish woman” was a fundamental ingredient of the Republican project, we should not readily accept that Turkish women have totally submitted themselves to this ideal. Although they are generally pictured as complacent or resilient, they have not been far away from the spirit of being defiant either. And as Arat suggests, “Their ways may epitomize how alternatives may develop in various power structures.”⁶⁵

For this reason, the present dissertation adopts the premise that female professionals employed by the state radio-TV were not completely submissive to the discourses and practices that subordinated them. Instead, these women were actual historical agents with changing and not always self-consistent desires, hopes, beliefs, ideals and ideas, in spite of working within the structure of a state organization, TRT, which was tied to national interests. They both reproduced the state ideology and yet subverted it from inside when translating it to their audiences. Furthermore, they did not assimilate themselves into the ideal of the Republican woman as such, however much they defined themselves as the representatives of the Republican ideology. Rather, they developed their own ways to manage the conflict between this ideal and their reality, ways that helped them to negotiate their existence in the public sphere.

⁶⁵ Arat, “Introduction,” p. 31.

Review of the Literature on Women and Media

The theory developed by Jürgen Habermas, a second generation member of the Frankfurt School,⁶⁶ about the transformation of the bourgeois public sphere and the role of the media in this process has been among the most influential contributions to debates on mass media. He argues that in the era of mass politics, the public sphere was transformed as the state extended and private interests were collectivized. He holds that power politics, in which large corporations make deals with one another and with the state, processes from which the public is excluded, has replaced the rational public discourse. In this era characterized by “the refeudalization of society,” as he calls it, the media function as manipulative agencies controlling mass opinion, in contrast to the early press which facilitated the formation and expression of public opinion.⁶⁷

Habermas’ view of the modern mass media has been criticized by numerous studies which suggest that the mass public is anything but malleable or passive.⁶⁸ Criticizing Habermas for confining women to “the bourgeois home” as passive subjects in his dichotomous articulation of the public and private spheres, particularly feminist media scholars have viewed the media as something more than a manipulative agency.

⁶⁶ For the Frankfurt School, the mass media serves to reproduce the existing societal regimes by manipulating masses. For details on this school of thought, see Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner, “Introduction to Part 1,” in *Media and Cultural Studies: Key Works*, eds. M.G. Durham and D. M. Kellner (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), pp. 3 - 8.

⁶⁷ James Curran, “Rethinking Media,” in *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and the Public Sphere*, eds. Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 38.

⁶⁸ A useful summary of the research critical of the Habermasian approach to the mass media is provided by Alexis Tan, *Mass Communication Theories and Society* (New York: Viley, 1985).

Recently there has developed a great deal of scholarly interest in the relationship between the media and gender. A significant number of studies has been done on how the media target women, define their interests, and talk about their experiences.⁶⁹

A paradigm shift has occurred in communication and media studies at the juncture of feminist media research and the cultural studies school, which has developed around the Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies since the 1960s. This shift entails a change from seeing communication as the mere transmission of messages over distance and time for the purpose of social control to seeing it as constitutive of meaning, which is produced via historically and socially grounded negotiation between institutionalized actors of the media and audience.

Scholars from the cultural studies school reject the elitist distinction between “high” and “low” cultures and attempt to overcome the portrayal of audience as passive and manipulated. Drawing on Gramscian notions of “hegemony” and “counter-hegemony,”⁷⁰ they examine how the hegemony of the dominant classes is constructed and reproduced in cultural outputs. They also seek a counter-hegemonic potential for resistance from alternative readings of cultural objects by various audiences.

⁶⁹ For a detailed discussion of the development of feminist media studies, and the range of theories and methodologies used in this field, see Liesbet van Zoonen, *Feminist Media Studies* (London: Sage, 1997).

⁷⁰ The notion “counter-hegemony” entails attempts to challenge or dismantle the hegemonic power. Gramsci argues that “counter-hegemony” can be observed in various spheres of life, such as history, media and music. For details, see David Forgacs, “Introduction,” in *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1918 – 1935*, ed. D. Forgacs (New York: Schocken Books, 2000), pp. 17 – 28.

In a similar vein, in their attempt to “politicize the personal,”⁷¹ feminist media scholars focus on the everyday life practices of women, and especially the spheres of domesticity and consumerism associated with them. Not surprisingly, one of the first issues feminist media critics dealt with was daytime programming, particularly the genre of soap opera, which glorified women’s confinement to the private sphere and yet gave place to strong female characters and spoke to women’s concerns. These studies have revealed the potential for female audiences’ resistance to the dominant meanings in media texts and showed that women actively participate in the meaning-making process in media.⁷²

The cultural studies perspective is generally considered antithetical to the political economy school. Scholars from the political economy school employ more social science-based research strategies and study cultural production and/or distribution rather than examine single media texts or audience reception patterns. They mainly argue that in capitalist societies the logic of commodification and of capital accumulation determines the media structures from limits to what can be said in mediated artifacts to labor processes and occupational patterns within media industries.⁷³

⁷¹ In 1969, Carol Hanisch, a radical feminist and an important member of the New York Radical Women, published a second-wave feminist manifesto entitled “The Personal is Political,” which soon became a feminist catchphrase. Borrowed from Marxism, the idea that “personal is political” basically means that nearly any problem experienced by an individual woman is the result of systemic oppression. For further details, see Carol Hanisch, July 1969, “The Personal is Political,” <http://www.carolhanisch.org/CHwritings/PIP.html> [25 July 2013].

⁷² Ien Ang’s study on the female audience of the famous TV series *Dallas* and Janice Radway’s research on women reading romance novels can be listed among these feminist works on media. For further discussion, see Ien Ang, *Watching Dallas: Soap Opera and Melodramatic Imagination* (London: Methuen, 1985); and also Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

⁷³ Much of the research on division of labor in media industries was carried out by the British sociology in the 1970s. A more recent example is Jeremy Tunstall’s study of TV producers, a crucially important occupational group for the TV industry as the lynchpin between the creative and technical staff and the management. His study demonstrates that the changing regulation and business patterns of the TV industry in the 1990s both sustained this pivotal position of TV producers and yet

The political economy school has a built-in temptation to ignore that the media is also a site of conflict and contestation among different actors. Also, this school demonstrates a paucity in regards to women's role in media production. Particularly pertaining to the relation between gender and the organization of media production, it is not easy to find detailed research in the political economy school aside from some general analyses which basically suggest that profit making goals of media organizations in a market driven framework tend to produce conservative symbols of gender in many media texts.

The current of feminist media studies that adopts the cultural studies perspective also overlooks the realm of media production as they almost solely concentrate on media texts or media reception patterns, whereas this area often becomes an issue of concern for those scholars who engage in establishing statistics about the media workforce with the aim of promoting gender equality in media industries.⁷⁴ These statistical studies demonstrate some general tendencies such as the domination of media industries by men, in particular by "white men," confinement of women communicators in particular areas of media production, as well as exclusion of women from senior management posts.⁷⁵

"Distortion" is as a key concept in the statistical studies on women and media. From a functionalist perspective, they maintain that underrepresenting and

worsened their conditions of payment and security. For further details, see James Tunstall, "Producers in British Television," in *Media Studies: A Reader*, eds. P. Morris and S. Thornham (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), pp. 102 – 12.

⁷⁴ Exemplary works include Cramer, J. and Creedon, Pamela J. "We've Come a Long Way, May be..." in *Women in Mass Communication: Challenging Gender Values*, eds. P. J. Creedon and Cramer, J (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1989), pp. 3 – 8; Vernon A. Stone, "Trends in the Status of Minorities and Women in Broadcast News," *Journalism Quarterly*, no. 65 (1988), pp. 288 - 293; and also Margaret Gallagher, ed. *Women and Decision Making: The Invisible Barriers* (Paris: UNESCO, 1987).

⁷⁵ Margaret Gallagher, *Unequal Opportunities: The Case of Women and the Media* (Paris: UNESCO, 1980).

denigrating women, the media distorts the reality and offers feminine role models which mutilates social development of girls and women. They attribute this oppressive function of the mass media to the overwhelming weight of male professionals in media industries, who are thought to reproduce the norms of patriarchy. Against this, they make a call for an expansion of the female workforce in media production in order to have more “realistic” images of women.⁷⁶

As an example, Kay Mills’ research in the USA has examined the impact of the “critical mass” of women media practitioners on story selection, editorial decisions, assignments and employment policy. Her findings indicate both male and female journalists’ approaches to news stories about rape, sexual harassment and health issues changed as a sufficient number of women in the newsroom had the effect of “sensitizing men.”⁷⁷

Despite the success of such statistical studies in raising communication specialists’ awareness about gendered employment patterns in media industries and in pressuring the media to improve women’s images in many countries, they suffer from a serious weakness: an ahistorical definition of gender that ignores its socio – historical particularities.

As illuminated by Liesbet van Zoonen’s study on the predominance of female news readers in the Dutch television news, any quantitative increase in the female

⁷⁶ Gaye Thucman is among the first to research the relation between stereotypic media images of gender and women’s socialization within an articulate theoretical framework containing the basic aspects of a functionalist feminist media theory. Drawing from different research data, Thucman has demonstrated the media’s indifference to the impressive transformation in women’s social status in the 1970s in the USA and its insistence on disseminating restrictive images of femininity. She argues that this symbolic annihilation will endanger women’s social developments as they are deprived of positive images to model their behavior on. For further details on her approach, see Gaye Thucman, *Hearth and Home: Images of Women and the Media* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

⁷⁷ Kay Mills, “What Difference do Women Journalists Make?” in *Women, Media and Politics*, ed. P. Norris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 45 – 7.

workforce in media production does not always mean women's empowerment in itself. She demonstrated that women's increased visibility in the news bulletins as anchorwomen resulted from a conscious editorial policy of constructing an intimate relationship with the audience. The redefinition of the news genre opened up new spaces for women who had been traditionally relegated to "soft news." That is, it is not women who changed the news, but changes in the news paved the way for women. van Zoonen concluded that any increase in the number of female news readers on behalf of "the embodiment of intimacy" might signify "just another articulation of traditional femininity."⁷⁸

In a similar vein, in her work on women's radio programs in Germany between 1924 and 1935, Kate Lacey has shown that the Nazi regime attempted to give a "feminine touch" to radio in order to establish a more intimate relationship with the audience when it realized that employment of radio as the public platform for demagogical discourses of the regime's elites resulted in plummeting listening figures. This change of the Nazi regime's broadcasting policy entailed that an increasing number of women started to have their voices aired. Nonetheless, the genre of women's and child's programs was almost the only outlet in which they were heard, as the regime obstinately adhered to the premise of separate spheres for men and women. Actually, the "feminine" voice was employed to advocate a vision of womanhood that enlisted women to serve the Volk as housewife-mothers.⁷⁹

Also, due to the organizational structures of media industries that limit the individual freedoms of staff, a large percentage of women in the media workforce

⁷⁸ Liesbet van Zoonen, "A Tyranny of Intimacy? Women, Femininity and Television," in *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and the Public Sphere*, eds. Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 218.

⁷⁹ Kate Lacey, "From *Plauderei* to Propaganda: On Women's Radio in Germany, 1924 – 1935," in *Women & Radio: Airing Differences*, ed. Caroline Mitchell (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 52 – 4.

may not be synonymous with a critical mass. As Naomi Sakr has written, the ways of operation in the Egypt Radio and Television Union (ERTU) illuminate, “A critical mass for women in the censored media is not simply a matter of achieving a statistically significant presence.”⁸⁰ The authority of the Union’s staff is restrained by extensive supervision, and its department heads are strongly recommended to take extreme caution for not crossing “red lines.” Thus, although various radio networks and television channels of the ERTU have female heads, media content is prevented from challenging social mores, except if approved by the government, and any program that deals with women’s status in society is prohibited from “threatening family ties” or “dishonoring the sanctity of family.”⁸¹

Some scholarly studies have been conducted on women’s perception of their professional roles in media production. The existing research about this issue generally focuses on the tensions that arise between the dominant definitions of femininity and the professional standards and norms of media production, particularly of journalism. They demonstrate that professional socialization patterns in media industries affect women in gender-specific ways. For example, working patterns of journalism tend to exclude women from the key areas of hard news or night-shift working, thus putting them at a disadvantage in professional terms.⁸²

⁸⁰ Naomi Sakr, “Women – Media Interaction in the Middle East: An Introductory Overview,” in *Women and Media in the Middle East: Power through Self – Expression*, ed. Naomi Sakr (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), pp. 8 – 9.

⁸¹ Lila Abu Lughod gives the example of Fathiyya al-Assal, one of Egypt’s famous socialist feminist writers, whose serials have been cut by civil servants. For further details, see Lila Abu Lughod, “Women on Women: Television Feminism and Village Lives,” in *Women and Power in the Middle East*, eds. S. Joseph & S. Slyomovics (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), p. 103.

⁸² An illustrative study in the USA has been conducted by Cox. She examines the career factors that could be influenced by gender roles such as success, appearance, news assignment, family planning and longevity and demonstrates how female television evening news journalists individually adapted to and coped with gender roles in their personal and professional lives. See Brandy Cox, “How Gender Roles Affect Women Journalists in Arkansas Television Evening News” (MA thesis, University of Arkansas, 2007).

Some studies also argue the following: Whereas journalism requires a competitive, detached and assertive working style, women's socialization follows quite different patterns, which handicaps their professional development.⁸³

Donna Halper's *Invisible Stars: A Social History of Women in American Broadcasting* and Catherine Murphy's dissertation on the BBC's salaried and waged female staff during the interwar years can be listed among these studies. Also, a number of works collected in Caroline Mitchell's *Women and Radio: Airing Differences* reveals the gendered inequalities in the British radio industry and pays homage to many unique contributions women have made into radio broadcasting not only as consumers but also as producers, managers, editors as well as presenters. In addition, biographies of several well-known female broadcast professionals have been published recently, such as *Waiting for Prime Time: The Women of Television News* edited by Marlene Sanders⁸⁴ and Marcia Rock.⁸⁵

One of the most significant contributions of these studies is that they make visible women's agency in media production. By exploring the long-neglected subject of women's participation in media industries, they witness individual contributions of professional women in the male-dominated atmosphere of radio-TV

⁸³ For example, in her dissertation on the rise of Jane Pauley as a well-known television news figure, Dodd has argued that whereas being relentless and aggressive is considered desirable in any male journalist, these features are often depicted as "difficult," "bitchy" or "undesirable" if found in female journalists. For a full discussion, see Cynthia Cristine Dodd, "Women in Broadcast Journalism: A Feminist Critical Analysis of the Rise of Jane Pauley" (MA thesis, California State University, 1999).

⁸⁴ Marlene Sanders worked as a news vice-president at the ABC broadcasting network in the USA during the second half of the 1970s, the first woman holding such a position at a major television network. She had also worked there as a correspondent, anchorwoman and documentary producer before.

⁸⁵ Other examples include the following: Dennis Abrams, *Barbara Walters: Television Host and Producer* (New York: Chelsea House Publishing, 2010); Jennifer Haris & Elwood Watson, eds. *The Oprah Phenomenon* (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2007) and Marina Goldovskaya, *Woman with a Movie Camera: My Life as a Russian Filmmaker* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006).

broadcasting and refute a widely-held assumption about women's absence from media production. Nevertheless, they accept gender as a stable feature which women bring into a media organization from outside and which remains unaffected by the everyday politics of this media organization and by the broader socio-historical context.

Some feminist studies on women in media production have attempted to overcome this problem. They regard gender as an unfolding outcome of various discourses and practices and analyze how professional socialization patterns in media production contribute to the construction of particular gendered subjectivities. For example, van Zoonen has examined how feminist journalists' experiences in the academy, during their internship and at the beginning of their professional careers conditioned their definitions of feminism and journalism.⁸⁶ In another exemplary study, Julia d'Acci has analyzed the production process of a popular American TV series from the 1980s, *Cagney and Lacey*, which was about two female New York police officers, and their private and working lives, from a perspective that attests to the particular socio-historical conditions that shaped the authorship of its female producers. She demonstrated that such factors as the strength of the women's movement, censorship and professional standards exerted a powerful influence on the personal choices made by the female producers of this popular series.⁸⁷

In Turkey, the relation between gender and the media constitute a recently emerging field of inquiry. Some exemplary studies, such as those available in

⁸⁶ Liesbet van Zoonen, "Professional Socialization of Feminist Journalists in the Netherlands," *Women's Studies in Communication*, 12, no.3 (1989), pp. 1 – 23.

⁸⁷ Julia d'Acci, *Defining Women: Television and the Case of Cagney & Lacey* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

Gender and Media,⁸⁸ deal with the construction and reproduction of gender roles in media artifacts. There are also a number of recent studies on the impact of media texts on female audiences, such as *Televizyon ve Kadın* (Television and Women), authored by Zeynep Karahan Uslu.⁸⁹ In addition, a few works examine how female journalists perceive their profession and reconcile their gendered roles with its established norms and standards.⁹⁰

Against this limited number of attempts to account for the relation between gender and the media, there is a huge body of historical research on the mass media in Turkey, and particularly on TRT. These works usually portray TRT as a state controlled and hierarchically structured media institution. They examine how “high politics” shape the field of broadcasting and determines the ideological contents of radio-TV broadcasts.⁹¹

These studies tend to deny any agency to the behind-the-scene players in this field; that is, they accept TRT’s broadcast professionals as nothing more than “a transmission instrument of the state,” with the assumption that the presumed source of broadcasted messages accounts for their content. Besides, these historical studies

⁸⁸ Nevena Dakovic, Deniz Derman and Karen Ross, eds. *Gender and Media* (Ankara: Mediation, 1996).

⁸⁹ Other exemplary works can also be found in the proceedings of the Woman and Media Section of the Symposium on Interdisciplinary Meeting in Women’s Studies, organized by Yeditepe University in 2004. For full texts of the papers presented there, see Yeditepe Üniversitesi Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, *Kadın Çalışmalarında Disiplinlerarası Buluşma: 1 – 4 Mart 2004 Sempozyum Bildirileri 2* (İstanbul: Yeditepe Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2004).

⁹⁰ An illustrative work has been conducted by Korkmaz and İnceoğlu. This study both examines how the image of women is constructed in various media artifacts and evaluates the in-depth interviews conducted with 50 female journalists in terms of the tension between their womanhood and professional roles. For a full discussion, see Yasemin İnceoğlu and Yeşim Korkmaz, *Gazetecilik 24 Saat: Medyada Kadın ve Kadın Gazeteciler* (İstanbul: Türkiye Gazeteciler Cemiyeti, 2002).

⁹¹ Exemplary works include Uygur Kocabaşoğlu, *Şirket Telsizinden Devlet Radyosuna: TRT Öncesi Dönemde Radyonun Tarihsel Gelişimi ve Türk Siyasal Hayatı İçindeki Yeri* (Ankara: SBF Basın ve Yayın Yüksekokulu, 1980); Emir Turam, *Medyanın Siyasal Hayata Etkileri* (İstanbul: İrfan Yayıncılık, 1994); Yusuf Devran, *Siyasal İktidar İlişkisinin Dünü Bugünü* (İstanbul: Başlık Yayın Grubu, 2011); and Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumun Tarihi*.

are “un-gendered” in the sense that they render women in media production invisible since they consider women’s work inferior or in the background. They do not go beyond offering a glimpse of women’s role in broadcasting with a name here and a footnote there.

Historical research about the mass media in Turkey usually adopts an Althusserian framework in the analysis of media production.⁹² Louis Althusser has described those institutions of civil society that serve to reproduce the existing order via ideological domination as “Ideological State Apparatuses” (ISAs), which means to consist of institutions like religion, education, politics, family and the media.⁹³ He differentiates them from “Repressive State Apparatuses,” which operate in the public realm through force, violence and repression.

Althusser accepts that ISAs act as “relatively autonomous” from the state and from the capital. In fact, he perceives them as sites of ideological confrontations disclosing the contradictions in the dominant ideology. Yet, he suggests that these institutions ultimately serve as the agents of the state and of the ruling class.⁹⁴

Althusser’s theory of social reproduction has emerged as a radical break from traditional approaches and opened up a novel perspective to the study of state-society relations in capitalism. However, his approach is said to fail to overcome the problem of functionalism since he defines ideological state apparatuses solely by the function

⁹² Among the studies on the historical development of broadcasting, Meltem Ahıska’s work, *Radyonun Sihirli Kapısı*, is actually a ground – breaking one in the academy. Instead of seeing radio simply as a “mouthpiece of the state,” this study highlights the historical fractures that occurred in the transmission of the state elites’ phantasm of “being western and national” via radio broadcasting.

⁹³ Althusser diverges from orthodox Marxists not only in reelaborating the relation between the base and superstructure but also in arguing that instead of being a mere illusion, ideology has a material existence. See Louis Althusser, *For Marx* (London: Penguin Press, 1969), pp. 166 – 7.

⁹⁴ For details about Althusser’s approach to the mass media, see Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” in *Mapping Ideology*, ed. S. Zizek (London, New York: Verso, 1994), pp. 100 – 140.

they perform for the reproduction of the existing order. For example, Althusser argues the following as regards education:

Children at school... learn the “rules” of good behavior, i.e. the attitude that should be observed by every agent in the division of labor, according to the job he is “designed” for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labor and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination.⁹⁵

Critics maintain that Althusser actually reduces education into “a mechanism for the enforced indoctrination of technical skills and respectful attitudes, the imposition of the dominant ideology, and for distributing people into the realm of production.”⁹⁶ Moreover, Althusser’s approach conceptualizes individuals as passive carriers of the dominant ideology. Since it almost leaves no place for human agency, it gives no hope for change, critics argue.

In his discussion on the potential for resistance in education as an ideological apparatus of the state, Henry Giroux has argued that the notion of domination as developed by Althusser is one-sided since it is not possible to find in his perspective any likelihood for the emergence of oppositional ideologies in these institutions. According to him, the problem is that Althusser views ideological apparatuses of the state not as “social sites marked by interplay of domination, accommodation and struggle,” but as sites that function to reproduce the existing order.⁹⁷

Any study that concerns itself with the construction of subjectivity is deemed to problematize the nature of the relation between agency and structure, a contentious question of socio-historical research. As regards this problem, this dissertation is

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 102.

⁹⁶ Dominic Strinati, *An Introduction into Theories of Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004.), p. 145.

⁹⁷ For details of Giroux’ criticism, see Henry Giroux, *Theory and Resistance in Education* (London: Bergin & Garvey, 2001).

built on the premise that although the subject is constructed through various discourses and practices, it is not merely the output of this subjugation. Therefore, throughout this dissertation, the personal narratives of the professional women employed by TRT will be examined, bearing in mind that they actively participated in constructing their selves, however much their agency was constrained by various historical forces such as the influence of the Republican ideology on their socialization, the overall societal discourse on radio and TV, the organizational structure of TRT as well as their mediated imagery in the popular culture.

The question about the interaction between the agency of these female broadcast professionals and the structures they were involved in is closely related also to the way the state media is theorized. The state radio and TV in Turkey was said to be a mere instrument of hegemony. Indeed, throughout its history, TRT was controlled and supervised by the political authority. The goals declared in its charter seemed to serve the state ideology, as well. Still, its definition as a mere ideological instrument of the state downplays the complex way it operated. This definition ignores the negotiations and struggles that occurred in this state-run field, thereby failing to see how it was not simply hegemonic.

Homi Bhabha has argued that within nations people are both pedagogical objects and performative subjects.⁹⁸ Particularly pertaining to professionals working for the state radio-TV, this argument states that they are not only shaped, informed and educated by the state ideology, but they also actively produce it for their imagined audiences. These cultural elites are critical mediators who articulate and translate the state ideology. They are creative people with their own career goals,

⁹⁸ Homi Bhabha, "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation," in *Nation and Narration*, ed. H. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 297 – 9.

aims and visions, and there is always the likelihood that their visions could become oppositional to the state ideology.

Not surprisingly, many radio-TV professionals employed by TRT defined themselves as critics of government policies and claimed to be “voice of the people against the status quo.” Similar to what Abu-Lughod maintains about TV producers at the Egypt’s state television,⁹⁹ “there [was] a good deal of slippage” in their mediation of the state ideology. This “slippage” reveals that the role played by these professionals in hegemony was not synonymous with state domination itself, even if they were related.

As regards the women employed as broadcast professionals by TRT, seeing the relation between the state media and hegemony not in a merely instrumentalist fashion but in its entire complexity makes it possible to say that these women did not act as passive carriers of the state ideology, but negotiated and challenged it from a woman’s perspective. It also opens up an opportunity to understand how the discourses and practices that prevailed over the field of broadcasting were inconsistent concerning women in the sense that they pushed women into silence on the one hand, and they empowered their voice, on the other.

Reflections on Methodology: Women’s Personal Narratives

The question about the interaction between the subjectivity of the people engaged in the field of broadcasting and the particular socio-historical context over which they exert their agency awaits critical scrutiny. Asking this question could help us see the mass media not as a mere instrument of the state but as a critical site for agency. It

⁹⁹ See, Abu-Lughod, *Dramas of Nation*, p. 189

also could open up a way to understand how gendered identities of the women involved in it are constructed and transformed and how they become active agents of this construction process however much their subjectivity is constrained by the particular socio-historical and cultural conditions they live in. In order to answer this question, we must rethink about our research methodologies since the construction of the object of the study cannot be separated from the methods with which it is constructed.

In this dissertation, I conceptualize gender not as a stable identity of human beings that they bring into their working environments from outside, but as a precarious social construction. Thus, I operationalize gender not as independent variable in examining women's experiences at work. Rather, gender will be considered as a more or less dependent variable unfolding through various practices and performances. As such a conception of gender requires seeing it as a process of social negotiation underlined by power relations, this dissertation will employ an interpretative research strategy, sensitive to women's sense making practices.

This dissertation mainly draws on the in-depth interviews with those women who worked for TRT in the 1970s and in the 1980s either as journalists or as producers. The actual names of the interviewees are not disclosed in the study for the purpose of confidentiality. It also benefits from autobiographies, diaries and journals of women employed by TRT, such as Jülide Gülizar, Adalet Ağaoğlu, and Gülben Dinçmen.

In addition to these biographical sources, TRT's own publications such as its charter, annual reports, personnel and office regulations, education and general broadcast plans, publicity documents and staff magazines as well as the reports of the

Prime Ministry High Supervision Council on TRT are used to examine the historical development of the employment and broadcasting policy of the institution.

Moreover, in order to gain access to the changing landscape of the public opinion about the relation between women and the media, national newspapers *Milliyet* and *Cumhuriyet* are employed as primary sources of analysis. Lastly, for the purpose of analyzing how female broadcast professionals were portrayed in the popular culture, issues of *TV'de 7 (Gün)* and *Telemagazin* were searched from 1975, when the first popular broadcast magazine was published, to the late 1980s by the method of random sampling.

I should admit that radio remains somehow at the background in this study as the discussion about the 1970s and especially about the 1980s mostly focuses on TV. This is mostly because after the introduction of television technology, TV attracted more interest in the public opinion, as was reflected in the press. Also most of the interviewees worked for TV production and for TV news, or had transferred from radio to TV as they achieved seniority. On the other hand, the research implies that radio could occasionally offer a higher potential than TV, the visual nature of which makes women's relation with it more contested, for reaching the female audience without compartmentalization of their concerns on air.

In addition, the implications of the start of colored broadcasting in 1984 and the broadcast of additional TV channels, TRT 2, TRT 3 and GAP TV in the second half of the 1980s, with their particularly assigned goals and objectives and assumed audience profiles, for women's positioning in this field and for the way they involved in the negotiation on womanhood on air is not elaborated in this study mainly due to the limited scope and time. This also waits, admittedly, critical exploration.

Last but not least, an important limitation of this study is that it follows the public discussion on radio and TV mainly from the archives of those national dailies known to have had a left or middle of the left reader's profile, even though it covered some examples from rightist dailies. These dailies are preferred simply because most of the female broadcast professionals on whom this study focused were politically affiliated with the left, even if not directly involved in the leftist movement. I still believe that it could be highly beneficial to scrutinize how the rightist intelligentsia assessed radio and TV's social role and what they thought about their interaction with gender from the developmentalist to the neoliberal era.

Recently, there has been an outpouring of scholarly work based on personal narrative evidence. The most important motive that nurtures this lively interest in personal narratives is the desire to rewrite "history from below."¹⁰⁰ Life stories are regarded as "counter-narratives that dispute misleading generalizations or refute universal claims,"¹⁰¹ and that introduce silenced voices to the historical record.

The increase in the scholarly and popular interest in women's self-narratives has particular socio-historical reasons, though. According to Sirman, Turkish society "discovered memory" when the middle classes witnessed a crisis of the Republican values. Particularly the second half of the 1990s became the setting for many developments that spelled a "story of loss."¹⁰² For some, the crisis emerged as a

¹⁰⁰ Emerging partly from the preoccupations of the Communist Party Historians Group in Britain in the 1950s, this approach to history writing takes ordinary people as its subjects, and focuses on their experiences and perspectives, in contrast to the traditional political history which concentrates on the actions of male political elites. For further details, see Harvey J. Kaye, *The British Marxist Historians* (Hanover and London: Vesleyan University Press, 1997), pp. 1 – 23.

¹⁰¹ Mary Jo Maynes, Jennifer L. Pierce and Barbara Laslett, *Telling Stories: The Use of Personal Narratives in the Social Sciences and History* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), p. 1.

¹⁰² Nükhet Sirman, "Constituting Public Emotions through Memory: Interviewing Witnesses," *New Left Review*, no. 34 (Spring 2006), pp. 33 – 4.

result of the globalization process which threatened the principle of national sovereignty. The rise of Islamist politics, the establishment of a coalition government with the Islamist Welfare Party as its partner, bureaucratic corruption, ethnicity and religion-based political movements, the deepening inflation and ossification of urban poverty also triggered this sense of crisis.

All these developments nurtured the desire to rediscover the public memory of the Republican women through oral history works. At the same time, feeling that they faced a threat to their very existence, various professional women who completed their education in the first decades of the Republic, such as Mina Urgan, Türkan Saylan, İsmet Kür, and Cahit Uçuk, had their autobiographies published, which allowed them an opportunity to express their feeling of nostalgia for a lost golden age.¹⁰³

Some feminist historians focus on the emotional context in which these narratives are transmitted. For example, according to Sirman, what made the self-narratives of the Republican women attractive to listeners was not their content at all. Indeed, the contents of these narratives did not have much value beyond offering anecdotes that embraced the Republican ideology. Their power of influence lays somewhere else. Sirman argues that the Republican women's narratives about "a mythic golden age," which were dominated by an ethos of self-devotion and belonging, impelled listeners to take a look at their own subjectivities. Listeners usually found out that they lacked such a powerful a sense of belonging. Thus, she maintains, "This discourse... acquire[d] its power by displacing the crisis of

¹⁰³ In addition to their feeling of nostalgia in the midst of an existential crisis, one factor which encouraged them to write their autobiographies is that the dominant popular discourse of the post-1980 period provoked people to disclose their privacy to the public. This phenomenon continued to bear its fruits in the 1990s. According to Aksoy, the "curtain of privacy that had covered the private life" was removed particularly in the autobiographies published after 1990. For further discussion on the autobiographies of the Republican women, see Nazan Aksoy, *Kurgulanmış Benlikler: Otobiyografi, Kadın, Cumhuriyet* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2009).

narrative from being a problem of the social to being a crisis of the [listening] subject.”¹⁰⁴

Other feminist historians attempt to listen to women’s narratives as Anderson and Jack describes “in stereo, receiving both the dominant and the muted channels clearly and tuning them carefully to understand the relationship between them.”¹⁰⁵ Illustratively, Elif Ekin Akşit has studied the silences in the self-narratives of the women who were trained in the Girls’ Institutes of the Republican period. Although the women interviewed by Akşit presented an apparently self-consistent identity, their stories reflected conflicts and fractures. She argues it was the discrepancy between the individual experiences of these women and the state discourse on womanhood that accounted for their silence. Their silence brought to surface the internal contradictions of the national narrative concerning women.¹⁰⁶

A study that draws on personal narrative evidence can encounter criticisms for violating the scientific notions of objectivity and universality. It is true that personal narrative evidence used in a study may not be always fully credible in point of fact. Some authors have warned that using personal narratives as the primary sources of a historical research project on media production may generate the risk of accepting all of what is said in them as true.¹⁰⁷

Although I use personal narratives as source material, I pay attention not to romanticize women’s individual roles in media production. In order to avoid

¹⁰⁴ Sirman, “Constituting Public Emotions through Memory,” p. 45.

¹⁰⁵ Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Jack, “Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses,” in *Women’s Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, eds. Sherna Berger Gluch and Daphne Patai (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 13.

¹⁰⁶ For further discussion, see Elif Ekin Akşit, *Kızların Sessizliği: Kız Enstitülerinin Uzun Tarihi* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005).

¹⁰⁷ Linda Steiner, “Newsroom Accounts of Power at Work,” in *News, Gender and Power*, eds. Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston and Stuart Allan (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 151.

accepting each assertion they made as “factual,” I attempted to situate what they said in the broader socio-historical context and in the particular institutional conditions of TRT, by checking it against the available historical data.

I also believe that personal narratives own a “different credibility,” as famous oral historian Portelli has once suggested. He argues that rather than being a weakness, their subjectivity is the actual strength of oral histories. The importance of personal narrative evidence comes from that “it tells less about events than about their meaning.”¹⁰⁸ That is, personal narratives tell us not just what people did but what they wanted to do and how they made sense of what they did.

At first glance, personal narratives seem “idiosyncratic anecdotes,” as said by Maynes, Pierce and Laslett.¹⁰⁹ Nonetheless, if they are read in deep, they appear as the dialogue of individual life stories with the broader socio-historical and cultural conditions. They reveal that an individual’s identity is constructed within and by particular socio-historical conditions through which she lives. They also bring to light that an individual is never a passive victim of the conditions in which she finds herself.¹¹⁰ While we listen to personal narratives, we experience an ebb and flow between the macrocosm and the microcosm, for personal narrative functions as a delicate bridge between the social and the individual and invites its listeners to walk on this bridge.

Personal narrative evidence leaves us with more than mere anecdotes. Particularly regarding women, from their live stories we learn how their history can challenge our understanding of history as a whole. Leydesdorff writes that “for every

¹⁰⁸ Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 50.

¹⁰⁹ Maynes, Pierce and Laslett, p. 2

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 5.

account from a female voice is potentially dissonant to existing histories.”¹¹¹ We also have to remember, as she says, that “on the reverse side of remembering and speaking [there] is forgetting and silence.”¹¹² Women’s personal narratives retain their potential to pose a challenge to this suffocation, which is one of the major reasons for feminist life story researchers to continue their work.

To admit, women’s oral history proved to be more problematic than many feminists had imagined. A major part of the problem was that feminist assumptions had the effect of foregrounding gender while obscuring the centrality of other factors. To put in another way, they assumed that gender united women while other identities divided them.¹¹³

Another problem arose from the new dimension oral history has brought to feminist studies. An oral history interview always involves at least two subjectivities, that of the narrator and that of the interviewer. Although feminist oral historians simply believed that they were contributing to women’s empowerment by rescuing their voices from history, as they continued to analyze the production process of oral history, they discovered what Leydesdorff terms the “real separation between the narrator and the interviewer.”¹¹⁴

When I started this study, my aim was to “rescue women’s voice” from the official historical accounts of TRT, yet I found myself working against the grain within each oral history interview I conducted with a female broadcast professional. I had hoped to meet the kind of women who waged a “war of womanness” in this state

¹¹¹ Selma Leydesdorff, Luisa Passerini and Paul Thompson, “Introduction,” in *Gender and Memory*, eds. S. Leydesdorff, L. Passerini and P. Thompson (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009), p. 12.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

institution, but, as the research process went on, I felt disappointed as I recognized that I and my interviewees were hardly on the same side.

From my first interview onwards, I came across women who said that they did not face any gender discrimination in their professional lives and who did not allow anybody to speak ill of TRT, which they saw either as their school or as their “father’s heart” (*baba ocağı*). Even though some interviewees admitted that they faced unequal treatment in their working life because they were women, they still took great care not to associate these discriminatory practices with TRT as an institution. They explained that gender discrimination occurred only sporadically and resulted from the individual behavior of some male workmates.

What they said (or did not say) about gender discrimination at work reminded me of one of the defining characteristics of the self-narratives of the Republican women. As Aksoy mentions, the Republican women claimed that they did not encounter gender discrimination in the public domain. Many of them maintained that they felt they had more advantages than their Western counterparts.

For example, in her autobiography, Mina Urgan makes no complaints about gender discrimination. According to her, she faced unfair treatment not because she was a woman, but because she was a leftist intellectual.¹¹⁵ She reaffirms her loyalty to Mustafa Kemal in the following statements:

I am a Kemalist because if Mustafa Kemal had not existed, I would not have been ‘the person who I am today.’ It would be a complete anomaly if an educated woman over eighty in this society does not believe in Kemalism.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Aksoy, pp. 162 – 3.

¹¹⁶ Mina Urgan, *Bir Dinazorun Anıları* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1998), p. 42. The original text is as follows: *Eğer Mustafa Kemal olmasaydı, ben “ben” olmayacağım için Kemalist’im. Eğitim görmüş, seksenini geçirmiş bir kadının bu memlekette Kemalizm’e inanmaması tamamıyla anormal olurdu.* (All the translations in this study are mine except otherwise stated)

In a similar vein, Nermin Abadan Unat glorifies the Republican era in the following statements:

For twenty-five percent of the classroom in a girls' high school to go on to an academic career and reach the top seemed quite natural to us then. Doors were held open everywhere for those who belonged to the Republican generation like us.¹¹⁷

Some Republican women admit that that they actually experienced gender discrimination in the public domain. Nevertheless, they avoid associating these discriminatory practices with the Republican ideology as such. For instance, Türkan Saylan states that she had encountered restraints as a young woman but was able to stand against them thanks to her professional identity. Although she accepts that sexual inequality had been far from being removed, this had not prevented her from considering the Republican years a “golden age.” She describes Mustafa Kemal as her main supporter in her struggle for public existence.¹¹⁸ Recently on a TV interview, Adalet Ağaoğlu also declared that she owed her identity as a professional female writer to the Republic despite her criticism of Republican ideology. She said if the Republican state had not made primary education mandatory for the both genders, her father would not have registered her for the primary school on his own initiative.¹¹⁹

Arat explains that such assessments of the Republican women arose from certain policy principles the Republican regime followed: Although men's education had been given primacy and a somewhat gendered curricula had been followed at

¹¹⁷ Sedef Kabaş, *Hayatını Seçen Kadın: Hocaların Hocası Nermin Abadan Unat* (İstanbul: Doğan Yayınları, 2010), p. 96. The original text is as follows: *Bir kız lisesinde sınıfın yüzde 25'inin akademik kariyere girip en üst kademeye ulaşması! Böyle bir sonuç bizlere o zaman oldukça doğal görünmüştü. Bizim gibi Cumhuriyet kuşağına mensup olanlar için kapılar her yerde açık tutulmuştu.*

¹¹⁸ Ayşe Kulin, *Türkan: Tek ve Tek Başına* (İstanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2009), p. 54.

¹¹⁹ Adalet Ağaoğlu, interview by Cüneyt Özdemir, *Soru- Yorum*, CNN Türk, 23 December 2011.

secondary and higher levels of education, the Republican regime had not subscribed to the kind of biological theories that accepted women as the “inferior sex,” such as those developed in the Nazi Germany. In contrast, girls were encouraged to believe that they could study any subject and pursue any career.¹²⁰

There is another important reason for the Republican women’s claim that they had been treated equally in the public domain. These women were actually supported and motivated by their male workmates in the workplace life since they were not perceived as a real threat. Men showed tolerance and offered paternal protection to these women and established a supposedly egalitarian professional environment for them.¹²¹

Indeed, during the research, I observed that many professional women employed by TRT actually had been surrounded by a network of patriarchal protection, particularly in the initial years of their working lives. The interviewees frequently talked about how their male superiors had behaved towards them almost as “fathers.”

In addition to this, as argued by Özbay, women come across gender discrimination not in a “naked form,” but as “married woman, single woman, young woman, old woman, uneducated woman and so on;” that is, the various components of a woman’s identity are so intertwined that it is highly difficult to identify episodes of “naked gender discrimination” in her self-narrative.¹²²

¹²⁰ Zehra Arat, “Educating the Daughters of the Republic,” in *Deconstructing the Images of Turkish Woman*, ed. Zehra Arat (NY: Palgrave, 2000), p. 177.

¹²¹ Aksoy, p. 188.

¹²² Quoted by Ayşe Durakbaşı, “Cumhuriyet Döneminde Modern Kadın ve Erkek Kimliklerinin Oluşumu: Kemalist Kadın Kimliği ve ‘Münevver Erkekler’,” in *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, ed. A. Berkay Hacımirzaoğlu (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), p. 34.

As the research process went on, I came to see that the interviewees had not faced discrimination at TRT simply because they were women. The particular position they occupied in this hierarchical field largely determined whether they would encounter gender discrimination or not. The only interviewee who frankly disclosed the humiliating treatment she had experienced at TRT, where she had worked, was employed as a contract-based producer assistant in the second half of the 1980s. At that time she was a “young and inexperienced woman,” who had been made to do the “heaviest work” and to believe that she was “replaceable.” She mentioned, however, that the experienced female producers from the older generation were clearly powerful and influential in the institution.¹²³

In a similar vein, the frequency and nature of discriminatory practices they experienced depended on the department in which they were employed. Those interviewees who worked in the News Office, which was male-dominated, told stories about how they were surrounded by a patriarchal network of male colleagues and superiors: They were both protected as “sisters” or as “daughters,” and they were discriminated against on the pretension that their “femininity” contradicted certain professional requirements and standards of journalism.¹²⁴ In contrast, most of the interviewees who worked as part of the production team, particularly at the Education-Culture-Drama department, said that their workplace had been dominated by women and they had not felt unfairly treated due to their gender.¹²⁵

¹²³ H.T., personal interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, 8 October 2010. She is currently aged 52.

¹²⁴ Ü.G. and İ.Ç., personal interviews by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, 18 January 2010. Ü.G. is 73 years old, whereas İ.Ç. is currently aged 64.

¹²⁵ N.Ç. and S.Ü., personal interviews by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, 2 December 2010. Both of them are currently aged 61.

Many feminist researchers have observed that an ambitious personality is one of the main characteristics of professional women in Turkey. For example, Kabasakal has included it in the list of the features of the top woman managers she interviewed.¹²⁶ I observed a similar trend in my interviews, as well. Regardless of working as a waged or salaried employee, the most common feature shared by the interviewees was their professional ambition. Each interviewee particularly emphasized how devoted she was to her profession.

They were “abnormally ambitious,” as one interviewee put it. The most outstanding example was provided by this interviewee. She started to work for TRT as an assistant producer in 1979. To become a producer, she had to pass a three month’s course and a qualifying exam. However, just before the courses started, she broke her arm. She said she was so determined to pass the exam that she learned to write left-handed in only three days.¹²⁷

In almost each interview, I also listened to a story about the abandonment of domestic rules and duties on behalf of profession. Most of them delegated the housework and childcare responsibilities to maids or female relatives. Some stated that they actually perceived the time and energy allocated to the domestic sphere as wasted. Apparently, what made their lives meaningful was their professional identity. For example, one of the interviewees, who started to work for TRT TV in 1979, told me that just after she got married she went on a trip throughout Turkey in order to shoot a documentary.¹²⁸ Another interviewee, who has been employed by TRT from

¹²⁶ Hayat Kabasakal, “A Profile of Top Women Managers in Turkey,” in *Deconstructing the Images of Turkish Woman*, ed. Zehra Arat (NY: Palgrave, 2000), p. 227.

¹²⁷ D.A., personal interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, 3 May 2011. She is currently aged 58.

¹²⁸ S.K.A., personal interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, 25 October 2010. She is currently aged 61.

1973 to the present, said that although she was in the last three days of her pregnancy, she wanted to stay for a night's shift at the radio station despite her friends' suggestions otherwise.¹²⁹

In her work on Turkish women in academia, where she questioned the public image of the professional educated women as “emancipated,” Acar argues these women experienced a “compartmentalized life” in practice: They lived in two separate worlds, one of their profession and one of their families, which required them to develop different role-specific identities. While in their professional life they posited a “de-sexed” image suppressing their femininity, at home they turned into “a subservient housewife” and accepted their subordinate position.¹³⁰

During the research, however, I observed that the interviewees were far from living compartmentalized lives. Admittedly, the feeling of rupture, which the double burden of home and work on women engendered, was running beneath almost all the narratives. Feeling themselves obliged to divide their loyalties between work and family, they rarely made a single choice, but rather a succession of choices, involving a whole series of practical decisions. In this process, they internalized the cultural contradictions of gender in a constant by mediating opposing cultural demands.

These very challenges of the broadcasting profession for women turned them into what Fowler describes as “lucid outsiders”¹³¹ who broke with the established gender regime. As said by interviewee C.O., it was TRT where [they] have acquired

¹²⁹ N.Ç.

¹³⁰ Feride Acar, *Turkish Women in Academia: Roles and Careers* (Ankara: METU Studies in Development, 1983), p. 422.

¹³¹ Bridget Fowler, “Reading Pierre Bourdieu’s Masculine Domination: Notes towards an Intersectional Analysis of Gender, Culture and Class,” *Cultural Studies* 17, no. 3 – 4 (2003), p. 486.

“a non-conformist personality.”¹³² Actually, while they were learning to manage the tension between their womanhood and their public roles, they developed strong personalities and opened up individual paths to public influence, which also transformed the gender relations in the private domain. They did not act as subservient house-mothers. On the contrary, as one interviewee put it, “It is a fact that I turned into a beetle-browed person here since I had to do that. For example, I became a very authoritarian person. That is, I maintain this authority also at home.”¹³³

According to Aksoy, all of these features make professional women resemble “men who have locked their emotions in a drawer and who live any moment in a sense of mission.”¹³⁴ Some interviewees actually said that their profession made them act and behave like men both physically and spiritually. To the question of whether she recognized her gender in the workplace, C.O., who had started to work for TRT TV in 1974 as a waged producer’s assistant and was later transferred to the salaried staff, responded, “I did not feel like a woman since the job masculinizes you both spiritually and physically, and you develop a language of your own.”¹³⁵ She recalled that when she had been an assistant, she had been required to carry the program bands, the length of which was around 2 inches, so her muscles got strengthened like a man’s.

¹³² C.O., personal interview by the author, note taking, Istanbul, Turkey, 28 May 2011. She is currently aged 58.

¹³³ D.A. The original quotation is as follows: *Şu bir gerçek ki, ben çok çatık kaşlı biri oldum burda. Çünkü bunu yapmak zorundaydım. Çok otoriter biri oldum mesela. Yani bu otoriteyi ben evde de devam ettiriyorum.*

¹³⁴ Aksoy, p. 101.

¹³⁵ C.O. The original quotation is as follows: *Kendimi kadın olarak hissetmedim, çünkü iş sizi hem ruhen hem bedenlen erkeksileştiriyor ve kendine göre bir dil geliştiriyorsun.*

On the other hand, she admitted, “If you were fairly presentable, it would be easier for you to request someone to carry those bands,” and added, “If you exploited our femininity against certain people, you could feel more comfortable at work.”¹³⁶ Thus, her adoption of a masculine way of conduct at work arose not only from the requirements of TV production itself, but also apparently worked as a shelter against gender-based humiliation by men. To survive “in a wheel spun by men,” in her own words, she had to act as a man. Otherwise, she would have been only one of “those girls,” regardless of her attempts to prove that her work was on par with that of her male colleagues.¹³⁷

Besides this, most of them stated that they did not perceive themselves simply as women, but as individuals with a critical public mission, that of “enlightening an otherwise ignorant society.” This self-perception can be regarded as a repercussion of the Republican socialization process through which these women had passed. Kemalism defended the idea that women should participate in the public sphere and take on social roles for which they should sacrifice their individual needs and desires.

Still, as Durakbaşı writes, it should not be underestimated that the Republican socialization process also cultivated in educated professional women the “first germs of individuation,” however unintentionally. As the individual woman pushed her way to open up a space for herself in the public domain and challenged her gender status, she was forced to develop an individual ethic for herself. Actually, the interviewees regarded their professional identity not only as a way to contribute

¹³⁶ Ibid. The original quotation is as follows: *Elin yüzün düzgünse, birinden o bantları taşımasını istemek daha kolay olurdu. Birtakım insanlara karşı dişiliğinizi kullansaydınız, daha rahat ederdiniz.*

¹³⁷ Ibid.

to society, but also as an opportunity to become self-developed individuals in the public domain.¹³⁸

Part of the objective of this dissertation is to examine how all the changing socio-cultural environment of the 1980s transformed the self-perceptions, values, and ideas of the women employed as professionals by the state radio and television. To my surprise, at first glance, the interviewees' perceptions about their selfhood and their profession did not demonstrate much change from the developmentalist 1970s to the neoliberal 1980s.

Admittedly, the interviewees who started to work for TRT in the 1980s put much greater emphasis on individuality in making sense of their professional roles and seemed less submissive to the Republican ideology. For example, almost all the interviewees employed by TRT in the 1970s stated that they were "children of the Republic," whereas those from the TRT generation of the 1980s did not make such explicit references to the Republican ideology in their self-identification.

Despite these differences in their self-perceptions, the women who entered into the professional ranks of TRT in the 1980s still seemed to be the carriers of the tradition of the Kemalist female identity in many respects: They saw their professional career as a path to overcome the restraints of the traditional modes of femininity. Moreover, despite an evident change in the government's approach to broadcasting from defining it as a public educator serving the common good to considering it an economic activity whereby information and entertainment were exchanged as commodities, many female broadcast professionals still saw their primary role as educating society and considered broadcasting a public service.

¹³⁸ Durakbaşı, "The Formation of the Kemalist Female Identity," p. 6.

In addition, those interviewees who had worked for TRT since the 1970s did not see the 1980 coup as a turning point in their professional careers at all. Instead, they related a narrative of continuity, which was broken by the establishment of the first Justice and Development Party (JDP) government in 2002.

This observation made me rethink the research process. The most outstanding moment was when I recognized that the metaphor of ebb and flow is a good way to describe the way time is handled in oral narratives.¹³⁹ This occurred when one interviewee phoned me right after the interview in order to say the following: Whereas she had been able to produce a TV program on the status of women in society choosing the keynote speakers herself even during the Nationalist Front governments in the second half of the 1970s, she was not able to find any opportunity to make such programs under the reign of the JDP today. She told me that she had forgotten to mention this “fact” during the interview, and she wanted it to be included in my dissertation.¹⁴⁰

Indeed, in almost each interview, I somehow found myself discussing with my interviewees the influence of the JDP’s coming into power on the mass media, and on TRT in particular, whereas I had not included any questions about this in my questionnaire. Nonetheless, they told their stories with the present in mind.

At first glance, I regarded this as a technical problem which already had challenged many oral historians. As Portelli suggests, in an oral history work while the historian is interested in reconstructing the past, the narrator is usually keen on projecting an image. Therefore, while the historian tries to speak to the narrator about

¹³⁹ Portelli, p. 65.

¹⁴⁰ C.O.

a particular period or subject, the narrator often reintroduces the events she considers important in her life.¹⁴¹

The discrepancy between the narrator's time and the historian's time in an oral history work is beyond a merely technical problem, though. As Aksoy writes, the narrator constructs her reality by looking at the past from her current standpoint.¹⁴² Changes which might have currently occurred in the narrator's subjective consciousness or in her social status may influence how she articulated and evaluated her story, for "memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings."¹⁴³

An interviewee told me that only after the JDP came to power and dismissed her and some of her female colleagues from their managerial posts in 2003 did she began to question whether her professional ambition was worth abandoning her role as a mother.¹⁴⁴ Some of those interviewees who had started to work for TRT in the 1970s purposefully retired right after the establishment of the JDP government. Apparently there are two options left for those who continue to work: Either they maintain a low profile and feel nostalgia for the past, or they have begun to feel disillusioned with and to question the idealized image of a professional woman as an achievement oriented and highly ambitious figure with a man-like character.

As they looked at the past from the present, when they are experiencing identity crises, they reconstructed the past through a narrative of continuity. This may explain why I was not able to observe much divergence in their perceptions both about their profession and about themselves from the 1970s to the late 1980s, but we

¹⁴¹ Portelli, p. 63.

¹⁴² Aksoy, p. 36.

¹⁴³ Portelli, p. 52.

¹⁴⁴ D.A.

should still ask to what extent the 1980s corresponded to a break from the past in these professional women's lives and how they handled this break.

CHAPTER 2

WOMEN ON THE AIR UNTIL THE 1960s

In my childhood, the Aga-Baltic radio receiver was kept on a high wooden shelf on the wall of our room. Despite the fine hand crafted lace cloth over it, it was like the symbol of the state authority with its huge form, its tranquil furniture, and its agency news which were waited for and listened to with attention. The National Anthem, which was played a few times a day at each opening and closedown, used to increase the radio's impact on us once more.¹⁴⁵

This description by Özden Cankaya of the radio not only demonstrates the symbolization of the state authority by the radio receiver at home, but also illustrates the gendered imagery of radio as a male authority penetrating into the private domain. Cankaya contrasted the cumbersome body of the radio receiver with the hand-made cloth over it. While the cloth stood for the “feminine” private sphere, the furniture signified the “masculine” state authority.

As already seen in this description, gendered metaphors provided one of the main frames of reference in the discourse on radio. Radio was usually portrayed as a public and male medium that targeted the private female sphere via a process of penetration and invasion. A reverse penetration also has occurred throughout the history of radio in the sense that many women have exploited this medium of mass communication to acquire and maintain public existence. Nevertheless, their active involvement in radio broadcasting as professionals was conditioned by the dominant discourses and practices that set the limits for women's participation in public life.

¹⁴⁵ Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumun Tarihi*, p. 1. The original text is as follows: *Çocukluğumda Aga-Baltic marka radyo, odamızın duvarında yüksekçe bir tahta rafta dururdu. Üzerindeki ince işlemeli dantel örtüsüne karşın, iri gövdesi, ağırbaşlı mobilyasıyla, beklenen ve dikkatle izlenen ajans haberleriyle devlet otoritesinin simgesi gibiydi. Günde birkaç kez, her açılıp kapanışında çalan İstiklal Marşı radyonun üzerimizdeki etkisini bir kez daha arttırırdı.*

The first part of the present chapter briefly examines the development of the state radio during the Republican period and discusses the repercussions of the construction of the state radio as a school socializing its staff in the modern/national identity for female radio professionals. The second part of the chapter explores the transformation of radio in the multi-party period, particularly under the DP's reign, into an instrument of populism and propaganda.

The rest of the chapter is organized around the life stories of three women, Jülide Gülizar, Adalet Ağaoğlu, and interviewee Ü. G., who worked at Ankara Radio as professionals in the 1950s. It discusses the fractures involved in the socialization processes of these “Republican girls” both with their families and at school as is evident in their personal narratives. It also examines the gendered dynamics of their working life at the state radio in that decade.

Republican Radio as an Educational Apparatus for Women

Radio before the State Monopoly

As Korkut Boratav writes, in the 1920s, the cultivation of a national/local bourgeoisie by the state efforts dominated the economic policy. One of the most widely used methods to this end was the transfer of state monopolies to private persons or enterprises that had privileged relationships with the Republican leadership circles.¹⁴⁶ Radio was among those fields where this method was applied.

The monopoly of radio broadcasting was contracted by the state for a 10-year period to a national company called *Telsiz Telefon Türk Anonim Şirketi* (TTAŞ)

¹⁴⁶ Boratav, p. 40.

(Radio Telephone Turkish Incorporation), in 1926.¹⁴⁷ This company was entitled to operate the transmitting stations in Ankara and in Istanbul and to establish and operate receiving or transmitting stations in other cities if approved by the government.¹⁴⁸

Our knowledge about the staff employed by Ankara Radio during the TTAŞ period is, unfortunately, limited. This is because most of the second-hand sources about this period did not include any information about the staff. Indeed, in the TTAŞ period the radio station in Ankara stayed very much behind the one in Istanbul although the transmitter there was more powerful.



Fig. 1. Musicians employed by Istanbul Radio during the TTAŞ period¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ The founders of the company were Mahmut Celal (Bayar) on behalf of *İş Bankası* (Bank of business), Siirt and Gümüşhane Parliamentarians Mahmut (Soydan) and Cemal Hüsnü (Taray) as well as tradesman Sedat Nuri (İleri). The founding capital of the company was shared among *İş Bankası* (by 40%), the state news agency *Anadolu Ajansı* (Anatolian agency) (by 30%) in addition to Faliş Rıfkı, Cemal Hüsnü and Sedat Nuri İleri (by 10% for each). Some sources mentioned that this company was actually a French-Turkish partnership. The official magazine of Istanbul Radio *Telsiz* published program schedules both in French and in Turkish. Moreover, opening and closedown announcements were in both languages at the early years of regular radio broadcasts. These facts reinforce this assumption. Furthermore, a report drawn up by the American Embassy in 1927 said that the company was founded as a French-Turkish association and supported by a well-known French corporation *Campagne Française de Radio*, which supplied many of its technical hardware and equipment. This report was quoted by two sources: Ahıska, *Radyonun Sihirli Kapısı*, p. 108; and Ayhan Dink, Özden Cankaya and Nail Ekici eds., *Istanbul Radyosu: Anılar, Yaşantılar* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2000), p. 67.

¹⁴⁸ Kocabaşoğlu, p. 31.

¹⁴⁹ Copied from Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 73. The musicians are Lutist Nedres Bey, Refik Ferzan, Ali Rıza Şengel, Mesut Cemil, Selahattin Demircioğlu (in the back row from left to right) with Lutist Hayriye Örs, Vecihe Daryal and Ruşen Ferit Kam (sitters from left to right).

According to an article published in *Telsiz* in 1928, out of the 21 musicians employed by Istanbul Radio, six were women: Singer Hikmet Hanım, Lutist Hayriye Hanım, Singer Süheyla Bedriye Hanım from Izmir, Nezahat Hanım, Tambur Player Naime Sipahi, and Kemancha Player Hadiye Ötügen. In addition, Madam Taskin played the piano for Istanbul Radio.¹⁵⁰ Also, two of the ten employees in the administrative staff of Istanbul Radio were women.¹⁵¹ One of the two speakers of Ankara Radio was a woman, Feriha Hanım, as well.¹⁵² On the other hand, women were not represented among the executive positions of Ankara and Istanbul Radios.¹⁵³



Fig. 2. Administrative staff of Istanbul Radio at the TTAŞ period¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Kocabaşoğlu, p. 28.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 62.

¹⁵⁴ Copied from Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, p. 20.

Radio during the Authoritarian 1930s

In the 1930s, when the Republican regime was consolidated into an authoritarian single-party order, “undisciplined” aspects of radio, such as the absence of an institutionalized structure that controlled broadcasts, became a major concern among the elite.¹⁵⁵ A changing definition of radio from “the luxurious music box to the Republican teacher” gradually developed among the Republican elites. Inspired by the developments in radio broadcasting in countries like Russia and Germany, where radio was employed as a disciplinary machine of single-party regimes, elites defended the idea that radio should not be used as an instrument of entertainment but as a “magical instructor” inculcating the principles of the Republic.¹⁵⁶

In the 1930s, many parts of the globe experienced deeper state intervention into various fields of social, cultural and political life; radio in Turkey was no exception. In the 1935 program of the Republican People’s Party (RPP), which recognized the state-party unification, radio was defined as “an instrument of political and cultural discipline.”¹⁵⁷ In 1936, the government refused to renew the license of TTAŞ and assumed the monopoly of radio broadcasting on itself.

¹⁵⁵ The radio was also criticized for its failure to create a homogeneously national voice. The prohibition of the classical Turkish music on radio between 1934 and 1936 was, in fact, one of the most remarkable attempts to bring discipline to radio on behalf of constructing a national yet modern self. However, the concern that this prohibition led the audience to listen to the Arabic music on the Egyptian Radio paved the way for its removal. For further discussion on this short-lived ban, see Meral Özbek, *Popüler Kültür ve Orhan Gencebay Arabeski* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), p. 145.

¹⁵⁶ For example, one of the Republican intellectuals İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu suggested, “Experiments made in Russia, Germany and Italy showed that... Radio can elevate the section of culture, radio can teach anything; in short, radio can be the quickest and the most powerful worker of a newest revolution.” See İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, “Radyoyu Ülküleştirme Lazımdır,” *Yeni Adam*, no. 8 (19 February 1934), p. 7.

¹⁵⁷ Kocabaşoğlu, p. 116.

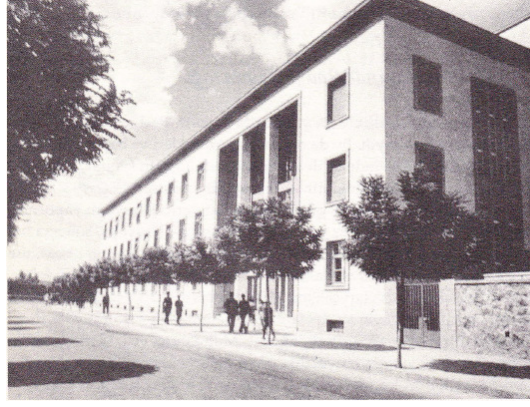


Fig. 3. Ankara Radio House established in 1938¹⁵⁸

Establishment of a modern and large radio house in Ankara in 1938 was the most profound symbol of the new era in radio broadcasting during which Ankara got much ahead of Istanbul. Ahıska has maintained that the success of the political discourse which posited Ankara as the symbolic “nucleus of the nation” was possible if only elites believed in it.¹⁵⁹ The erection of a new radio house in Ankara, which appeared as a “grand school,” as discussed below, was a major step on the long way to the institutionalization of this belief.

Radio as a School: Disciplining the Female Voice

The Republican elites saw education as one of the main institutional arenas where the beliefs, attitudes, and values of people could be molded via a planned process of socialization.¹⁶⁰ The state radio was assigned a similar mission, assisting the project of nation building by educating the public. In particular, radio was expected to teach

¹⁵⁸ Copied from Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, p. 28.

¹⁵⁹ Meltem Ahıska, “Türkiye’de İktidar ve Gerçeklik,” in *Türkiye’de İktidarı Yeniden Düşünmek*, ed. K. Murat Güney (Istanbul: Varlık Yayınları, 2009), p. 51.

¹⁶⁰ Füsün Üstel, “Makbul Vatandaş”ın Peşinde: *II. Meşrutiyet’ten Bugüne Vatandaşlık Eğitimi* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011), p. 127.

the principles, values, and ideals of the new regime to the “illiterate masses” in rural areas, thereby circumventing the problem of inadequate schooling.

Despite the role it was appointed, radio’s transmitting power and coverage capacity remained limited,¹⁶¹ and radio receivers were sold at high prices.¹⁶² The majority of the radio audience was composed of the urban elite families in Ankara, for whom household radio receivers acted as a prestige symbol.

Jülide Gülizar, who grew up in a small province near Adana, said that they did not have a radio receiver at home in the 1930s:

At that time, people were completely lacking in... radio receivers! The only way to listen to music was the lute that ladies played during their visiting days, the songs and ballads that they sang either individually or as a chorus.¹⁶³

Interviewee Ü.G., on the other hand, was born into an urban family in Ankara. Her parents were senior officials at the Turkish Red Crescent. She said the following about the “luxury” radio receiver in her household in the second half of the 1940s:

The radio was sacred at our home. There was a Blaupunkt radio receiver, which is now at my summer house in Kilyos. We were not allowed to touch on the station tuning, for example. We were not even allowed to turn it on or off.”¹⁶⁴

The Republican radio served another critical function. According to Ahıska, the state radio acted as a teacher that trained its professionals on the job within a national

¹⁶¹ Although a long-wave radio transmitter was put into service in Ankara in 1938, it did not cover eastern and western Anatolia as well as the coastal regions in the north and in the south. In addition, after 1938 Istanbul Radio was deactivated. Occasional attempts to reactive it, particularly during the Second World War, did not yield results until the trial broadcasts in 1949. See Kocabaşoğlu, pp. 202 – 3.

¹⁶² See *ibid.*, p. 154.

¹⁶³ Jülide Gülizar, *Ah Baba Ah* (Ankara: Sinemis Yayınları, 2005), p. 27. The original text is as follows: *O zamanlarda radyo... ne gezer? Müzik dinlemenin tek yolu, kabul günlerinde hanımların çaldıkları ut, tek tek ya da koro halinde söyledikleri şarkılar, türküler...*

¹⁶⁴ Ü.G. The original quotation is as follows: *Bizim evde radyo kutsaldı. Blaupunkt marka bir radyo vardı ki şimdi Kilyos’taki yazlık evimde duruyor. İstasyon ayarına dokunmamız falan yasaktı. Açıp kapatmamız bile yasaktı.*

framework.¹⁶⁵ Especially along with the centralization drive in the radio organization in the first half of the 1940s, Ankara Radio was turned into what Kütükçü describes as “a school which opened out its gates to talented young people all over the country and admitted those suitable for cultivation.”¹⁶⁶

Both its exam-based admission procedures and its comprehensive training facilities gave Ankara Radio the appearance of a school. In-house training was divided into two groups: The first group covered courses about Turkish language, grammar, and diction. These courses played an influential role in creation of a common national vernacular by eliminating dialectical differences, by disseminating new words and phrases, and by ensuring the institutionalization of certain expression patterns.¹⁶⁷ These courses were attended by radio announcers.

The second group included courses on music, on Turkish classical music in particular.¹⁶⁸ The musical education at Ankara Radio created a “radio style” in the performance of the Turkish classical music, characterized by what Kütükçü describes as “adherence to the written music and to the method, avoidance of exaggerated melody adornments, and... a loyal taste of performance.”¹⁶⁹

This disciplining of musical performance had particular implications for the female singers on the radio’s staff. According to Kütükçü, since Istanbul Radio’s

¹⁶⁵ Ahıska, *Radyonun Sihirli Kapısı*, p. 17.

¹⁶⁶ Tamer Kütükçü, *Radyoculuk Geleneğimiz ve Türk Musikisi* (Istanbul: Ötüken Yayınları, 2012), p. 70.

¹⁶⁷ Kocabaşoğlu, p. 241.

¹⁶⁸ A well-known singer of the Turkish classical music, Müzeyyen Senar, said the following about these music courses she took in Ankara Radio: “During the period when I stayed at the radio, we learned the most important 460 pieces of classical Turkish music in 54 different methods. I recorded those one by one in my notebook. Then on 15 July 1940 I had that notebook type-written and bound. I still keep it because sometimes I check it if a fault that jars occurs when a piece is performed.” Quoted in Kütükçü, pp. 73 – 4.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

female singers lacked a musical tradition, singing styles of Gypsy and/or non-Muslim musicians influenced their performance. They also inherited these groups' "dialectical deficiencies." He holds that Ankara Radio, which acted almost as a "music academy," required its female singers to abandon this "undisciplined legacy" and to adopt a West-oriented way of performing music.¹⁷⁰

Kütükçü's assumption about women's lack of musical tradition overlooks the role the *harem* women played in the development of the Ottoman music.¹⁷¹ It also trivializes the significance of the musical genre *Kanto* (fin de siècle cabaret song) in the way female performers of music gained recognition in public life. *Kanto*, which was almost always performed by Greek or Gypsy women in cities, contributed to the popularization of women's musical identity in the late Ottoman period. This genre, however, was isolated by Ankara Radio, which embarked upon creating a style of musical performance embodying the "modern/national spirit."

As Serpil Sancar has claimed, women's education in modern public schools entailed the disappearance and/or silencing of their traditions in various spheres of life including that of music.¹⁷² It is not that women lacked a musical tradition of their own, but that the Republican regime handicapped intergenerational transmission of

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 76 – 7.

¹⁷¹ Research conducted by Behvar Beşiroğlu has demonstrated that the male-dominated atmosphere of social life in the Ottoman Empire did not necessarily mean that the arts were completely monopolized by a male tradition. Drawing on various written sources and descriptive texts such as miniature paintings and travel books, she shows that Ottoman women, including female headworkers employed in the Imperial *harem*, were influential in musical developments, both in the city and in the Palace. They both lectured on music and were well-known for their performances and compositions. One of these women was Leyla Saz, a notable composer in the tradition of the Turkish classical music. Born in 1850 into an Ottoman aristocrat family of Cretan origins, she engaged with poetry and music both in Turkish and in European schools and composed more than fifty songs. For further details about Ottoman female musicians, see Ş. Behvar Beşiroğlu, n.d., "Osmanlı-Türk Musikisinde Kadının Müzikal Kimliği," http://www.muzikoloji.org/yazi/yazi_goster_uye.asp?yazi_id=326 [28 July 2012].

¹⁷² Serpil Sancar, *Türk Modernleşmesinin Cinsiyeti: Erkekler Devlet, Kadınlar Aile Kurar* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012), p. 212.

women's musical traditions and constructed the state radio as a school where the woman's voice was disciplined on modern/national premises.



Fig. 4 Speaker Emel Gazimihal reading news on the radio¹⁷³

Women were employed at the Republican radio not only as performers of music, but also as announcers. The first female announcer of the Republican radio was Emel Gazimihal, who started to work for Ankara Radio in 1937. During the Second World War, she became one of the first female news readers in the world. She both attended courses at the radio house and benefited from professional development opportunities abroad. For example, she was sent to the BBC headquarters in London in 1938 to take up a one-year personnel training program.

As a pioneering figure, Gazimihal signified the Republican policy of emancipating women by inviting them into the public sphere where they could work as professionals with conditions even better than those of their counterparts in the West. She was said to have received training in Europe upon Mustafa Kemal's

¹⁷³ Copied from "Türkiye'nin İlk Spikerleri: Emel Gazimihal," 28 November 2012, <http://spikerlik-kursu.com/?p=1476> [11 July 2013].

directive, at a time when there were no female news readers employed by the BBC.¹⁷⁴

The BBC appointed Sheila Borret as its first female news reader in July 1933; however, her time at the BBC was short lived. Although she was highly praised for her performance, her contract was terminated abruptly. One of the objections to her appointment was that she was married and so deprived a man of the position. It was also alleged that listeners objected to a woman's voice in role of news speaker.¹⁷⁵

In fact, the female voice amplified by radio created controversy from the beginning. Especially when women performed as radio announcers, they came under intense fire. Debates revolved around the suitability of the female voice for the position, which included extempore speaking in addition to the reading of program information and news. It was put forward that a woman's voice was naturally too "feeble" to do announcing. Also, there was the claim that audiences were annoyed to hear women speaking authoritatively rather than singing or entertaining.

The opinion that news was an area to which a woman's voice was ill-suited was not unique to Turkey. For example, in the USA, the NBC appointed Elsie Janis as its first female news speaker in 1935. She was the only woman among 26 radio announcers. The following was written about her employer's attitude toward Janis:

¹⁷⁴ Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 98.

¹⁷⁵ See Ann McKay, "Speaking up: Voice Amplification and Women's Struggle for Public Expression," in *Women & Radio: Airing Differences*, ed. Caroline Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 22. Despite its hesitation to appoint a woman as a news speaker, the BBC of the interwar years as a new and progressive industry introduced work practices that differentiated it from the other public enterprises in Britain in terms of women's employment. It employed a large pool of female secretarial and clerical staff throughout the 1930s (rising from 200 in 1931 to 600 in 1939). In addition, there were a remarkable number of women in its salaried staff working for radio production. For example, in 1939, 14.4% of the salaried staff was composed of women, if engineers, all of whom were men, are removed from its employment statistics. For these women, a post at the BBC was usually a positive experience since they worked in an "attractive and prestigious institution," within comparatively better rates of wage and conditions of service. For further details, see Catherine Murphy, "'On an Equal Footing with Men?' Women and Work at the BBC, 1923 – 1939" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 2011).

“[He is] not sure what type of program her hoarse voice is best suited for, but he is certain she will read no more Press-Radio news bulletins. Listeners complained that a woman’s voice was inappropriate.”¹⁷⁶

Research showed that, if employed at all, female speakers were frequently limited to women’s programs, or “radio for women” as some called it, whose employer’s objective was to persuade women to listen to and purchase radio receivers. Also, appointing women as speakers on radio programs for women and children was sometimes a definite state policy, as in the Nazi regime in Germany, which attempted to establish a relationship of intimacy with radio audiences.¹⁷⁷

In contrast, the Republican radio exhibited a difference in airing the woman’s voice: The woman’s speaking voice was not available in the talk broadcasts that addressed women. Speakers of the Republican radio’s talk programs about domestic life were the leading male intellectual figures of the regime, such as Selim Sırrı Tarcan and Dr. Galip Ataç.¹⁷⁸ They both produced and presented these programs themselves. Yet, the Republican radio did not submit itself to the idea that the “feminine” voice did not suit the announcing job, including reading news. Instead, it employed women as announcers and made them into symbols of the modernization drive of the Republican regime.

¹⁷⁶ McKay, p. 22.

¹⁷⁷ For details on women’s radio in the Nazi period, see Lacey, “From *Plauderei* to Propaganda.”

¹⁷⁸ Selim Sırrı Tarcan was an educator, a sports official and a politician, mostly known for his contribution to the establishment of the National Olympic Committee of Turkey and the introduction of volleyball sport to Turkey. Galip Ataç was a physician who worked as the chief of medicine at *Haydarpaşa Emraz-ı Sariye ve İstilaiye Hastanesi* (Haydarpaşa Hospital for Communicable Diseases) until the second half of the 1930s. Ataç was then known for his radio program *Evin Saati* (Home hour), where he explained complex health issues in a rather popular language to the audience. For further discussion on their radio programs, see Ahıska, *Radyonun Sihirli Kapısı*, pp. 205 – 55.

Radio in the Populist Decade of the 1950s

While Ankara Radio began regular broadcasts in 1938 under the state monopoly, Istanbul Radio had to suspend its operations for a while. The first reason was the lack of adequate government funding for its technical and physical equipment and departure of its professional staff to Ankara. However, the political authority decided to put Istanbul Radio into service again, considering the increase in the number of subscribers under the wartime conditions.

Throughout the world, the Second World War raised radio's importance primarily as a means of national propaganda. Accordingly, an increase was observed in the radio's broadcasting period, coverage capacity and transmitting power in Turkey at that time period, as in many other countries. Also, during the war years, radio became "the mouth of the government and the ear of the nation," as its chief declared.¹⁷⁹ That is, radio was mainly utilized for propagating its cause by the political authority both inside and abroad Turkey. This entailed centralization in the radio's organizational structure, which was realized by the establishment of the Directorate General for the Press in 1940, the objective of which was defined as "monopolizing means of propaganda and controlling them thoroughly in order to protect the Turkish people from dirty propaganda and to broadcast news which express our national outlook to our people."¹⁸⁰

For the audience's part, as the war provoked the urge for gaining immediate knowledge about current events in the world, the number of radio receiver owners

¹⁷⁹ Kocabaşoğlu, p. 185.

¹⁸⁰ Quoted from *ibid.*, p. 186. The original text is as follows: *Belli başlı propaganda vasıtalarını bir elde toplamak, bunları sıkı bir surette murakabe altında bulundurmak ve böylece Türk halkını, muşır propagandalardan korumak, milli menfaatlerimize uygun ve milli görüşün ifadesi olan haberleri milletimize duyurmak...*

demonstrated a striking rise by 75% between 1940 and 1946. Admittedly, the majority of radio listeners were still educated and urban. However, the rate of increase in the number of subscribers was two-fold in city centers, whereas it was almost five-fold in rural areas, indicating a change in the profile of the radio audience, which would bear its fruits after the war.¹⁸¹

Between 1946 and 1960, Turkey experienced agriculture-based economic growth and further integrated to world capitalism. In political terms, these years were characterized by the painful experience of transition to multi-party democracy. When the Democrats came to power in 1950, they took an authoritarian framework which enabled and even encouraged the supremacy of the single party over all other political institutions. Having adopted the centralized political framework of the single party era, the DP turned it against the opposition and the civil-military bureaucracy and justified its authoritarian measures on the idea of the “party-state.”

Accordingly, the DP defended the idea that the government could benefit from the state radio as it wished.¹⁸² For example, in one of his parliamentary speeches, Prime Minister Menderes said, “The property and the instruments of the state are used by the government on behalf of the state and of the country. Nobody has the right to claim that the state radio is common to all.”

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p. 207.

¹⁸² *Ulus*, 4 April 1951. The original text is as follows: *Devlet malı ve vasıtalarını devlet ve memleket menfaatine olarak hükümet kullanır. Devlet radyosunun orta malı olduğunu iddia etmek hiç kimsenin hakkı değildir.*



Fig. 5. Istanbul Radio House established in 1949¹⁸³

In the 1950s, the annual rate of increase in the number of radio subscribers was striking (ranging between 22% and 50%). The increase was especially evident in villages.¹⁸⁴ Amidst the conspicuous expansion of the radio audience, the most critical improvement in radio broadcasting was the establishment of a new radio house and of a powerful radio transmitter (150 KW) in Istanbul in 1949.

At the newly established Istanbul Radio House, an exam for the position of speaker was conducted on 25 July 1949, with Emel Gazimihal as the chief speaker on the jury. Almost 200 hundred people attended the exam. The attendants passed multiple voice tests and an oral interview, and only three of them, two men and one woman, were found satisfactory: Mekşufe Ekeman, Selahattin Küçük, and Tarık Gürcan.¹⁸⁵ The technical staff also included a female senior engineer of electricity, Mualla Acar, who was the first female graduate of Konya High School.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ Copied from Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 89.

¹⁸⁴ For example, the number of radio receivers in rural regions rose by 63% just in one year from 1949 to 1950 and by almost %70 in 1952. See Kocabaşoğlu, p. 286.

¹⁸⁵ Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, pp. 97 – 8.

¹⁸⁶ Mehmet Bildirici, *Konya Lisesi'nden Elli Yedililer de Geçti*, May 2007, http://www.mehmetbildirici.com/download/57_mezunlar_1.pdf [7 August 2012].

The Istanbul Radio House launched its operations with a limited number of staff. However, shortage of qualified staff became a much more obstinate problem at Ankara Radio, mainly because the reactivation of Istanbul Radio encouraged radio professionals to return to this city. Ankara Radio was particularly deprived of staff with experience in program making.

Jülide Gülizar said that there had been no producers employed by Ankara Radio in the 1950s. She stated the program staff had been composed of announcers, accepted to be its “display window,” technicians in “its kitchen,” and some other officials, while programs were produced by people outside the radio, particularly by those figures considered “desirable” by the DP government, or had been supplied by a few Western – oriented cultural centers.¹⁸⁷



Fig. 6. Covers of two issues from *Radyo* in the 1940s and *Radyo Alemi* in the 1950s¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ After the Second World War, particularly after the DP's rise to power, foreign organizations like the British Cultural Commission, the USA Press and Radio Attaché and The Voice of America became active in radio in Turkey. See Jülide Gülizar, *Haberler Bitti Şimdi Oyun Havaları* (Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık, 1994), p. 31.

¹⁸⁸ Copied from Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 123.

From the late 1940s on, attempts were made to turn radio from a modern teacher into an instrument of entertainment more sympathetic and more attentive to the tastes and expectations of particular groups of audience. The minister responsible for radio broadcasting defined radio's main function as follows: "Our only goal is to restore joy to and please the wide mass of citizens, who has forgotten to smile for years and years and who has no other instrument than radio to cheer up."¹⁸⁹

In line with this policy, changes were observed in music programs: Their proportion gradually increased between 1946 and 1960, constituting 70% of all radio broadcasts on average. In addition, more than half of these music programs broadcast Western music, particularly Western pop music at the expense of its classical genre, which indicated the development of a more populist definition of Westernization among the governing elite.¹⁹⁰ The proportion of both folk and classical Turkish music also increased in this time period, and religious music was rehabilitated.¹⁹¹

Another striking change was the rise in the proportion of moral and religious programs, which also were used as an effective instrument of government propaganda, particularly after 1957.¹⁹² Yet, among the DP government's authoritarian/populist interventions to radio, *Vatan Cephesi* (the Motherland Front) was the most sensational. Between 1 October 1958 and 26 January 1960, radio news

¹⁸⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 11 March 1955. The original text is as follows: *Gayemiz yalnız, yıllar ve yıllar boyu gülmeyi unutmış ve neşelenmek için radyodan başka vasıtası olmayan geniş vatandaş kitlesini neşeye kavuşturmak ve onu memnun etmektir.*

¹⁹⁰ Kocabaşoğlu, p. 296.

¹⁹¹ For example, in 1950, 46% of the music broadcasts by Istanbul Radio were composed of Turkish music, whereas their proportion was only 24% between 1940 and 1946. See Kütükçü, p. 114.

¹⁹² In the 1950s, they comprised almost 2% of all radio programs and 7% of all talk programs on the average. The proportion of moral programs among all commentaries was only 0.45%, however, between 1940 and 1946. See Kocabaşoğlu, p. 221.

bulletins announced endless lists of individuals who had registered for this pro-government popular front.¹⁹³

As Toprak writes, Turkey's "honeymoon" with the liberal economy was short lived. Especially in the second half of the 1950s, Turkey struggled with the dilemmas of the liberal approach to development, which culminated in an economic crisis in 1957.¹⁹⁴ The stabilization measures the government took after the crisis created disillusionment, especially among the urban middle classes. This disillusionment, which was reinforced by the DP's authoritarian policies, found its expression in the form of mounting political tension in the parliament and in the press.

Radio was located right in the middle of the conflicts between the government and the opposition. While the political opposition against the DP government was rising, the radio house was made into a "spineless rosary"¹⁹⁵ through censorship and supervision.¹⁹⁶

The discontent of urban social groups was mobilized into action by the youth's anti-government street demonstrations. Adalet Ağaoğlu has put out that

¹⁹³ The apparent goal of *Vatan Cephesi* (the Motherland Front) was to persuade the public opinion that the DP's popularity was still on the rise. According to Sunar, It actually indicated transformation of the DP's populism from a "moderate" one that depended on patronage relations to an "authoritarian – plebiscitary" one that drew on ideological mobilization of masses. The main reason for this transformation was the depletion of resources for maintenance of patronage relations after the economic crisis in 1957. For further discussion on this change in the DP's populism, see İlkey Sunar, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, 1st ed., s.v., "Demokrat Parti ve Popülizm," p. 2084.

¹⁹⁴ Zafer Toprak, "1968'i Yargılamak ya da 68 Kuşağına Mersiye," *Cogito*, no. 14 (1998), p. 157.

¹⁹⁵ Gülizar, *Haberler Bitti*, p. 34.

¹⁹⁶ To illustrate, radio's chief news bulletins were monopolized either by items about the government's activities or by the DP elites' speeches, and senior male speakers, such as Can Okan, were usually appointed to read them. Both Jülide Gülizar and interviewee Ü.G. mentioned that Okan was the representative voice of Prime Minister Menderes on radio. Appointment of a male speaker with a bass voice tone as the representative of Menderes on radio might have been a response to his depiction as a feminine character by the opponent press. Actually, in the 1950s various cartoons magazines often satirized Menderes by portraying him as a woman who had dared to enter a masculine political environment. For details, see Levent Cantek, *Şehre Göçen Eşek: Popüler Kültür, Mizah ve Tarih* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011), pp. 146 – 56.

emergence of an opponent youth movement created a sense of suspicion among the radio authorities against the radio's young staff:

As the government started to loath young people..., the radio director started to disfavor them, too. My dear, these young people became meddling step by step. Indeed, this time they are not the ones who stoned the *Tan* Printing House, who burned books in squares. These are a bit weird. On each decline of the day, they pour into Kızılay and shout all at once against the prime minister and his ministers. ... In turn, these release their horsed and copped police against the young people; they drop lachrymose bombs.¹⁹⁷

There was a hierarchical order of merit at the radio house, which occasionally created conflicts among the senior and the junior staff.¹⁹⁸ Besides imposing unequal patterns of treatment against the younger staff, this order was accompanied by a male-dominated atmosphere, as will be discussed below.

Personal Narratives of Female Radio Professionals

Fusun Üstel writes that in the 1950s “conservative democracy was constructed on a gendered basis.”¹⁹⁹ It was a decade when urban middle classes adopted modern values into their daily lives as articulated within a conservatist framework. It entailed

¹⁹⁷ Adalet Ağaoğlu, *Göç Temizliği* (Istanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2008), p. 107. (The original texts of all the quotations longer than four sentences are given in the Appendix E)

¹⁹⁸ For their part, the young staff was discontent with the hierarchical order of merit at the radio house, as the following case illustrates. When senior speakers were not available to read the bulletins on the radio, one of the “amateurs” was asked to do the job on their behalf. In one of such occasions Program Director Faruk Yener called Doğan Soylu, a young male speaker, to his office and asked him to announce the evening bulletin since the female speaker Dürnev Tunaseli, who had been assigned this task, did not feel herself good that evening. Doğan Soylu got irritated by this manner of Yener's and refused to take over Tunaseli's task. Then, a young female speaker Altın Erkuş was called to the director's office. However, she gave a similar reaction to the director's “notice.” Altın said that she cannot read the news bulletin within such a psychology as there was little time left for the broadcast. Then she left the office, having added that her blood pressure rose and a doctor can check her blood pressure if requested. Upon the young speakers' resistance, Yener and Tunaseli read the news bulletin together. However, after a while, speakers Doğan Soylu and Altın Erkuş were investigated by the radio administration. Both of them were accused of “avoidance from reading Menderes' discourse,” and punished with a month's wage cut. See Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, pp. 137 – 8.

¹⁹⁹ Üstel, pp. 269 – 70.

a fading emphasis on the image of the woman as a public professional figure as the symbol of the modern Republic. Sancar also argues that while the modernization process was incorporating more of a conservatist tone throughout the 1950s, women were thrown back into their home, where they were expected to carry out their tasks as modern housewives and mothers.²⁰⁰

On the other hand, by the 1950s the first generation of the “Republican girls” had completed their educations and started to seek employment as professionals in the public domain. The high incidence of women in professions was actually a phenomenon that emerged in cities after the Second World War. And radio was one of the main professional fields women ventured into in the 1950s.

Working as a professional for the state radio generated both challenges and opportunities for women. On the opportunity side, they saw radio as a gate to self-empowerment and public existence. One of these “Republican girls,” Betül Mardin, told the story of how she first passed this “gate” as follows:

When the boom of Cemal Reşit and Ekrem Reşit started, they were often in our life as our family friends. At the age of 16, I was translating a play from English to Turkish; I took the play to Ekrem Reşit with my father. The man took the play to Mister Muhsin. It was such an era that those who knew a little foreign language could elevate themselves immediately. Who deserves to translate such a play at the age of 16! However, there was such a thing.²⁰¹

Elife Hazin Güran, who started to work at Ankara Radio as an announcer-speaker in 1950, explained how women felt about their profession as follows:

In the years when we started to work, namely as radio speakers, there was the reaction of a circle; second, there was opposition among the family. However, due to passion and desire for the job and for this

²⁰⁰ Sancar, p. 229.

²⁰¹ Quoted in Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, pp. 101 – 2.

working environment, it never prevented me from working and young people thinking like me.²⁰²



Fig. 7. Announcer Elife Hazin Güran at the Ankara Radio House Station²⁰³

The female professionals employed by radio in the 1950s usually came from middle or upper-middle class urban families that had accumulated a significant amount of Republican social and cultural capital and transmitted it to their children. They had started their education lives in the 1930s and the 1940s. They had attended the most prestigious high schools and universities of the Republic.

The present section analyzes the entrance of women into the state-led field of radio broadcasting in that decade by drawing on their personal narratives. It shows that the new form of femininity developed during the Republican period functioned as an opportunity for change in these women's lives. Their transformation into the "Republican woman" however, was not a smooth process immune from tension and struggles.

²⁰² Ibid., p. 140. The original text is as follows: *Bizim işe, yani radyo spikerliğine başladığımız yıllarda bir çevrenin tepkisi vardı, ikincisi aile içinde bir muhalefet vardı, fakat işe ve bu çalışma dünyasına ait arzu ve istek hiçbir zaman benim çalışmama ve benim gibi düşünen gençlere engel olmadı.*

²⁰³ Copied from *ibid.*, p. 141.

Jülide Gülizar: “A Ghost from an Alien World”

Jülide Gülizar, who entered Ankara Radio in 1956 as a speaker and worked as a broadcast professional till 1981, was born in 1929 in Adana to a family composed of a father who worked for the TCDD (Turkish Republic Railway Administration) as a lower order official, a housewife mother, and a grandmother. She claimed to have no answer to the question of where she was from. Her mother was from Elbistan Maraş, which she left at the age of 3, while her father’s family had migrated from Crete to Turkey during the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in 1923.

The family lived in various regions in Anatolia due to the requirements of her father’s occupation. Therefore, she passed the first 14–15 years of her life in various small provinces in southeastern Anatolia.

She described her family as “a small and typical Republican family which survived around the limits of poverty and yet saw the Republican values as superior over any other things and believed that a magnificent future was shining over Turkey’s horizon.”²⁰⁴ She added that that her father, however, had been opposed to registering her for secondary school. His excuse was that “schooled girls [wrote] letters to boys.”²⁰⁵ He told his daughter if she really wanted to get an education, she could go to a Girls’ Institute. She threatened him that she would abandon her family and become *orta malı* (common property, slang for “prostitute”) unless he let her continue education.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Jülide Gülizar, *Yaşam Sana Teşekkür Ederim* (Ankara: Sinemis Yayıncılık, 2007), p. iii. The original text is as follows: *Cumhuriyet’in değerlerini her şeyin üstünde gören, Türkiye’nin ufkunda görkemli bir geleceğin parladığına inanan, bir küçük ve tipik Cumhuriyet ailesinin kızıyım.*

²⁰⁵ Gülizar, *Ah Baba Ah*, p.71.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

After she completed her secondary education, her father again opposed to registering her daughter for high school. She had to commute to high school by train since there were not any high schools in their province. Her father maintained he knew that “girls and boys [made] love in those trains.” Despite his opposition, as a result of Jülide and her mother’s resistance, he ultimately accepted that she be sent to Ankara. Gülizar stayed at her uncle’s apartment there and attended *Ankara Kız Lisesi* (Ankara Girls’ High School).²⁰⁷

She said that Ankara was the “the city of her dreams” when she was a girl. This dream was inscribed on her imagination mainly by her teachers’ discourse about Ankara as the rising symbol of the Republic.²⁰⁸ For her, Ankara also signified the comfort provided by domestic use of modern technology. She perceived Ankara as a “heavenly” place:

Oh, my God! How easy things are here! For example, carrying wood and coal from the basement up to the floor you live in, lighting the fire, cleaning the stove pipe that choked regularly in order to warm up... None of these is necessary. As if we came not to Ankara but to the Heaven.²⁰⁹

She considered herself a “real *Ankaralı*” (inhabitant of Ankara) due to her identification with the Kemalist life-style of that city. She admitted that as she had not been born into a notable family in Ankara, she was not considered to be a “real inhabitant” of this city by her friends. Indeed, as a high school girl who had come from a small Anatolian province, she had painful experiences due to the cultural differences between herself and the girls from Ankara. She said she could not get rid

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 127.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 143.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 147. The original text is as follows: *Aman Tanrım, burada işler ne kadar kolay. Örneğin ısınmak için, bodrum katından ta oturduğün kata kadar odun – kömür taşımak, soba yakmak, belli sürelerle tıkanan soba borusunu temizlemek... Bunların hiçbiri yok. Ankara’ya değil cennete gelmişiz sanki.*

of her “southeastern worldview” while she was a girl in Ankara. In her terms, she had internalized the patriarchal idea that a woman should protect her honor by “behaving like a man” in public arenas, which influenced the minute details of her life:

Another thing also caught my attention in Ankara. Girls walked in streets so comfortably that they actually... stopped even for window shopping. God save me from this! ...According to my father, virtuous girls should... walk headlong, knitting their eyebrows. I should say right here that for the sake of my father’s concept of honor, two lines had slightly formed between my eyebrows even before I turned 30.²¹⁰



Fig. 8. Students of *Ankara Kız Lisesi* at the Republican Day celebrations²¹¹

Gülizar described *Ankara Kız Lisesi* as “the first educational institution that was established for girls’ education by the Republic,”²¹² which raised those “girls who would put their signatures to great successes.”²¹³ Yet, her life story reveals that the construction of the “Republican girl” by means of education was fractured by deep social inequalities embodied in culture.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 146.

²¹¹ Copied from “Fotoğraflarla Eski Ankara,” n.d., www.ankaralisesi.org/dosyalar/eskiankaraakl.ppt [25 October 2012].

²¹² Gülizar, *Ah Baba Ah*, p. 161.

²¹³ Ibid., p. 164.

²¹⁴ See Akşit, pp. 204 – 5.

At high school, she was made to feel embarrassed because the way she dressed and spoke did not conform to the “modern standards.” On her first day at school, the other students looked on her as “a ghost from an alien world or a wild girl from the mountains.”²¹⁵ They made fun of her pronunciation and vocabulary, which had been influenced by the Arabic widely spoken in southeastern Anatolia.²¹⁶ Some teachers also treated her in an embarrassing way. For example, one female teacher said to her the following in class after she had given an incorrect answer to a question about a chemical substance:

You have departed from Mersin and come to Ankara to study, allegedly. However, you do not know a blunder and will not also be able to learn it. You had better return to Mersin. Sweep the house, wash the dishes, the clothes, and light the fire there. Yes, light the fire because you also do not know what a radiator is. Let your father not waste his money on you.²¹⁷

She later regarded her successful career as a radio news reader as a form of revenge against her high school classmates:

At the moment I opened my mouth, each of those holes [on the microphone] was transformed into huge gates of caves. Their interior was completely dark. When I looked at them closely, I saw a mass there composed of the students of *Ankara Kız Lisesi*. They were not making fun of me this time. As I completed my announcement and came out in great excitement, those who watched me in the control room asked, “Why did you look so hostilely and shake your head oddly when you started to speak? And when you completed the announcement, a bizarre smile appeared on your face.” Its reason was very simple. I had demanded to show off to those in the cave.²¹⁸

Kıvanç Kılınç contrasts the *İsmet Paşa Kız Enstitüsü* (İsmet Pasha Girl's Institute) (1930) and *Ankara Kız Lisesi* (1938), which were located very close to each other, as educational projects of the Republic that targeted girls from different backgrounds.

²¹⁵ Gülizar, *Ah Baba Ah*, p. 152.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 155 – 7.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

The *İsmet Paşa Kız Enstitüsü* opened its doors to girls from lower or middle income groups. It tried to educate them as “modern housewives and mothers.” In contrast, *Ankara Kız Lisesi* mostly addressed girls from the higher echelons in society. Not only were these girls keen on having professional careers, but they also could effort to hire housemaids in their adulthood. They were encouraged to get university education, and domestic arts covered only a minor part of the high school’s curriculum.²¹⁹



Fig. 9: A classroom at *Ankara Kız Lisesi*²²⁰

The girls at *Ankara Kız Lisesi*, who were encouraged to become the modern professional women of the Republic, still retained some restrictive ideals of femininity. They dreamed of marrying the proverbial prince on a white horse.²²¹ This “prince” would probably be a graduate of *Mülkiye* (School of Civil Service).

The students at *Ankara Kız Lisesi* called their counterparts at the *İsmet Paşa Kız Enstitüsü* *asri hizmetçiler* (modern maids). They told the girls at the *İsmet Paşa Kız Enstitüsü* to study their lessons well. The reason was that the students at *Ankara*

²¹⁹ Kıvanç Kılınç, “Constructing Women for the Republic: The Spatial Politics of Gender, Class and Domesticity in Ankara, 1928 – 1952” (Ph.D. Diss., State University of New York, 2010).

²²⁰ Copied from “Fotoğraflarla Eski Ankara.”

²²¹ Gülizar, *Yaşam Sana Teşekkür Ederim*, p. 103.

Kız Lisesi were planning to marry a man from *Mülkiye* and to choose their maids from among the girls who graduated from the *İsmet Paşa Kız Enstitüsü*.²²² Yet, Gülizar remembered feeling “frozen” when the girls of the Institute replied back to them, “You can employ us as your maids in your apartments in the future. Then we will deceive your *Mülkiyeli* (of the School of Civil Service) husbands and strip you of them.”²²³

Having finished high school as a successful student, Gülizar registered at the Faculty of Law at Ankara University. Attending university made her feel powerful:

Ultimately... I was pounding at the door of university. I was... full of trust in front of that door. I was trying to prepare for the future in the most beautiful, the most sophisticated way... It was as if I would dislocate the world if I moved the top of my finger.²²⁴

This time her father felt proud that his daughter attended university. He decided to move to Ankara to live with her. She described the change in his father’s attitude to her willingness to pursue higher education as follows:

The man, who had used every opportunity to prevent me from studying, was gone and replaced by a father, who prides himself, however slightly, on her high school graduate daughter... He agreed to come to Ankara... The only reason for this was so that I could study at university.²²⁵

The main motive for his move to this city was to make sure she was not alone in Ankara since her uncle, with whom she had been living, was about to move to another city. As a petty state official, he was unable to afford the life expenses of a

²²² Gülizar, *Ah Baba Ah*, p.225.

²²³ Ibid., p. 226. The original text is as follows: *Tamam, siz bizleri hizmetçi olarak alın evinize. Biz de sizin Mülkiyeli kocaları ayartıp, elinizden alırsız.*

²²⁴ Gülizar, *Yaşam Sana Teşekkür Ederim*, p. vi. The original text is as follows: *Ve gelmiş, üniversite kapısına dayanmışım. Bu kapının önünde... güven doluyum... Sanki parmağımın ucunu kıpırdatsam dünyayı yerinden oynatacağım.*

²²⁵ Ibid., pp. 1, 8. The original text is as follows: *Eline geçen her fırsatı beni okutmamak için kullanan o adam gitmiş, yerine lise mezunu kızıyla haftıdan de olsa övünen bir baba gelmişti... Ankara’ya gelmeyi kabul etmişti... Bunun tek nedeni benim üniversitede okuyabilmemdi.*

daughter living separately. She had no chance to work to support herself while studying, since the stigma of a father making his daughter work was something her father could not bear. Still, the change in his father's attitude to her educational endeavors is indicative of the transformation of values and norms about girls' education in society.

Although Turkey experienced a striking increase in the educational attainment levels of both genders in absolute terms after the 1930s, a discrepancy persisted between them in terms of their school enrollment rates and number of graduates; and it became much more widened in higher education. Because high-income urban groups were able to benefit more from the already insufficient educational opportunities, this further reinforced inequalities among women from different classes. While university education more or less functioned as a means of social mobility for male students of lower socio-cultural origins, most of their female schoolmates, whose numbers were already low, were from elite urban families.

Gülizar described the male-dominated student profile of the Faculty of Law in Ankara in the late 1940s as follows:

Ankara University Faculty of Law was the most crowded scientific institution in the capital, and probably more crowded than the faculties in Istanbul, I suppose. A high number of young men registered here since registration without examination was available and attendance was not obligatory. And they were usually young men who had both to study and to work since they did not have a prosperous financial status... A very small part of that high number of students was girls.²²⁶

²²⁶ Ibid, p. 101. The original text is as follows: *Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi, sanırım Başkent'teki hatta belki de İstanbul'daki fakültelerin en kalabalık bilim kurumuydu. Sınavsız kayıt yapıldığı ve devam zorunluluğu olmadığı için çok sayıda genç buraya kayıt yaptırıyordu. Bunlar da genelde maddi durumları elverişli olmadığı için, çalışarak okumak zorunda olan gençlerdi... Çok sayıdaki öğrencilerin pek azı kızlardı.*

Unlike in *Ankara Kız Lisesi*, in the male-dominated atmosphere of the faculty, she now felt herself as “a girl in an army of men.” This feeling led her to adopt more of a “man-like” attitude and appearance at school:

I was raised by parents who said, “My daughter is like a man. If I sent her into the army, she would come out as stainless.” Although I was not in an army now, I was inside a group of men whose number was as big as an army’s. I had to come out as stainless. I also had to show everybody that I was “a man-like girl.” Therefore, I had to be masculine from my posture to my walk, from my look to my behavior, from my sitting down and standing up to my talking.²²⁷

In addition to trying to behave like a man, another challenge awaited her at university. The majority of the girls at university came from elite urban families in Ankara, and she had to cope with the culturally-embodied inequalities this engendered:

And during my university years, my mother continuously felt regret that she could not dress and equip me as she wished... In my faculty years, a great part of girls came to university in different clothes each day. They were the college graduate girls from Ankara TED. That is, they were the children of wealthy families. I had a black skirt, a grey sweater I had knitted myself and a white summer shirt my mother had sown. That white shirt was washed every two days in the evening, ironed and put on in the morning.²²⁸

She got married soon after she graduated from university. Yet, she was passionate to work. She was employed as a part-time Turkish teacher in Erzurum, where she lived for a while as was required by her husband’s military service there. After her husband fulfilled his military service, she moved back to Ankara. She and her husband were hired as civil servants in the *Sayıştay* (Court of Auditors). While she was working there, she gave birth to a boy. Having not satisfied with her position in this state institution, she attended and passed the radio’s admission exam in March 1956.

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 102.

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 103.

She said that this examination process was informed by nepotism, and the exam questions did not actually assess the applicants' talents or skills for the profession:²²⁹

These examinations are also a long, a very long story... Pass five or six phases; get eliminated in a pointless interview with questions like "What is your name? Who are your parents? Where do you work? Are you married or single?" etc., and see that somebody "with a business card" selected in your place. It is extremely frustrating. However, it did not deter me, for I know and I believe that "I have a very beautiful voice; I read poems very beautifully; I will be a speaker."²³⁰

At the beginning of her career, Gülizar felt like a powerful individual who had realized an "impossible" dream. She described how she felt during her night shifts at the radio station as follows:

During the night shifts I acted as if I was not at the studio, but at an eighth environment of color, as if I lived in the fifth season of the thirteenth month... I thought that I had power to pull the rope of nights; I assumed that I could change anything by this power as I wished. To govern destiny and time, to shatter even storms in a tea cup with a blow... And similar difficulties were the kind of formations that I could overcome easily.²³¹

Despite serving as a gate to freedom, the Radio House was a male-dominated environment where patriarchal authority was reinforced. Most of the "masters" who supervised the "students" at the station were men. They not only educated their young workmates on the job, but also guarded them almost in a paternal manner. It was particularly female radio employees who were watched over by their male superiors. Gülizar said that radio program director and speaker Hikmet Münir

²²⁹ Speakers were admitted to radio after passing examinations. Although not as regular as it was for the radio musicians, they were offered in-house training, as well. However, in the 1950s, it was occasionally criticized in the press that radio speakership was not regarded as a profession, and no efforts were paid for the professionalization of this occupation. For detailed discussion, see Kocabaşoğlu, p. 274.

²³⁰ Gülizar, *Haberler Bitti*, p. 16.

²³¹ Gülizar, *Yaşam Sana Teşekkür Ederim*, p.175.

Ebcioğlu was the main figure who had encouraged her to apply to the speakership exam:

My microphone life started with that pair of lines I read on Ankara Radio in the first program that was produced in presence of the audience ... Others then followed that first special program. From then on, I continuously read poems in programs. One day Ebcioğlu said “Let’s make you a speaker,” stating that I had a very beautiful voice and I read poems very well. It never came into my head to perceive those words as a pair of kind words told to a girl keen on this stuff. Believing was better. When I applied to the speakership exam held five years after these words were said, Hikmet Münir had been appointed to a post in Cyprus. Attending the exam as deprived of my most powerful support demoralized me a lot. However, his voice that always echoed in my ears prevented me from disrupting and disentangling myself.²³²

The patriarchal authority at the radio house also worked to its female staff’s professional disadvantage. To illustrate, their male superiors prevented them from conducting interviews outside the radio house. It is true that the radio house was a gate to the public life for these women, yet this gate was itself guarded by paternal male figures who did not allow their female students to go outside on behalf of their profession. The female radio professionals, however, did not remain passive to this authority. They resisted this “protection,” and had their right to “go outside” recognized by the administration:

When it was very necessary, interviews were conducted merely with male speakers. On the other hand, live broadcasts were made by people outside. On August 30 and October 29 those from the military and some teachers from the *Gazi Eğitim Enstitüsü* (Ghazi Education Institute) on May 19... There is no place even for male speakers on live broadcasts... Naturally, we, ladies, rebelled against this situation. We also demanded to conduct interviews, and we could succeed in it as men did. Our uprising was recognized by the administration. They started to send also ladies to interviews, however seldomly.²³³

At home, they had to deal with the burden of domestic responsibilities. Many of them were left no choice but to give up work after marriage, particularly after having

²³² Gülizar, *Haberler Bitti*, pp. 15 – 6.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

children in case they were unable to mobilize their family relatives' assistance for childcare. Actually, radio broadcasting was not a very "family-friendly" occupation since it entailed morning, day and night shifts, but Gülizar was "lucky" in dealing with the double burden of home and work since she lived very close to her parents who took care of her son while she was at the radio house.²³⁴

When female broadcast professionals went out of the radio house on duty, they faced another challenge. They took great care not to violate the "decent" image of the institution they worked for by adopting their bodily appearance to this image. Gülizar explained how she managed her appearance as a representative of Ankara Radio as follows:

... I was in love with live broadcasting... As I continued to wait for it desperately, an Italian light music band called Scarlatti came to Ankara. It was going to perform a concert in today's *Büyük Tiyatro* (Grand Theater) stage, and that concert was going to be broadcast live on the radio. Radio Director Ümit Halil Demiriz nominated that task to me, saying "You had kept telling, 'Live broadcast, live broadcast;' look, here is a live broadcast for you"... I shut myself home for three days; I made preparations without eating anything. It was as if I had been preparing to conquer the world. I almost learned by heart the pages-long text that I had written again and again. I was ready now. However...What was I going to wear when I appeared on the scene in front of the audience? *I was representing the monumental Ankara Radio*. It would not be proper to appear in everyday clothes. Good, but I did not have that kind of a dress. It would not be worth to make a huge expense by buying it for just one night. One of my friends came to my help. She gave me a black dress that glittered in light and her white and fleecy bolero for that night. We went shopping hastily and bought a pair of high-heeled shoes. We also went to the hairdresser's and had a Farah Diba style hair make-up, which was fashionable at that time. We completed my make-up by coloring my eyebrows, eyes and lips. Also, those friends who knew that business went over the colors once more, saying that the stage make-up should be in dark colors.²³⁵

²³⁴ Gülizar, *Yaşam Sana Teşekkür Ederim*, p. 176.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 100 – 1. (The italics are mine)

At times women working for radio found themselves saying “but that is not me.”

This was the price they paid for participating in public life as professionals who were tasked to represent the state authority:

In addition to regarding myself as a stranger in those black dress and white bolero, when I wore that pair of high-heeled shoes, which I found very sharp, an emotion settled in me as if I were looking downwards from the top of an apartment. I was enormously uncomfortable. And when I saw my made-up face in the mirror, I thought as if I had met someone completely strange to me. Anything that could be regarded unfavorable for me was there together, but I was going to endure all those because I was going to do a thing I had demanded very much.²³⁶

Although Gülizar was passionate about her profession, the hierarchical order at the radio house which discriminated against the young staff made her feel dissatisfied with it:

At that time I had been a speaker at Ankara Radio for two and a half years. I did not feel satisfied with this profession, which I had taken up with great aspiration and enthusiasm. That happiness which had initially gushed out from inside me started to lose something here and there because the task we did is only to read the texts submitted to us. There is nothing called program at the radio. Live broadcasts are monopolized by a few people outside... Radio does not have a unit called newsroom. News is announced four times a day as morning, noon, evening and night bulletins. Giant like speakers, who also tried to train us, were made to read those which had the value of the “chief news bulletin” among them, and we are left with the bulletins at 7:30 in the morning and at 22:45 at night. That is, what we the newcomers did was to list in succession the sentences such as “News ended; now it is time for dance music; you have listened to dance music; now it is time for songs” and like. That is, the situation was completely disappointing for me.²³⁷

Thus, she gave up her post at radio for a while and worked as an intern-lawyer instead. However, throughout her short-lasting career in law she understood that she could not be a lawyer due to what she described as her “extremely emotional attitude” in court. Thus, she started to work for radio as a speaker again.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Gülizar, *Yaşam Sana Teşekkür Ederim*, p. 187.

At around the same time, she got divorced. She said that the main reason for her divorce was her husband's ignorance of his family responsibilities, which increased the burden on her:

Rıza likes living in a bohemian style instead of standing up and searching for solutions to certain problems. I would also like such a life, but... Let him write poems, have them published, and read them in meetings... Due to... my daring nature... when it is necessary to take the child to the doctor, I myself paying the doctor's fee; I take the children to doctor with my mother. I struggle to find money to buy charcoal in winter.²³⁸

Another reason for her return to the radio house was that she had to overcome economic difficulties as a single mother after her divorce, and a post at the radio offered a higher income than a junior lawyer could earn.²³⁹

She recalled that after she presented the online broadcast of the play staged on *Büyük Tiyatro*, Radio Director Demiriz promised that all staff would be assigned such tasks, regardless of their gender. Upon the 1960 military coup female radio speakers felt disappointed as they thought that this promise was “stillborn,” yet they were “mistaken.”²⁴⁰

Although the radio administration had hesitated to assign its female staff to tasks outside, such as interviews or live broadcasts, this policy changed suddenly after the coup in 1960. After that point, female radio broadcast professionals were given many assignments outside the radio house:

One week after May 27, we saw that nothing had ended; instead, many things had just started. Besides, we saw it so much that we, ladies, whom they had not allowed to take a step to a single interview, to a live broadcast, did countless interviews about any topic in any place.²⁴¹

²³⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 177.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.* The original text is as follows: ...27 Mayıs'tan bir hafta sonra hiçbir şeyin bitmediğini, hatta birçok şeyin yeni başladığını gördük. Hem de öylesinde gördük ki, adımızı bir tek röportaja, naklen yayına attırmadıkları biz hanımlar nerelerde, ne konularda röportajlar yaptık.

Interviewee Ü.G.: “A Speaker since Childhood”

Ü.G., who started to work at Ankara Radio as an announcer-speaker in 1956, had a more urban background than that of Gülizar. She was born in 1938 to an upper middle class, urban family in Ankara. Both of her parents were state officials at the Red Crescent headquarters. She described her family in the following words:

My mother was among the first graduates of the *Izmir Ticaret Lisesi* (Izmir High School for Commerce). She [used] the old script when she started primary school. Then they passed to the Latin alphabet. And at that time...probably in the 1930s... there was a central appointment system. And she had lost his father at a very young age. She applied to that central system. In Ankara... The Red Crescent... They needed female officials. She was the first female official there. Before she died, she requested, “In any case cover my coffin with the Red Crescent flag...” She worked for 33 years. And my father graduated from the Academy of Economics and Administrative Sciences here. He applied to the same center in order to find a post. He applied from Istanbul. He was also appointed to Ankara. They met there, liked each other and got married... Then I got born.²⁴²

Ü.G.’s whole education life passed in Ankara. She started primary education at Ankara College. She finished Namık Kemal Secondary School. Then she attended *Ankara Kız Lisesi*, like Gülizar. Having parents with high school diplomas, however, she did not need to struggle to pursue education. Instead, she was encouraged by her family to this end. In a previous interview with her, she mentioned that she obtained her enthusiasm for speakership from her mother’s “taste for beautiful Turkish.” She said that in her childhood her mother had asked her to read newspapers aloud and corrected her mistakes in pronunciation and intonation.²⁴³

²⁴² Ü.G.

²⁴³ “Mikrofonda 25 Yıl,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 11 (21 April 1975), p. 14.

During the interview, she mentioned how the socio-cultural divergence between the students from *İsmet Paşa Kız Enstitüsü* and from *Ankara Kız Lisesi* influenced their choice of partners:

In *Ankara Kız Lisesi* ... there was a yard surrounded by high walls. And there were two high schools for boys at that time. One was *Gazi Lisesi* (Ghazi High School), and the other was *Atatürk Erkek Lisesi* (Atatürk Boys' High School). In a building very close to the Girls' High School, the Girls Institute was located. Those from *Gazi Lisesi* used to wait in front of the Institute... And those from Atatürk High School used to wait for the ones from the Girls' High School. They had [the girls] divided among themselves.²⁴⁴

She started to work at Ankara Radio as a child speaker at the age of 11. She also played the piano during the radio program *Çocuk Saati* (Child's hour). After finishing *Ankara Kız Lisesi*, she attended the Department of Art History at the Language History Geography Faculty at Ankara University. By that time, she had already become a salaried employee of Ankara Radio after passing the admission exam in 1956:

When I succeeded in the exam... I was on *Çocuk Saati*. That year they held a speakership exam. Admittedly, I had been writing texts, vocalizing, playing the piano for years at *Çocuk Saati*; however, I did not know what speakership meant in real terms. There was a notion of speakership, and I was a very good radio listener. One of the old novelists, Mükerrrem Kamil Sun, used to direct *Çocuk Saati*. She insisted, "... They will hold an exam; do not fail to attend it..." That is, I attended it in order not to offend my teacher. I succeeded. However, because I was not 18 yet, I was not appointed as an officer... I was assigned to the permanent staff after I turned 18.²⁴⁵

In the interview, when Ü.G. was asked to talk about the atmosphere of the radio house, she underlined that they had been trained by "masters" in their fields as if they had been in a school. When she tried to remember her female workmates at the radio

²⁴⁴ Ü.G.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

house, she paused and changed the topic. She continued to talk about her “qualified” male chiefs instead.

Her silence was particularly striking as it revealed the male-dominated atmosphere of the radio house. The only woman she remembered as having a director’s position was Adalet Ağaoğlu.

Adalet Ağaoğlu: “The Impossible was Possible”

Adalet Ağaoğlu was born in the same year as Gülizar, 1929, in a province close to Ankara, Nallıhan, at the crossroads of old trading routes. Her father was a merchant in textiles; her mother was a housewife. She had three brothers.²⁴⁶ Her family was among the local notables and lived in a large *konak* (mansion) in Nallıhan.²⁴⁷

Ağaoğlu said that despite being wealthy, her father showed hesitation about meeting her children’s schooling expenses:

Our father had a housekeeper, a herder, servants and assistants in the province. Especially in summer and autumn months various women worked in the house. My father used to carry a huge golden watch in his waist pocket. However, he did not buy shoes for us until our shoes were completely worn through... most particularly, he did not want to spend a single penny for our course books or notebooks. Our mother had to wage long-lasting pitched battles against him so that... such kind of needs of ours could be met.²⁴⁸

While she was a child, Ağaoğlu was keen on going to school merely because she perceived it as an opportunity to escape from the burdens of domestic life that fell on the shoulders of the female members of the household:

²⁴⁶ Özge Dikmen, “Adalet Ağaoğlu’nun Romanlarında Sosyal Yapı” (M.A. Thesis, Cumhuriyet University, Turkey, 2008).

²⁴⁷ Ağaoğlu, *Göç Temizliği*, p. xxii.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 86.

I used to get angry because I was secluded at the end of the day although my three brothers were free. That was injustice. I used to wash the dishes and iron the shirts and pans of all the four, especially of my father. My mother was unable to deal with all these alone... Despite our sacrifices for them, they gave us nothing in return. My father used to go to work at least. My middle brother used to help him a little; however, the other two used to go in and out the house and ask, "What's for dinner today?" And one of them wanted to understand why we had not put the shoes in a better order in front of the gate. He wondered if we did not like him. Did they bear down on our heads? All right, they were going to school and studying for their lessons. They had such excuses. Perhaps, I merely wanted to go to school in order to have such an excuse because there was nobody at home who told me studying... was a good thing. As far as I could see then, the only tangible benefit of going to school... was that it saved a person from that troublesome housework.²⁴⁹

Like Gülizar, Ağaoğlu had to struggle against her father to pursue education, and her mother came to her help. Recently on a TV program she said that despite all the flaws of the Republican ideology, she owed her public identity as a female author to the Republic. That is, if the Republican state had not rendered primary education mandatory for the two sexes, her father would not have registered her even to primary school by his own initiative.²⁵⁰

Her father actually wanted to seclude her after she had completed primary education: "After primary school finished, he was ultimately saved from being legally guilty. From then on, he could make decisions himself about his own daughter. That is alright; stay at home... Help your mother!"²⁵¹ However, Ağaoğlu went on a hunger strike as a reaction:

I wanted to study! ...I shut myself into a room in the house in Nallıhan. I did not unlock the... door for three days. Hunger strike! When they broke into the room and let me out, I had fainted.... Then, I heard my father's... voice, "As if a secondary school was

²⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 21 – 2.

²⁵⁰ Ağaoğlu, interview by Cüneyt Özdemir.

²⁵¹ Ağaoğlu, *Göç Temizliği*, p. 84. The original text is as follows: *İlkokul bitince, yasalar önünde suçlu olmaktan nihayet kurtulmuştu. Artık, kendi kızı üzerinde kendi karar verebilirdi. Tamam işte, evde otur... Annene yardım et!*

available here!” My mother was saying something in a murmur. Ultimately, my father burst out, “I’m fed up! Pick up your children and leave! ... Have them study in Ankara!”²⁵²

That was how she and her family moved to the capital in 1938 as there was no secondary school in their province at that time. In Ankara, she was still the only person who helped her mother at home:

In order that our men could be better informed about the outside life, in order that their horizons could expand in squares, streets, and pubs, we continued wearing ourselves out for them sixteen hours a day. My mother’s “free time,” when she sat to knit sweaters for the men and patch up their socks, was study time for me. I had to do even this without offending anybody’s eyes and without letting anybody recognize that I had free time.²⁵³

Revisionist feminist historical studies highlight the role of the “father” in the development of the Republican women’s public identities. A basic tenet of the construction of the Kemalist female identity is said to be the fathers’ ambition for upbringing their daughters as girls who could adapt themselves to the public spaces where two sexes socialized together. The “tacit agreement” between the Republican fathers and daughters entailed that the fathers, and particularly Mustafa Kemal, who was idolized as the “father of the whole nation,” would back up their daughters and introduce them to the public under their patronage. In return, the daughters, who were offered opportunities for education and employment as well as a certain degree of freedom, would take extreme caution in order to veil their sexuality while participating in social life.²⁵⁴

All the “Republican daughters” were not that “lucky” in their relationship with their fathers, as the life stories of Gülizar and Ağaoğlu demonstrate. They were

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid., pp. 22 – 3.

²⁵⁴ See Ayşe Durakbaşı, “Kemalist Kadın Kimliği,” *Tarih ve Toplum* 54, no.1 (1988), pp. 39 – 44; and also Nilüfer Göle, *Modern Mahrem: Medeniyet ve Örtünme* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), pp. 106 – 8.

not passive beneficiaries of the opportunities for women's empowerment merely imposed from top to bottom by the Republican elites. Instead, they actively participated in this process by challenging the patriarchal authority at home.

Their aspirations for pursuing education were outright rejected by their fathers, who did not want to send their girls away to a boarding school, especially in case they lacked relatives who lived close enough to the school to "keep an eye on their daughters." Thus, they had to struggle against their fathers in order to continue their educations.

Actually, Arat has maintained that many fathers tended to support their daughters' professional education only in cases when they did not have any sons. She also shows that a correlation between fathers' and daughters' educational qualifications was observed only at the upper ends of the social strata: It was high school or college graduate fathers who encouraged their daughters to pursue higher education,²⁵⁵ as interviewee Ü.G.'s above-mentioned life story also confirms.

The primary assistants of many "Republican daughters" in the struggle they waged against the patriarchal authority at home were their mothers, as observed in Gülizar and Ağaoğlu's narratives. More often than not, they had to argue with male family members to meet their daughters' schooling expenses and to have them continue their educations. As in Gülizar's story, by their domestic activities such as washing, sewing or knitting, they also assisted their daughters to alleviate the injuries inflicted upon them as a result of the culturally embodied inequalities between them and girls from higher income families.

The active role of mothers in the educational lives of the Republican women is usually neglected by the revisionist feminist studies, which put their emphasis

²⁵⁵ Zehra Arat, "Educating the Daughters of the Republic," pp. 166 – 8.

instead on the relationships between the Kemalist fathers and their daughters. By doing so, these studies unwillingly adopt the hegemonic masculine discourse that downplays women's labor at home simply because it is less "visible."

In Ankara, Ağaoğlu attended *Ankara Kız Lisesi* as Gülizar did. After high school, she registered at the Department of French Language and Literature at the Faculty of Language and History-Geography at Ankara University; however, unlike Gülizar, she did not let her father know beforehand that she was going to attend university. She paid her registration fee by writing for dailies such as *Akşam* and *Ulus*.

Earning her own money made her feel emancipated not merely from being dependent on her father's income but also from restrictions against her right to control her own body:

It was as if that first two and a half liras was my emancipation. It was my emancipation from being fond of my father due to the money he would offer me. It was my emancipation from distressing my mother in order to be able to receive that money from my father. Indeed, those two and a half liras was my freedom to fall in love. By somebody else's labor, we could not have even the right to use our own bodies.²⁵⁶

She basically saw a post at the radio as a way to economic freedom and applied for the admission exam in 1951. She initially kept it a secret from her family, especially from the male members of her household:

I was taught to be honest, self-sacrificing, hard-working, absolutely hard working; however, I was also taught to be submissive, meek and silent alongside it. They wanted to seclude me after primary school. I even finished faculty as having demonstrated by our hunger strikes, by my daring behaviors such as eloping...that going to school and getting a job was not immorality for sure. According to my father and to my brothers, I often deviated from the straight road... In the end, they also became obliged to believe that there was nothing derogatory around. Look, now I demanded my economic freedom. I secretly applied to Ankara Radio's officer recruitment exams. I was accepted for the job.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 144.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 20.

At the radio house, her “paternal guardian” figure was Refik Ahmet Sevengil, who worked as the head of the radio administration in the 1950s. Ağaoğlu compared him to the character Doctor Hayrullah in Reşat Nuri Güntekin’s novel *Çalılıkıuşu*.²⁵⁸

If we were not able to slam the door and leave, if we were not able to move around within our own identities, it was because nobody doubted that... all men of ours would swoop down on us even before we went beyond a single street. However, here it is that Feride’s life far away from home demonstrated to us that the impossible was possible... If we are in love, if we want to set up a home only with him, with the young man we love, that gate is also still and always open in spite of everything. Here it is that Feride ultimately... rejoins with the man she loves. In that case, it was enough that a paternal guardian like Doctor Hayrullah was available. I wondered who my Doctor Hayrullah could be. Almost eight years after I met Feride, her deep respect and love for her paternal guardian, the old military doctor... manifested itself as focalized in a single person for my part. I felt in love with Refik Ahmet Sevengil. He was as old as my father, but his heart was full of enthusiasm. More importantly, Mister Refik Ahmet did not make fun of what I wrote. He encouraged me. In those years I needed this so much...²⁵⁹

Having started to work as an assistant in the Talks and Drama Broadcasts Office, as she recalled, she felt “full of energy” when she was invited by Sevengil to offer her suggestions for improving radio dramas:

Mister Refik Ahmet, who sent me from the Radio Office to improve the drama broadcasts of Ankara Radio, one day asked me what I was planning for these broadcasts. Radio scriptwriting was not a familiar genre. Plays were in the hands of a few writers who had learned this channel. I submitted a proposal of three items to Mister Refik Ahmet... I also went into the details of these main breakthroughs.... Mister Refik Ahmet said, “You do not have a single assistant; will you be able to

²⁵⁸ The main female character of this novel, Feride, reflected an idealized type of the Republican girl. More important than not, this character symbolized the response of the Republican regime to the concerns generated by “women’s emancipation.” Against the turbulence in gender relations generated by the process of transition to the Republican/modern family, novels published in the early Republican period were usually characterized by nostalgia for the virtuous and self-sacrificing Ottoman woman and by condemnation of Westernization. On the other hand, in *Çalılıkıuşu* Reşat Nuri attempted to overcome this nostalgia by creating the character Feride as an honorable and modest girl who devoted herself to the Republican ideal, albeit after having disappointed in her love affair. For further discussion on the female characters in the Republican novels, see Işıl Baş, Dilek Doltaş and Füsün Akatlı, 11 November 1999, “Panel: Türk Romanında Kadının Yüzyılı,” <http://feminisite.net/news.php?act=details&nid=217> [7 September 2012].

²⁵⁹ Ağaoğlu, *Göç Temizliği*, p. 40.

realize all these?’’ with a glitter in his deep blue eyes indicating that he confirmed me. It would be sufficient for me if he okayed my proposals as the Radio Office Director. I felt myself full of energy.²⁶⁰

For Ankara Radio, Ağaoğlu produced a magazine program called *Perde Arası* (Interlude). The program traced contemporary developments in theatre and introduced recently staged theatre plays to audience through interviews with script writers, translators, producers, actors and actresses. It also enabled the audience to listen to pieces from those plays.²⁶¹

In 1954, she married Halim Ağaoğlu, an engineer working for the state. Between 1957 and 1959, Ağaoğlu went to the USA with her husband. Following her return, she again worked at Ankara Radio and began to produce new talks programs, documentaries and magazines besides *Perde Arası*.²⁶² Particularly, she took a significant role for introduction of the genre of drama series to the radio’s schedule. Mahmut Tali Öngören, who had been appointed as the Program Director of Ankara Radio by the time Ağaoğlu resumed her job at radio, defined her active role in production of the radio’s first periodic drama serials as follows:

At that time I was appointed as the program director. The idea of introducing the genre of periodic drama to radio was always in my mind. However, only a talented author engaged in theatre could succeed in this work. Meanwhile Adalet Ağaoğlu also started to work at the Ankara Radio for the second time. Apparently she had continuously thought about bringing the genre of periodic drama to radio. She immediately rolled up her sleeves and produced the program of periodic drama, which still continues today.²⁶³

Ağaoğlu explained how her public identity as a professional producer and scriptwriter, she gave a long struggle to achieve, ultimately changed her relations

²⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 42 – 3.

²⁶¹ Ibid., p. 44.

²⁶² Ibid., p. 93.

²⁶³ *Cumhuriyet*, 27 October 1975.

with the male members of her household and made her feel empowered in the following words:

Some beautiful summer nights we used to meet Mister Refik Ahmet and Sevim San, who was the secretary of The State Theatre General Director Cevat Memduh Altar at that time, and go to the Sail Club in the Youth Park. As if I wanted to prove that now I also grew up like my brothers and obtained my personality and my freedom, I used to order a vodka rich in lemon juice.²⁶⁴

She added, “My authorship had ‘become official’ in the family home. During my engagement, after I was married and also in the marriage home, nobody turned off the light in my room at night from then onwards.”²⁶⁵

In the dominant cultural imaginary, the figure of the professional woman stood for meanings beyond individuality of these women. It was rather employed as an abstract and passive symbol of the modern Turkey. What people applauded when they appeared on the scene was not their individual achievements but the Republican ideal that they were thought to embody. Yet, they did not readily submit to their reduction into symbols, as the following memoir of Ağaoğlu about the staging of one of her plays in Ankara demonstrates:

I remember the first night when the play we co-authored with “Sis Sevim” and we named *Bir Piyas Yazalım* (Let’s write a play) was staged... The year is 1952... Ankara... The applause dragged on... I had also watched many other plays on the same stage for five or six years... Our play was no better than any other plays I had seen. However, I still observed the greatest part of applause was devoted to us. I sensed something. As having been pushed by this sense, I refused to appear to greet the audience. Perhaps, more than half of the applause was because each one of us was a “young woman.” A “female play

²⁶⁴ Ağaoğlu, *Göç Temizliği*, p. 42. The original text is as follows: *Bazı güzel yaz akşamlarında Refik Ahmet Bey ve o sıralar Devlet Tiyatrosu Genel Müdürü Cevat Memduh Altar’ın sekreteri olan Sevim San’la buluşup Gençlik Parkı’ndaki Yelken Klubü’ne giderdik. Ben de erkek kardeşlerim gibi artık büyüdüğümü, kişiliğime ve özgürlüğüme kavuştuğumu kanıtlamak istercesine limon suyu bol bir votka ısmarlıyordum.*

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 44. The original text is as follows: *Yazarlığım baba evinde, “resmiyet” kazanmıştı. Nişanlılığım süresince ve evlendikten sonra evlilik evinde de kimse kalkıp gecelerce ışığımı söndürmedi artık.*

writer” who was both young and local... What they applauded was probably the official ideology.²⁶⁶

Adalet Ağaoğlu defined the emergent working environment at the radio house after the coup in May 1960s as follows: “I was supposing that all those bad years when motherland fronts had been announced were about to pass.”²⁶⁷ Actually, the state radio, which was assigned the mission of “enlightening society” on the path to “wholesale national development” after the May coup, opened up new existential spaces for professionals. Most particularly, as content of radio broadcasts was rearticulated with the aim of reaching a diversified audience through a livelier address, the radio administration abandoned the policy of secluding its professional female staff to the radio house. Instead, it urged them to be physically mobile to bring into air the issues that were not spelled before, including the woman question, which reinforced these female professionals’ sense of empowerment.

On the other hand, this reconceptualization of the radio’s role against society as a “teacher” tasked to assist national development brought about a novel definition of the profession of radio broadcasting, with particular implications for women. For female radio professionals, the process of adaptation to this novel identity passed much more painfully and stressfully than expected, as will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 15 – 6.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 94. The original text is as follows: *Vatan cephelerinin okunduğu bütün o kötü yıllar geçmek üzeredir sanyordum.*

CHAPTER 3

FEMALE RADIO PROFESSIONALS IN THE 1960s

“Pandora's Box was opened,”²⁶⁸ as Aydınöglu writes, in the 1960s in Turkey as the country underwent a great political, social, cultural and economic transformation. TRT was released from the Pandora’s Box as an autonomous public broadcasting institution. The coup leaders attempted to divide and balance the governmental authority by certain constitutional arrangements. Broadcasting was restructured in accordance with these constitutional principles as a public service. Article 121 of the 1961 Constitution stated, “The administration of radio and TV stations is organized as an autonomous public entity. All kinds of radio and TV broadcasts are made on the principle of impartiality. Radio and Television Administration has... the responsibility to assist culture and education.”²⁶⁹

TRT was born with considerable reforms that mainly aimed at turning radio into a public educator. Faruk Yener, a previous director at Ankara Radio, stated the following soon after the establishment of TRT: “The issue of the foundation of TRT [was]... a matter of education.”²⁷⁰ The increase both in the proportion and in the variety of talk and news programs was an outcome of this development. Between 1965 and 1969, when an increase of almost 100 hours was seen in the total daily

²⁶⁸ Ergun Aydınöglu, *Türkiye Solu (1960 – 1980)* (Istanbul: Versus Kitap, 2007), p. 48.

²⁶⁹ Quoted in Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, p.58. The original article is as follows: *Radyo ve televizyon istasyonların idaresi özerk kamu tüzel kişiliği halinde kanunla düzenlenir. Her türlü radyo ve televizyon yayınları, tarafsızlık esaslarına göre yapılır. Radyo ve televizyon idaresi, kültür ve eğitime yardımcılık görevinin gerektirdiği yetkilere sahip kılınır.*

²⁷⁰ *Milliyet*, 14 October 1964. The original text is as follows: *TRT’nin kuruluşu meselesi... bir eğitim davasıdır.*

radio broadcasts, the proportion of talks increased from 17.2% to 19.2%, and news programs from 2.3 % to 11.9 %.²⁷¹

The redefinition of the role of radio as a public educator was closely related to the hegemony of the developmentalist ideology of the 1960s. A developmentalist discourse dominated the intellectual and political environment of many nations in the non-Western parts of the world in this time period. Developmentalism constituted the new form that shaped the relations between the Western and non-Western societies following the de-colonization movement. Turkey's Republican regime had been incorporated into this developmentalist drive after the Second World War. In the 1960s "development" became the catchword in Turkey; the question of how to achieve development dominated the intellectual discussions of the decade on both ends of the political spectrum.

In the developmentalist model the state played the leading role, and the primary aim was wholesale national development. The developmentalist state assumed monopoly over the cultural and the economic life of society on behalf of the nation. Not only did the state act as the leading economic actor, it was also the greatest employer in this model: A large number of professionals became state officials. Offering an opportunity of upward social mobility to these professionals, the developmentalist state created a new class of elites loyal to itself.²⁷²

The state elites regarded education as the ultimate way of overcoming social problems and realizing full national development. They claimed that the solution for social inequalities was state-led development coupled with equality of opportunities in education. Despite this claim, education acted as one of the main axes that

²⁷¹ Ünsal Oskay, *Toplumsal Gelişmede Radyo ve Televizyon: Gerikalmışlık Açısından Olanaklar ve Sınırlar* (Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası, 1971), p. 26 – 7.

²⁷² Koğacioğlu, p. 15.

separated the state elites from the rest of society in the developmentalist period. As Koğacıoğlu writes, the developmentalist discourse claimed that the distinguishing line in society was between the “enlightened” state elites and the “traditional and conservative people,” and the state elites insisted on conserving this “constructive distinction based on education.”²⁷³

Radio was regarded as a medium of this developmentalist regime. It was assigned two basic objectives. First, it was required to convince the people to put faith in development and to mobilize them to participate in the developmentalist drive. For example, a report on education by radio that was drawn up by the State Planning Organization (SPO) in 1963 said,

Development can only be realized by the type of human being who has attained a certain educational level and who is constructive and creative... Radio is obliged to mobilize society, which has been left to lethargy... to live a prosperous and happier life.²⁷⁴

Second, radio was expected to improve education, particularly in rural areas. The same report claimed that establishing schools in every village was an almost “unrealizable dream” and demanded that alternative means and instruments be employed in order not to “leave people alone with their destiny.” The report argued that radio microphones could introduce “the best teacher and the best education method” to people; besides, they could do this saving money, labor and time. Accordingly, by assisting public education, radio could minimize the difficulty of the task of “establishing schools in more than thirty thousand villages.”²⁷⁵

²⁷³ Ibid, p. 19.

²⁷⁴ Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Eğitim Politikası Özel İhtisas Komisyonu TRT Komitesi, *Radyo ile Eğitim Raporu* (Ankara: DPT Yayınları, 1963), p. 6. The original text is as follows: *Kalkınma ancak belli bir eğitim düzeyine erişmiş yapıcı ve yaratıcı insanla mümkün olabilecektir... Radyo... uyuşukluğa terk edilmiş toplumu daha refahlı ve mutlu yaşama yönünde hareket ettirmelidir.*

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 7.

Both male and female radio professionals were incorporated into this developmentalist drive as agents. However, they did not experience this process in the same way. It had particular implications for female radio professionals. The redefinition of radio as a public educator generated an urgent need for “enlightened elites.” TRT compensated for its lack of personnel specialized in radio production by welcoming female university students and graduates to its ranks. These women usually came from middle and upper-middle class urban families since university education was still unattainable for the rest of the women in Turkey. Their admission to TRT ensured that radio remained “a family affair,” and women were treated as objects of patriarchal protection by their male chiefs and colleagues, as will be discussed in detail below.

TRT gave up the previous policy of secluding female employees to radio stations, and women found in radio a route to self-expression in the public sphere. However, their active participation in radio production generated debates on the relation between gender and the mass media: Womanhood was considered a restraint on the fulfillment of professional responsibilities, particularly in the field of newsmaking. Furthermore, the feminine voice was found ill-suited to represent the state. It was rather seen as a beautiful, decorative item.

Against the anxiety created by women’s attainment of seats in a previously-male dominated profession, the redefinition of the role of radio as a public educator generated opportunities for female radio professionals to challenge expected gender norms. First, they were encouraged to leave their “ivory tower” and to be more mobile in order to produce lively programs that addressed the whole society. Second, they were asked to transmit enlightening messages to their radio audiences. They reinterpreted this mission as an opportunity to make public the problems that had

kept silent before. Most particularly, they exploited this opportunity to discuss the woman question on air.

Still, female radio professionals adopted the elitist mentality of the developmentalist ideology. They regarded themselves as missionaries whose duty was to awaken the ignorant masses. They acted as the representatives of the developmentalist regime and did not develop an autonomous identity. It is unfair to call this mere self-illusion, though. They were conscious of the tension between their public role and their womanhood, as observed in their personal narratives. First, they experienced the professional requirement of mobility not only as a source of freedom, but also as a source of insecurity. This requirement also acted as a restraint on their career opportunities. Second, although they adopted the enlightening mission wholeheartedly, their self-adjustment to the radio's educating role was a challenging process. They experienced the socio-cultural rupture between themselves and their targeted audience with pain.

Furthermore, violations of the TRT's autonomy by the political authority had particular implications for female radio professionals. Feeling disillusioned with their mission as a result of the severe political pressure on TRT, some of them thought of giving up their professional career, but they faced the risk of losing their public voice and having to return home.

“Keeping It a Family Affair:” Women's Admission to Radio

Although Turkey experienced a striking increase in educational attainment levels in absolute terms after the 1930s, an imbalance in school enrollment rates persisted between the two genders in favor of men, and this gap was much more widened in

higher education. In addition, well-off urban social groups were able to benefit disproportionately more from the already insufficient educational facilities.²⁷⁶ Thus, the women who had the chance to attend university usually came from urban middle or upper classes.

Although these women were “lucky” enough to receive university educations, they still faced discrimination at school. In particular, certain faculties such as political science had a predominantly masculine atmosphere. İ.Ç., who studied at the Faculty of Political Sciences at Ankara University (traditionally called *Mülkiye*), in the late 1960s, stated the following about the male-dominated environment of this faculty:

The school where I studied was one in which the mass of men was huge. There were very few women. A lecture hall almost full of men, and, for example, 15 women... If I calculate how many people were in the crowd, probably there were nearly 15 women against 250 men; that is, women were a small minority in the Faculty of Political Sciences at that time.²⁷⁷

Gülben Dinçmen, who started to work for TRT as a radio producer after graduating from the same faculty, mentioned that the young women at the faculty sat at the front desks and listened to the lectures carefully.²⁷⁸ However, they were made to feel as if they were “invaders:”

We were more disciplined than male students in attending classes. ... Despite this, I remember that one of our precious female professors frequently expressed her irritation: “Each female student sitting here inhibits at least three people’s subsistence.” ... How was this calculation... made? Probably, the father, the mother and the child... It means that we were superfluous invaders.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁶ Ferhunde Özbay, “The Impact of Education on Women in Rural and Urban Turkey,” in *Women in Turkish Society*, ed. N. Abadan Unat (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), pp. 160 – 80.

²⁷⁷ İ.Ç.

²⁷⁸ Gülben Dinçmen, *Radyolu Yıllar* (Istanbul: Geniş Kitaplık, 2007), p. 13.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 13 – 4.

These women also faced limits to their choices about professional career. Dinçmen started university right after the coup on 27 May 1960. It was her mother who encouraged her to register at the *Mülkiye* since she wanted her daughter to become a district governor. In her autobiography, Dinçmen questioned, “why not a mayor, but a district governor?” Her answer was as follows: “Probably there was the same reserved approach which encouraged girls to become a nurse instead of a doctor.”²⁸⁰

Once she started university, however, she recognized that it was “impossible [for girls]... to dream of being a district governor:”

Girls were not allowed to become district governors. There were not any proper roads in the district, and the existing one was very bad. “They will travel on horses or on donkeys; how could girls tolerate it?” Of the claims put forth that girls could not become district governors, the only one that I remember is this.²⁸¹

Facing barriers to their career opportunities in other state institutions, these women saw TRT as a novel field of occupation where gender discrimination was less severe:

I am one of those young women who went to Ankara after high school in order to be free. In order to emancipate from the family..., I first went to *Mülkiye*. However, the situation was interesting there. When I was almost in the third year, I understood that I could not be a district governor or a diplomat after *Mülkiye*. I had not known such a thing until then. ... They do not employ women as governors. ... There was a law. However, they changed it later. Someone... applied for its amendment. Likewise, there was not restriction in diplomacy; however, there was not a reference in it, too; that is, women usually remained as eighth class secretaries. They were not able to overcome it. Rather, the dream of being an ambassador... You become a diplomat if you agree to work at lower levels. When I realized those two things, I decided on TRT as a new field of occupation.²⁸²

²⁸⁰ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Herhalde kız çocuklarını, doktor olmak varken, hemşire olmaya özendiren aynı çekingen yaklaşım vardı.*

²⁸¹ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Kızlar kaymakam olamıyordu. Kasabada doğru düzgün yol yok, olan da çok kötü. “At veya eşek sırtında yolculuk yapılacak, kızlar buna nasıl dayansın?” Kızların kaymakam olamayacaklarına dair ortaya atılan savlardan tek aklımda kalan budur.*

²⁸² İ.Ç.

TRT as a new-born institution seemed more appealing to women with higher education degrees. This was closely related to the redefinition of radio's social functions in accordance with the developmentalist ideology. After the May coup, attempts were made to change radio from a "music box" to a "teacher" instructing the principles of the new regime to society. A previous employee of TRT described the changing function of radio as follows:

TRT has just been established. Several new talk shows are being produced. It has been emancipated from being a music box in the eye of the people. It has become an instrument telling people something, commenting, narrating and delivering events to them.²⁸³

The redefinition of the role of radio as a teacher addressing diverse groups of people generated a need for what Nart describes as "intellectuals who are able to use their pens."²⁸⁴

The number of the radio personnel transferred from the previous era was limited. Kocabaşoğlu states that the total number of the staff employed in the Talks and Dramas Office at Ankara Radio in 1960 did not exceed ten.²⁸⁵ Turgut Özakman also claims that the pre-TRT radio, which had existed for 37 years, had not transferred a single play writer to the TRT period.²⁸⁶ Although, there was a shortage of the staff professionalized in talk radio, this genre was seen as an indispensable means of educating and disciplining the people.

²⁸³ Quoted in Sibel Nart, "1964 – 1980 Arası TRT Radyo Yayın Politikaları: Toplumsal ve Politik Süreçte Radyonun Tarihsel ve Kurumsal Gelişimi" (PhD. Diss., Ankara University, 2009), p. 114. The original text is as follows: *TRT yeni kurulmuş, yeni birtakım söz programları yapıyor. Müzik kutusu olmaktan kurtulmuş halkın nazarında. İnsanlara bir şeyler söyleyen, söz söyleyen, bir şey anlatan, olayları veren bir araç haline gelmiş.*

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 66.

²⁸⁵ Kocabaşoğlu, p. 375.

²⁸⁶ Turgut Özakman, *Radyo Notları* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü Müdürlüğü, 1969), p. 22.

In order to satisfy its urgent need for intellectuals, TRT held its first admission exam in October 1964 to employ producers, speakers, scriptwriters and reporters. Those who were employed by TRT at that time period highlighted that the exam was open to the public in order to support their claim that almost no status discrimination was observed in this examination process. The public nature of the TRT's admission exams also acted as an important factor in women's choice of TRT as their field of occupation. The interviewees who denied having experienced gender discrimination against women at TRT referred particularly to these admission exams.²⁸⁷ Most of them claimed that the only criterion of admission was merit.²⁸⁸

Dinçmen stated, "The exam was [their] only chance," for "[they] lacked an elderly relative who would give [them] a card saying 'The card bearer is an acquaintance of mine.'"²⁸⁹ She added the following:

Being keen on working at radio, being recognized by chance and being suggested by an acquaintance must not have been sufficient from then on. The understructure of this great change was being set up. And this challenging task was encumbered upon the backs of a group of self-sacrificing managers who were in power then.²⁹⁰

The admission exam was attended by over one thousand people in Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. Three hundred of them who succeeded in the first phase passed through a three-month training program consisting of courses on general knowledge, law, literature and use of Turkish. During these courses, some of the candidates were

²⁸⁷ N.Ç.

²⁸⁸ Ö.C., personal interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, 10 May 2010. She is currently aged 67.

²⁸⁹ Dinçmen, p. 14. Original text is as follows: *Sınav tek şansımızdı... "Hamil-i kart yakinimdir," diye elimize kart verecek bir büyükten yoksunduk!*

²⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 14 -15. Original text is as follows: *Radyoda çalışmak için hevesli olmak, tesadüfen farkına varılmak ya da bir tanıdık aracılığı ile tavsiye olunmak artık yeterli olmamalıydı. Bu büyük değişimin alt yapısı hazırlanıyordu. Bu zorlu görev de o zaman yönetimde olan bir grup fedakar yöneticinin sırtına yüklenmişti.*

eliminated through further tests and exams, and the number was reduced to 100.²⁹¹

After a training period of one and a half year, they attended another elimination exam.

Admitting young university students and graduates after a comprehensive examination process and offering them training opportunities both on the job and abroad, TRT resembled a school raising intellectuals. People who were on the staff frequently mentioned this feature of TRT's:

Those who educated us were the advanced masters in Turkey. We received education from the greatest men of culture in Turkey. They educated us on proper use of Turkish, and our instructors, like Nüzhet Şenbay, Turgut Özakman, Mahmut Tali Öngören, Baki Süha Ediboğlu, Oğuz Yılmazhiçyılmaz, Doğan Soylu and Rıdvan Çongur, gave lectures on radio.²⁹² The first thing they taught us was autonomy. That is, "You are here, but you are not... clarinet players. Your task is to educate the people by the programs you will produce in order to bring them up to a certain level. Therefore, first you should be well educated... because you are the ones who are to make the decision."²⁹³

Leyla Uzman, who was recruited to Istanbul Radio as a producer in August 1965, said that they saw TRT more as a school than a public institution or a mere work place:

We were a crowded group of young people who came to radio after passing the producership admission exam and the majority of whom were students. In our initial years, when we saw radio as a school instead of an official institution or a work place, we also allocated a lot of time to entertaining ourselves besides studying.²⁹⁴

²⁹¹ Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, p. 67.

²⁹² Some of these male intellectuals who gave lectures at the radio house came from other state institutions, such as Nüzhet Şenbay, who was a recognized lecturer of diction from the State Conservatory, whereas others already worked at radio either as speakers or as directors.

²⁹³ Quoted in Nart, p. 68.

²⁹⁴ Quoted in Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 184. The original text is as follows: *Prodüktör sınavını kazanarak radyoya gelen, genç, çoğu öğrenci kalabalık bir gruptuk ve radyoyu resmi bir kurum, bir işyerinden çok okul gibi gördüğümüz ilk yıllarımızda çalışmanın yanı sıra eğlenmeye çok zaman ayırıyorduk.*

Bilgesu Erenus, who worked for TRT in the second half of the 1960s as an assistant producer, also said, “In that era, TRT became a great school for me. I learned about my soil, my self and my people at TRT.”²⁹⁵ Her words are also revealing since they apparently acknowledge the distance between herself as a woman of urban origin and the radio audience targeted by the new regime.

TRT evoked the *Grandes Ecoles* in France, described by Bourdieu as the place where the cultural reproduction of the French elites took place. In his discussion on these schools, he argued that they tended to select “predisposed actors” who had a “desirable” habitus. According to him, in order to ensure that no one with an “undesirable” habitus entered the circles of would-be elites, these schools exhibited a high degree of social selectivity behind a disinterested appearance.²⁹⁶ Apparently, they welcomed anyone who could show sufficient merit in their admission exams which were supposedly open to the public; notwithstanding this meritocratic appearance, they serve the reproduction of socio-cultural inequalities, Bourdieu claims.²⁹⁷

Although merit seemed to be the only criteria of admission to TRT, the professionals it employed generally came from urban middle or upper-middle class families who could afford to invest in their children’s cultural capital. Purely technical skills were not considered enough to be a radio professional at TRT. These young people were expected to represent the Republican cultural capital they had

²⁹⁵ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 193. The original text is as follows: *Bu dönem içerisinde TRT benim için çok büyük bir okul oldu.... TRT’de hem toprağımı öğrendim, hem kendimi öğrendim, hem insanları öğrendim.*

²⁹⁶ Louic Wacquant, “From Ruling Class to the Field of Power: An Interview with Pierre Bourdieu on the State Nobility, *Theory, Culture & Society* 10, no. 3 (1993), p. 32.

²⁹⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), p. 141.

acquired in their childhood and school years. Indeed, the directors tried not to admit those with an “undesirable” habitus to the radio house.

For example, Turgut Özakman, who was the first chief of the Central Program Office established after the 1960 coup, made the following warning: If radio employees came from divergent family and education origins, even a single statement or behavior might generate misunderstanding among coworkers, and “unrest” might erupt in the radio houses.²⁹⁸ Therefore, he said a basic principle that should be followed in order to make radio “national and modern” was that the radio directors “examine and weigh out applicants in terms of etiquette, general knowledge... and habits.”²⁹⁹

TRT’s urgent need for young intellectuals loosened its social selectivity criteria in favor of female applicants. Female university graduates or students exploited this opportunity to their end and worked in the TRT’s ranks in high numbers. In Turkey, broadcasting was among the social goals-oriented service sectors where a relatively high proportion of women were employed.³⁰⁰ For example, in 1969, out of 1961 employees of TRT, 24.5% were women. In addition, its female staff demonstrated a higher educational attainment level than their male counterparts,

²⁹⁸ Özakman, p. 71.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 73.

³⁰⁰ Despite the slow rate of the growth of the female working class, women were employed in the public service in rising numbers in Turkey. Against only 12,716 female public officials in 1938, 123,812 women had been working in this sector by 1970, which equaled 18.9% of all state officials. However, they were more noticeable in certain service sectors like education (by 31.6%), tourism (by 26.3%) and health (by 22.2%). Also, in universities the proportion of female faculty staff showed a decisive increase since the 1930s. The urgent need for instructors in the newly established faculties paved the way for employment of women at an increasing rate in universities. While their rate was only 7.1% in 1934, it reached to 25.4% in 1974. For further details, see Nermin Abadan Unat, “Turkish Women and Social Change,” in *Women in Turkish Society*, ed. N. Abadan Unat (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), p 25; and also Dilek Er, “Modern Türkiye’de Kadın Öğretim Üyelerinin Konumuna ve Sorunlarına Sosyolojik Bir Yaklaşım” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Fırat University, 2008), p. 75.

as they did in many other professions in the public sector.³⁰¹ Among them, university graduates took first rank by 31% while only 20% of its male employees had university degrees.³⁰²

The “intriguing puzzle,” a term Öncü uses to define the high incidence of women in prestigious professions against the low participation rate of women in the urban labor force and the deep educational gap between two genders in favor of men, also informed the working patterns at TRT. Its circles were fortified by admitting women from high status, urban families instead of men of rural origin. By doing so, radio was, as Öncü describes it, “kept a family affair”³⁰³ among the elite.

Indeed, those who started to work for TRT right after its establishment exhibited a tendency to idealize it not only as a school but also as a family-like environment. As the chief of the Central Program Office, Turgut Özakman told radio directors to “show attention and affection to their young personnel as *a father* or an *elder brother* in order to boost their spirits.”³⁰⁴

Most particularly, young female radio professionals were usually treated as objects of patriarchal protection by their male chiefs and colleagues. Özgül Beyazıt Kıvanç, who worked at Istanbul Radio as a speaker after the TRT’s establishment, remembered that their male director protected young female radio professionals almost like a father:

Around 5:30 the radio station started to get empty, and an on-call speaker and a technician... were left behind. That was such a sad moment. A huge building is silent, and you are left alone there. Everybody is leaving. Our... radio director, Salih Akgöl, used to take a

³⁰¹ Çitçi, *Kadın Sorunu*, p. 103.

³⁰² Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu, *1969 Yılı ve 6 Hesap Devresine Ait Çalışma, Bilanço, Kar ve Zarar Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1970), p. 74.

³⁰³ Öncü, p. 189.

³⁰⁴ Özakman, p. 72. (Italics are mine)

fresh look around the studios in the evenings after everybody left. He was a surly and serious director who did not allow us to talk much. However, after a while we realized that there was a very warm and affectionate heart behind his surly face. After years he said to me, “You were very young. I used to tingle inside when I left you at the radio station.” That was the reason he came to control us when we were on duty. He used to follow our broadcast with this concern.³⁰⁵

Gülizar said that when the TRT News Office was established, it employed a limited number of staff, and women were underrepresented in it. Indeed, the only female employee was the secretary of the office chief apart from Gülizar, who was recruited to this office one and a half month after its foundation. After a while, another female news reporter started to work at the News Office.

Gülizar held that their male workmates and directors treated the women working at this office as if they were “princesses:”

We are three women who can be considered the nucleus of the female staff in the News Office. We are treated as princesses by our male friends. Nobody is allowed to speak ill of us... It is such a compatible, warm and beautiful environment.³⁰⁶

For example, Office Chief Doğan Kasaroğlu made an attempt to exempt Gülizar from night shifts on the grounds that “it does not suit manhood to make a young lady stay alone in the station at night.” Gülizar refused this exemption:

I do not want such privileges... If I come here, it means that I have accepted the challenges of this place. Also I cannot ascribe to womanhood the thing which you cannot ascribe to manhood. I will be on duty tonight...³⁰⁷

She admitted that she still felt afraid of staying alone in the station at night:

³⁰⁵ Quoted in Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, pp. 113 – 4.

³⁰⁶ Gülizar, *Haberler Bitti*, p. 207. The original text is as follows: *Haber Merkezi’ndeki bayanlar kadrosunun çekirdeği sayılabilecek biz üç hanım, erkek arkadaşlarımızdan prenses muamelesi görüyoruz. Kimse üstümüze toz kondurmuyor... Öylesine uyumlu, sıcak ve güzel bir ortam...*

³⁰⁷ Ibid., p.161. The original text is as follows: *Ben böyle ayrıcalıklar istemiyorum... Eğer ben buraya gelmeyi göze aldıysam, buranın çalışma koşullarını da kabullenmişim demektir. O sizin erkeklığe yakıştırmadığınızı, ben de kadınlığa yakıştıramıyorum.*

I can never forget the shiver I felt when the last footfall had gone off... In that huge building I was alone with the night watchman, whose face... I did not see. In order to alleviate the shiver I felt, I... locked the door... I continuously felt like calling Kasaroğlu or Muammer Yaşar... However, whenever my hand reached out to the phone, I stopped it, saying “Will you spoil the heroic behavior you exhibited in the daytime?”³⁰⁸

Female Radio Professionals as Missionaries of Development

The feminine voice transmitted over radio waves became an important site for contestation over gender identities. Women’s achievement of establishing public voices in a previously male-dominated field created anxiety. Most particularly, people argued that the radio audience was annoyed to hear women speaking authoritatively instead of singing or entertaining on radio.

Gülizar mentioned that in the DP period, experienced male speakers monopolized Ankara Radio’s chief news bulletins.³⁰⁹ After the foundation of TRT, radio abandoned this policy and appointed young women to read these bulletins, yet these young women were accused of violating the sanctity of the state. For example, Faruk Yener called the feminine voice “the ornament and elegance of radio.”³¹⁰ On the other hand, he argued that the presentation of the chief news bulletin by “the senseless voice of a high school girl” caused “frivolity in such vital news items that included statesmen’s words.”³¹¹

Yener wrote that Western radios had given up appointing women as presenters of their chief news bulletins. He wondered the reasons for TRT’s

³⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 161 – 2.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 100.

³¹⁰ *Milliyet*, 30 September 1964.

³¹¹ *Milliyet*, 26 March 1964.

insistence on the contrary: “If I said the directors are feminist or women do this job better, that would not be true. If I said they do not have male speakers available for news reading, this would not be true again. A weird situation...” Then he added, this attitude was in conflict with the self-definition of senior directors of TRT as “Ataturkist, revolutionary, Westernist and enlightened.”³¹²

The principle of objectivity as an established standard of journalism has particular implications for women working in the newsroom. Women are usually perceived as unable to transcend their bodily needs or their personal/emotional involvement with others, whereas the person who reports or presents news is required to be impartial as the representative of reason.

In a similar vein, the women recruited to the newly established TRT News Office were considered girls whose sexual identities obviated their professional responsibilities. In one of his parliament speeches, the leader of the Nation Party (NP), Osman Bölükbaşı,³¹³ who was called “TIRT Osman” by some as a result of his frequent accusations about TRT,³¹⁴ mentioned a radio program in which Jülide Gülizar conducted interviews with a British and a Russian professor about the anniversary of the declaration of the Magna Carta. He accused Gülizar of violating the principle of impartiality in these interviews. According to him, she had treated the Russian professor more favorably than the British one. He claimed that it was not

³¹² Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Yöneticiler feminist desem, kadınlar bu işi iyi yürütüyor desem, değil. Elllerinde haber okuyacak erkek spiker yok desem, yine değil. Bir garip durum...*

³¹³ The banner-bearer of the political attacks against the institution became the NP and its leader Osman Bölükbaşı until the establishment of the Justice Party government. The NP, which frequently accused TRT of political partiality and of supporting communism, was occasionally teased in the press. For example, a column writer mentioned the following anecdote: Someone from the NP circles, who was stammering, applied to TRT’s speakership admission exam. After his failure in the exam, he claimed that he was not admitted since he supported the NP. See *Milliyet*, 6 March 1965.

³¹⁴ Gülizar, *Haberler Bitti*, p.151.

surprising that the “handsome” Russian professor had seemed more attractive to the her, who was a “girl.” Therefore, he demanded not this “girl” but the directors, who had assigned such a “serious mission” to her, be held responsible for this “crime.”³¹⁵

Another parliamentarian, Ekrem Dikmen from the Justice Party (JP) made other outrageous statements about Jülide Gülizar’s interviews in the following parliamentary session:

When I turn on my radio, I want to hear words about my nationalism, my Muslimhood... However, what do I hear when I push the button? The love words of a girl who is fond of a Russian professor. This country is and will be outside the communists’ beat. Yes, those who are in love with the Russian professor, those who feel longing for that regime should go away; if they do not leave, they should not pollute the atmosphere of this Muslim country and its radio with their contaminated love affairs.³¹⁶

Although womanhood was perceived as a restraint on women’s fulfillment of their professional responsibilities, as seen in the examples above, young female radio professionals found opportunities to challenge the expected gender roles. These opportunities partly arose from the redefinition of the role of radio as a public educator in the service of the developmentalist regime.

First, they were encouraged to get out their offices in order to produce lively programs that addressed the whole society. They were warned that the audience did not want to listen to the “advice of a producer who knew no village other than Kadıköy.”³¹⁷ Therefore, they were asked to “aim their antennas at life” and to leave their “ivory tower.”³¹⁸ This required them to be physically mobile to make recordings and live broadcasts outside the radio house.

³¹⁵ Ibid., p.150.

³¹⁶ Ibid., p. 152.

³¹⁷ Özakman, p. 43.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

Young women who started to work at radio in the second half of the 1960s frequently expressed the pleasure they derived from this physical mobility in their memoirs and verbal accounts of their lives. As also mentioned in the previous chapter, Gülizar said that in the 1950s the women employed at Ankara Radio were not usually allowed to conduct interviews outside the radio station. After the establishment of TRT, they were assigned interviews in various places, such as in a brothel or in a shanty town.³¹⁹ For example, Gülizar herself made an interview at a transmitter tower in Ankara with female chief technician, Seniha Eke, from Ankara Radio. On the following day, she said, a number of newspapers asked, “What were these two ladies doing on the top of a tower early in the morning; are they insane?”³²⁰

Female radio professionals regarded mobility as an important source of freedom. To illustrate, Ö.C. explained her decision to work at TRT as follows:

If you wished you could be together with the top-level political leaders in Turkey, or you could be in the furthest place if you wished. That is, I used to have dinner with the President, yet I could spend the night in a nomad’s tent. This happened a lot: We went to Hakkari and stayed in the nomads’ tents in the mountains there. However, I have also been to a dinner with the President.³²¹

Similarly, Gülizar made the following comments to describe how she felt about her appointment to the News Office:

Speaker Gökçen Solok and I were taking the first step into the News Office. With this step of mine, a period in my life, which I believe to have been highly new and very beautiful, was just beginning. It was exactly what I wanted: It would not be possible to sit properly at desk even for half an hour... Today in Ankara, tomorrow in Gaziantep, the day after in Kars... A period to live breathlessly...³²²

³¹⁹ Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 129.

³²⁰ Gülizar, *Haberler Bitti*, p. 105. The original text is as follows: *Bu iki hanım sabahın köründe, kulenin tepesinde ne yapıyorlardı, deli mi bunlar?*

³²¹ Ö.C.

³²² Gülizar, *Haberler Bitti*, pp. 160 – 1.

On the other hand, the professional requirement of mobility occasionally made them feel unsafe and increased their burden since they also had to fulfill their domestic responsibilities. Gülizar admitted that sometimes she felt insecure while she was fulfilling her professional tasks outside. For example, she remembered that she had to spend a night with a male driver in a car or to eat breakfast with a male soldier in the mountains on their way. She responded to the same soldier's offer to have dinner together pretending that "her son (was) waiting for her at home for dinner."³²³

Radio professionals were also expected to act as missionaries propagating "enlightening" messages to society. In Turgut Özakman's words, they came across "the duty of enlightening a vast mass of audience which exhibited various differences in age, tendency, education and occupation."³²⁴

Since radio was tasked with educating society, its targeted audience was also redefined. It was a shared view that radio should not address only urban and well-off people. It was particularly expected to educate peasants.³²⁵ For example, the SPO's above-mentioned report on radio considered this medium obliged "to eliminate peasants' conservatism and to change their behaviors and ideals."³²⁶ It was also argued that urban and educated women should not be the single target of women's programs on radio. Instead, radio was expected to incorporate uneducated and

³²³ Ibid., p. 167.

³²⁴ Özakman, p. 32.

³²⁵ That was why village programs on radio were attached primacy after TRT's foundation. The proportion of village programs was 5.1% among all the radio programs and 19% among radio talks. For further information, see Oskay, p. 77.

³²⁶ DPT, *Radyo ile Eđitim Raporu*, p. 6.

unemployed women of provinces and cities into its audience, in addition to peasants.³²⁷

With the redefinition of the radio's assumed audience profile, the question as to how to communicate properly with these social groups arose. What characterized the address of radio professionals was a claim to represent the universal civilized knowledge against a mass that was deemed ignorant and in need of tutelage. They reproduced the elitist distinction between "enlightened state officials" and "traditional masses" and justified their own privileged roles as the agents of development on the basis of this distinction. They imagined the people as a passive whole that should be awakened by radio.

To illustrate the radio professionals' reflections on the social role of this medium, a female radio producer, Beldan Kabalak, who worked at TRT in the second half of the 1960s, said the following: "Turkish society is still unaware of the fact that it has been shaped according to the conditions of humanity." Therefore, "it is in a full sense of inadequacy and frustration," and "it explains its poverty, its ignorance and its inability to live decently with its own incompetence."³²⁸ Thus, she expected radio to "enlighten this ignorant and incompetent society about the development of the humanity."³²⁹

This elitist approach was particularly observed in radio programs addressing peasants and women. Turgut Özakman made critical remarks about radio's role in

³²⁷ Actually, the issue of educating women by radio was also frequently debated in the intellectual circles of the decade. The huge imbalance in educational achievement levels of women and men and the high number of illiterate women were the main points of reference of those who argued for prioritizing educational aspects of women's programs on radio.

³²⁸ Beldan Kabalak, *Bir Lisans Tezi Nasıl Reddedildi?* (Ankara: Kalite Matbaası, 1976), p. 40. The original text is as follows: *Türk halkı henüz insanın koşullarına göre biçimlendiğinin farkında olmadığından, tam bir yetersizlik duygusu ile ve eziklik içinde, yoksulluğunu, bilgisizliğini, insan gibi yaşayamamasını kendi yeteneksizliği ile açıklamaktadır.*

³²⁹ Ibid.

villages. According to him, radio producers were totally isolated from their targeted peasant audience.³³⁰ He also criticized the use of the “ossified pedantic character” in radio dramas about the village life. He claimed that this intellectual character was a remnant from the elitist-peasantist approach of the early Republican era.³³¹

Likewise, radio programs that targeted women brought together intellectual characters as instructors and female characters as students. The intellectual character of these programs was usually an “enlightened” male figure. In one of his columns, Hasan Puler, a columnist in the daily *Milliyet*, criticized the representation of women as naïve beings on radio:

On Tuesday morning, there was a program about “divorce.”... A girl was talking to a man. The male was a lawyer... He was listing reasons for divorce. As soon as he mentioned adultery, the young lady became amazed... As if she had rediscovered America. This is how a realist program should be! The young lady did not know about adultery!³³²

Radio was often accused of addressing an imagined audience that did not have any correspondence to reality. Indeed, miscommunication between radio and its audience was one of the critiques frequently raised against TRT in the 1960s. In another column, Puler told the following story in order to draw attention to this problem:

TRT reporter from Mucur [a district in Kırşehir] informed the TRT Domestic News Service about the social development works in the neighborhood, and Mucur was frequently mentioned in the bulletin *Köye Haberler* (News for village).³³³ One morning, listening to the radio, two women in the village Karaçalı pricked up their ears when they heard the name of their village on the radio after the folk songs ended. The social works in the village were being described. The teacher, the imam and the headman had joined their hands and cooperated, introduced water to the village, planted trees in the

³³⁰ Özakman, p. 114.

³³¹ Ibid., pp. 114 - 6.

³³² *Milliyet*, 3 March 1970.

³³³ This program started in 1965. It was a 5 minute program broadcast by all the radio stations. The program’s objective was to transmit news about various social development works performed by peasants. For detailed information about it, see Nart, p. 77.

schoolyard. Now they are trying to restore the village's road. The women naively listened to the news until the end. When another news item started to be announced, one of them asked the other: "...How do you think radio learned about our works? I wonder who told them." The other nodded knowingly, "Lately an airplane has been flying over our village... It was flying low. Its pilot must have seen them."³³⁴

Miscommunication between radio and its targeted audience resulted from insufficient physical development of radio's transmitting facilities and the socio-economic and regional gaps in the distribution of radio receivers.³³⁵ Also TRT's attempts to gather systematic information about the radio's audience remained mostly insufficient. All these drawbacks made some intellectuals consider radio's educating function almost a mere illusion.³³⁶

Apart from these problems, differences in the habituses of the radio professionals and their audience groups reinforced the difficulty of the radio's educating role. For female radio professionals, most of whom came from middle or upper middle class backgrounds, it was particularly difficult to adapt themselves to this novel understanding of radio. The following story told by Elife Hazin Güran, who worked as a producer-speaker at Ankara Radio in the 1960s, illustrated this challenge female radio producers came across:

³³⁴ *Milliyet*, 11 June 1966.

³³⁵ At the end of the decade there were 20 radio transmitters in Turkey. Only two of them, in Istanbul and in Ankara, were already put into use before the 1960s. Although the growth in the number of transmitting stations in a relatively short time period seemed to be a "success," the power of these stations was still not enough to cover the whole territory. It was estimated that 20% of the population in 17% of the country, particularly in eastern, western and middle Anatolia, did not benefit from these facilities in 1969. Furthermore, even though there was a growth by 60% in the number of registered radio receivers between 1963 and 1967, the increase was much more evident in cities. For example, in 1967 only around 30% of all the registered radio receivers, which equaled 2,720,959, were in rural areas. See Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu Genel Müdürlüğü, *Radyo Dinleme Alanları Haritası 1969 Yılı Sonu* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1970); and State Institute of Statistics, *Turkey Statistics Almanac – 1968* (Ankara: DİE Matbaası, 1969), p. 281.

³³⁶ Illustrating the inadequacy of radio's reach to particular audience groups, a research conducted by the State Planning Organization in 1970 demonstrated that more than half of village women never had the opportunity to listen to the radio. The report explained this with the following fact: Although the number of radio receivers in individual village households was very low, village men could find the opportunity to listen to the radio in public places like coffeehouses where women were excluded. For further details about this research, see Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, *Türk Köyünde Modernleşme Eğilimleri Araştırması* (Ankara: DPT Yayınları, 1970).

One day, my friend, producing *Kadın ve Ev Saati* (Woman and home hour), came into my office hastily and said that a case of emergency had erupted and she was not able to produce her program; she asked me to produce the program on her behalf for once. I replied, “Why not, of course, I can do it,” and I settled down to work. All I was going to do was to teach women a few useful tips and give them a recipe...

However, for broadcasting control, we are required to write texts beforehand and to obtain our teacher Feridun Fazıl Tülbentçi’s permission, “broadcastable.”... I wrote the recipe of the meal I had learned from my beloved mother... and submitted it for the signature... He gave an okay blindly. I read the program; it was broadcast two days later. And all the hell broke loose really then... Tülbentçi slammed me, “My girl, what have you done? Where did it occur to your mind to describe how to use nail polish on hands painted with henna?”

While I was still trying to understand in wonder... what I had done, one of my friends clarified the issue: “That is,” she said, “he is asking why you gave a recipe for shrimp’s cocktail instead of ... dried beans!”³³⁷

Female radio professionals experienced the socio-cultural rupture between themselves and their audience in despair. In addition, their gender identity reinforced their isolation from certain groups of audience such as peasants. For example, in his discussion about educational and cultural programs on radio, Turgut Özakman stated that “it is impossible to teach anything to peasants with a woman’s voice.” He added that if the speaker of a village program was not a man, this program would not have any chance of reaching the audience.³³⁸

At times female radio professional themselves recognized that their gender identity made it a challenging task to communicate with people of rural origins. Ağaoğlu described her feelings of hopelessness as a female intellectual in the face of this challenge as follows:

I had broken into a village coffeehouse with a bunch of books under my arm. I dared to ask the heavily sweating... men who had returned from the field, “I wonder if you know the program *Tarım Saati* (Agriculture hour) we have been broadcasting recently on our regional radio?” Ashamed of my voice coming up with full of knobs, I stood alone with

³³⁷ Quoted in Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 118.

³³⁸ Özakman, p. 115.

the resonance of this voice, for the men carried their seats the other side and turned their back to me. They made clear by their own manners that as a woman-girl I was not welcome there.³³⁹

Recognizing the difficulty of communicating with peasant men, Ağaoğlu contemplated educating village women by organizing reading groups, but this task was no less challenging:

Since I had stood aghast with books in my arms... now I was considering that anyway, at least, I organize reading days for the village women. ... Oh gosh, as if they did not have their... children... piss on the floor covered with sweet-swelling timber on my previous visit, will I make them listen to Madame Bovary?³⁴⁰

During the second half of the 1960s, radio addressed women as housewives and mothers in such programs as *Evin Köşesi* (The corner of the house) and *Ev Kadınının Not Defteri* (The notebook of the housewife). Filiz Ercan, who read one of these programs on the radio, made the following comment about them: “The first program I read on the tape... was a woman’s program. However, of course, in that program, I remember well... only recipes were made. Thus, this was our point of view on women.”³⁴¹

Also, the radio programs targeting women were usually broadcast early in the morning on weekdays; therefore, they were able to address neither the women working in the cities nor the women employed in the agricultural sector.³⁴² In this regard, Özakman also said the following: Radio did not give place to programs about

³³⁹ Adalet Ağaoğlu, *Damla Damla Günler* (İstanbul: Alkım Yayınları, 2004), p. 22.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 22. The original text is as follows: *Kucağımda kitaplarla kalakaldım ya... Şimdi de, olsun, ben de köy kadınlarına okuma günleri yapayım bari diye geçmekte içimden. Hay Allah, geçen gidişimde döşemesi mis gibi ahşap kaplı olan yere çocuklarını... iştivermeleri yokmuş gibi, Madam Bovary mi dinleteceğim onlara?*

³⁴¹ Quoted in Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 84. The original text is as follows: *Banda okuduğum ilk program... bir kadın programıydı. Ama tabii ki, o kadın programında, gayet iyi hatırlıyorum, sadece yemek tarifi yapıldı. Demek ki kadına bakış açımız buydu.*

³⁴² Nart, p. 85.

domestic issues on the weekends due to the dominant demands. This resulted in radio's inability to reach working women; it was also unable to incorporate working men into the audience of the radio programs about family issues.³⁴³

Although radio programs represented women mostly with their domestic roles, attempts were made to give a new outlook to women's programs on radio. Not only were the durations of these programs increased, but also the issues they covered were diversified. They were said to aim at "building women's awareness about their social status in the light of Ataturk's principles as well as assisting them to solve their problems."³⁴⁴

As an illuminating case, in the radio program titled *Ev İçin* (For home), broadcast between 1965 and 1969, issues like the rural-to-urban migration, population planning, migrant workers, air pollution, working women and their children, generational gaps, educational problems, child criminality, and sexuality were discussed. Also, this program listed issues like nutrition, child's development, pre-school education and practical domestic knowledge under the title of "Side Issues," attaching an almost secondary status to them. According to Sibel Nart, the list of issues covered by this program demonstrated that women were no longer represented merely with their domestic roles on radio.³⁴⁵

Ünsal Oskay argued that at its foundation TRT confined itself to a limited understanding of public broadcasting that did not go beyond the traditional Republican target of enlightening the people. However, he said, TRT's young producers reinterpreted their role in an unexpected fashion, going beyond their

³⁴³ Özakman, p. 116.

³⁴⁴ N. Osman Süerdem, *Radyo ve Halk Eğitimi* (Ankara: TRT Merkez Program Dairesi Yayınları, 1970), p. 27.

³⁴⁵ Nart, pp. 84 – 5.

assumed mission: What they understood from these “abstractly defined mission” was to “explain Turkey’s problems about underdevelopment properly to the people.”³⁴⁶

For example, Beldan Kabalak said the following about the role of radio against society:

The twentieth century is an era when the human race has started to destroy itself as a result of its creative power... On our planet, where around three billion people live, the number of starving, unclothed and poor people exceeds two billion. Besides those societies which empty their food into the sea in order to advance the market, nations that are offended due to starvation, poverty and neglect live... And this terrible corruption of the humanity... continues in an era when mind-blowing technical developments have removed the concepts of time and distance, when natural sciences challenge the God, when primitive notions like destiny...already became a thing of the past. It is... time for us to explain this picture of the world to our people, and radio... has the opportunities to show... the truth... Radio can help our people appreciate its place in the order of our era. Indeed, it is an inevitable task for a conscious radio to serve this cause.³⁴⁷

Although many of TRT’s young producers adopted the developmentalist discourse, their faith in development involved a strong leftist tone. This was not surprising at all since the leftist movement and thinking, which lived its heyday particularly in the second half of the 1960s, had almost a hegemonic influence on the intellectual environment of this decade.

The 1961 Constitution adopted after the coup involved two contradictory principles. It was designed to ensure autonomy of bureaucrats and technocrats from politics, and it encouraged the foundation of autonomous socio-political organizations in order to control the parliamentary majority, which led to an overall increase in people’s political participation.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁶ Oskay, p. 40.

³⁴⁷ Kabalak, pp. 39 – 40.

³⁴⁸ Aydınoğlu, p. 52.

In this environment of freedom, new political actors emerged in Turkey. First, the working class became a powerful autonomous actor along with the accelerated growth of industrialization and urbanization. The other newborn actor of the political scene in the 1960s was military officers. This situation turned Turkey into a country which spontaneously faced threats of military juntas and massive strikes by the working class.³⁴⁹

In this decade, intellectuals acting as the representatives of these two categories of people also held critical seats in the political life of Turkey. This development was mostly implicated by the foundation of the intellectual leftist magazine *Yön* (Direction).³⁵⁰ This magazine indicated the growth of the leftist opposition and social movements in the 1960s, and it acted as an important channel for the expression of the leftist thought.³⁵¹

Also, The Turkey's Workers Party (TWP) was founded by a group of trade union activists in 1961 as the representative of the working class. This party acquired mass support in a rather short time period, not only among workers but also among intellectuals and the youth. Ağaoğlu described how she behaved at the Ankara Radio station on the day after the 1965 election, when the TWP demonstrated success, as follows:

You are in a crowded mass of state officials in TRT tasked to edit and transmit the elections results to the News Office all the night. ... As a few votes from some cities came for the workers' party founded on the basis of the 1960 [sic.] Constitution, you jump to your feet now and then shout out "Hurray!" You have never learned to be a state official. Being a state official means being shy and colorless. That is not what you are. You think that everybody is as pleased as you with the votes coming for the TWP. It was not enough to clap your hands and scream

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 51.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 74.

³⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 77 – 9.

“Hurray! Hurray!;” above all, without even thinking about the reason why Director General Adnan Öztrak had you called and asked you, “How is it going?” you responded as overjoyed out of enthusiasm, “Fine, fine; the TWP will enter the parliament.” As if in autonomous TRT, everybody, and the director general especially, was in favor of the TWP!”³⁵²

The TWP was able to have 15 representatives in the parliament after the 1965 elections. However, the party’s influence on the political and intellectual life of Turkey was beyond its electoral success. According to Çulhaoğlu, besides its almost hegemonic influence on leftist intellectual circles, it incorporated the issues like class struggle, the Kurdish question, the woman question and so on, which were long pushed into silence, into the legitimate political discourse in Turkey.³⁵³

Likewise, the TRT’s young generation interpreted the autonomy of the institution as their freedom to address the issues which had not been made public before. According to Korkmaz Alemdar, in the post-1960 period, autonomy was interpreted as the opportunity to assert what had not been pronounced before.³⁵⁴ Gülben Dinçmen also mentioned that the environment of freedom introduced by the 1961 Constitution permitted the manifestation of the thoughts which had not been expressed by then, and this situation echoed on radio waves.³⁵⁵

In a similar vein, Jülide Gülizar said that in the eye of radio professionals autonomy meant independence and self-management.³⁵⁶ She described how they felt about working for an autonomous institution as follows:

³⁵² Ağaoğlu, *Göç Temizliği*, pp. 112 – 3.

³⁵³ Quoted in Aydınoglu, p. 79.

³⁵⁴ Korkmaz Alemdar, “Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumunun Geçirdiği Aşamalar Üzerine Görüşler,” *İletişim* 1 (1981), p.5.

³⁵⁵ Dinçmen, p. 129.

³⁵⁶ Quoted in Nart, p. 127.

The new TRT Law pumped fresh blood into all of us. None of us knew what autonomy was, yet we repeated, “We are autonomous from now on.” The information we obtained and our feelings about the issue told us that everything would be better then onwards. Besides, we would be the ones who create these good things and introduce them to society, and we would be the ones who enjoy this pleasure for the first time. It was as if we were in dream. In sum, we were all intoxicated with autonomy. For those who worked at TRT in that period, the date 1 May 1964 was... the beginning of a dream.³⁵⁷

Apart from the autonomy of the institution, there were other factors which made the younger staff at TRT feel independent and self-confident. First, since these young people had started to work after passing difficult exams as well as an intensive and long training program, they usually felt like missionaries chosen by merit. For example, Tuğlan described how he felt on his first day at the Theatre Office as follows:

When we obtained our order of appointment, feeling sure that we would be welcomed very warmly in that office and having dressed in navy blue, we went to the Theatre Office ... which consisted of a single room. Having been chosen from among 1100 people, we had honored the Theatre Office!³⁵⁸

In addition, the youth cult raised by the May coup, which got a great deal of public support from the youth’s demonstrations against the DP government, added to their self-perception as the young missionaries of a great change. In Bilgesu Erenus’ terms, they entered TRT as the “off-springs of the honor and self-respect”³⁵⁹ generated by the 1961 Constitution.

Ağaoğlu also described the relation between the TRT’s younger staff members' self-confidence and the youth cult raised by the coup as follows:

³⁵⁷ Jülide Gülizar, *TRT Meydan Savaşı* (Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık, 1995), pp. 146 – 7.

³⁵⁸ Quoted in Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 199. The original text is as follows: *Tayin emrimizi alınca artık bu şubede çok iyi karşılanacağımızdan emin, birlikte... tek odadan ibaret Tiyatro Şubesi'ne lacileri çekerek gidiyoruz. ... 1100 kişi arasından seçilerek Tiyatro Şubesi'ni şereflendirmişiz!*

³⁵⁹ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 193.

Here is: ‘The army and the youth hand in hand!’... It seemed as if the army as a whole was behind all of us, young people. As if the army was not an institution of the status quo...³⁶⁰

In these particular socio-historical conditions of the 1960s, the younger staff members at TRT, who saw themselves as missionaries by merit, developed a collective identity that went beyond expectations. Although they adopted the elitist approach of the developmentalist ideology in their address to their audience, their understanding of radio’s roles against society seemed interfering with it:

Radio... is obliged to clarify different social sections and to show our society’s problems to the people... faithfully... If income distribution in a society demonstrates a huge imbalance, if the burden of attempts at development is carried by the poor villager, the worker and the state official, if a small minority lives as gentlemen with its income acquired through illegal ways on the other hand, then there is already inequality in that society. The people have already been divided... *In this case, hiding the truth from a large majority of the people in order not to violate the national unity means preventing [radio] from fulfilling its function.*³⁶¹

Reinterpreting their educational mission as an opportunity to explain the problems about social development to the people, female radio professionals also found a chance to deal with the issue of women’s subordination in their programs. For example, when Gülizar was asked to conduct interviews in villages near Ankara for the TRT News Office, she opted to discuss about their particular problems with the village women:

In summer 1964, Program Director Güntekin Orkut, now departed, said that he would cross me out from Sunday shifts and he wanted me to go to a village in Ankara each Sunday and to conduct interviews there. This was a suggestion that I will seize, and I actually seized it... In the places we went we used to tape any problems of the village and peasants and announce these voices directly to the authorities... There was a party who did not have a positive look on these programs, rather on village tours. Village women... Besides all, they did not regard me

³⁶⁰ Ağaoğlu, *Göç Temizliği*, p. 94. Original text is as follows: *İşte: “Ordu gençlik el ele!” ...Bütün biz gençlerin ardında bütün bir ordu vardı sanki. Sanki Ordu düzenin bir kurumu değildi...*

³⁶¹ Kabalak, p. 39. (The italics are mine)

as one of them and avoided replying my questions. After a while, I recognized that these women were also afraid how their husbands would react to the answers they will give.³⁶²

On a particular occasion, Gülizar visited a village in order to conduct interviews with women about birth control:³⁶³

This fear was very manifest in the women in a village in Kalecik. When we entered the village... children and... the village men welcomed the van of Ankara Radio. When we got off, first I said that I wanted to have tea with the village women... and half an hour later the news arrived that [the women] were inviting me for breakfast. In our talks at the breakfast, I learned that these women gave birth to at least five children. Among them there were those who had seven, eight, ten or 12 children. All of them were complaining about this situation. These women were just the right thing for a program about birth control. Taking courage... from their complaints, I asked them whether they could talk in a program about birth control. They both volunteered and said, "What do our men say about it? In truth, he beats me if I say something bad." They thought over it for a while; they looked at each other... A full-grown woman, whom people come across in almost every village, had the last word: "Go ahead and talk! You get the stick... no matter what it takes. Let yourselves once get it because you talk on radio. At least, you have a reason to get the stick, and you will have said what you will say..." The women naturally said, "Yes." I put the microphone down in the middle... We surrounded it as a circle. I turned on the tape and asked the first question. They started talking. They were expressing their problems, complaints and wishes so sincerely and naturally... They talked for about half an hour.³⁶⁴

In addition to addressing problems of village women, Gülizar acted as the speaker of a radio serial written by Sevgi Soysal, who had been her high school classmate. This play was called *The Women of Venus*.³⁶⁵ Serpil Erdemgil said the following about it:

³⁶² Gülizar, *Haberler Bitti*, p. 203.

³⁶³ In the 1960s, overpopulation started to be considered a problem frustrating social development. The First Five Year Development Plan (1963 – 1967) allocated a large place to the issue of overpopulation and family planning as a solution to it. In the plan, family planning was handled not only in terms of the state's employment policy but also as a part of such aspects of social development as national income, education and health. In accordance, in the second half of the 1960s, radio broadcast many programs that mobilized the audience for family planning. See Yakup Kepenek & Nurhan Yentürk, *Türkiye Ekonomisi* (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2009), pp. 148 – 9.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 204 – 5.

³⁶⁵ Erdal Doğan, *Sevgi Soysal: Yaşasaydı Aşık Olurdum* (Istanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2002), p. 116.

Sevgi's serial *The Women of Venus* was produced for the women's zone in the morning. It was such a creative, beautiful and brilliant serial that it could take away your breath with its contents and its production style. I became anxiously waiting for the new scripts of this serial, which dealt with the problems of women in Turkey making a reference to the Venus.³⁶⁶

In the play, events took place in an imaginary society settled in Venus at an unknown time. There was a symbolic monument which kept this society together and which legitimized the second class status of women in it. Actually, this monument symbolized the traditional religious mentality. The majority of the female inhabitants contemplated organizing a resistance against men's domination, yet they lacked the necessary will to launch this resistance as a result of their emotions and their nurture. Therefore, the Woman Sage waged a struggle on behalf of them. At the beginning, the women stood by her side. Nonetheless, as it became clear that they had to fight against their men in order to achieve their rights, they gave up backing the Woman Sage and submitted again to the men. What is worse, they ultimately condemned the Woman Sage for mobilizing them for an uprising against their men, and they cooperated with the men against her.³⁶⁷

The main argument defended by *The Women of Venus* was that women's awareness should be raised by education in order that women's rights could develop in Turkey.³⁶⁸ Soysal also gave the message that despite all these drawbacks, in the future women will acknowledge the truth and organize themselves in order to achieve and defend their rights.

³⁶⁶ Serpil Erdemgil, *Sevgi Soysal: Radyo Konuşmaları* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), p. 9. The original text is as follows: *Sevgi'nin Venüslü Kadınlar dizisi sabahları soluk kesecek kadar yaratıcı güzel ve parlak bir diziydi. Venüs'e gönderme yaparak Türkiye'de kadınların sorunlarını ele alan bu dizinin yeni metinlerini ipe çeker olmuştum.*

³⁶⁷ Sefa Yüce, "Venüslü Kadınların Serüvenleri," *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 1, no. 5 (Fall 2008), p. 984.

³⁶⁸ Erdemgil, p. 9.

Pınar Kür made the following comment about this play:

I found it extremely didactic... Some feminist thoughts, which have become a slogan today, and some socialist ideas, which have now lost even their slogan character, are consecutively juxtaposed without attempting to establish any personal affinity with the audience.³⁶⁹

Soysal's play *The Women of Venus* reflected the dominant approach to the woman question in Turkey in the 1960s. According to Birsen Talay Keleşoğlu, in the 1960s intellectual discussions about the woman question emphasized Turkish women's indebtedness to Atatürk and to the Republic for their already achieved rights. In these discussions, the uneducated women living in villages were portrayed as "the subordinated," and the reason for their subordination was sought in the traditions, customs and the religious influences defining women as the second-class, and also in the underdevelopment of these areas.³⁷⁰

On the other side, the educated and urban Republican women claimed that they had already achieved the goals of equality with men and of freedom from the chains of tradition. Ayşe Durakbaşı called their situation "the illusion of emancipation," and she argued that this "illusion" prevented them from developing an identity that was autonomous from the official state ideology.³⁷¹

Towards the late 1960s, and particularly in the 1970s, women started to question this "illusion," as indicated by the works of some female writers such as Sevgi Soysal, Adalet Ağaoğlu, Nezihe Meriç and Firüzan. For example, Ağaoğlu wrote a radio play called *Köpeğin Ölümü* (The death of the dog) in 1971 right before

³⁶⁹ Quoted in Yüce, p. 983. The original text is as follows: *Aşırı didaktik... geldi bana. Günümüzde sloganlaşmış birtakım feminist düşünceler ile artık slogan olma niteliğini bile yitirmiş olan sosyalist düşünceler, seyirciyle herhangi bir kişisel yakınlık kurma çabası olmaksızın sıralanıyor.*

³⁷⁰ Birsen Talay Keleşoğlu, October 2010, "1970'lerin En Kitlesele Kadın Örgütü: İlerici Kadınlar Derneği," <http://www.yurtsuz.net/News.aspx?newsid=626> [2 February 2012].

³⁷¹ Durakbaşı, "Cumhuriyet Döneminde Modern Kadın ve Erkek Kimliklerinin Oluşumu," p. 42.

the March 12 military memorandum. The main female character of this play was a single, professional woman. While she was wandering alone in the street at night, she did not recognize that two policemen in plain clothes were pursuing her. These policemen found her suspect in the death of the dog in the embassy building in her neighborhood and took her to the police station. These same policemen also found one of her male neighbors suspect in the same event. Although both were ultimately found not guilty and released, the policemen continued to follow them.

After this event the woman and her male neighbor became acquaintances.

One evening the man visited her at her home. The woman introduced herself to the man as such:

I have a university degree, a post in the bureaucracy that has huge arms, comfort and freedom to choose and break up with my man, an environment surrounded by enlightened intellectuals, the right to spend my income as I wish, the right to refuse to have a child, annual leaves, casual leaves, and womanhood and menstruation leaves of three days... In short, everything is fine. Furthermore, I do not have any property to be dynamited.³⁷²

The woman admitted that she did not feel emancipated despite all her apparent rights and benefits:

Nonetheless, I am arrested as if I was chained from my angels to the wall... in a cell whose doors was shut down over and over, whose ventilation windows wore thick iron grids. To escape... I must escape. Some nights I burst into streets. I want to feel that I am not arrested, that I am free. I cannot do it. I cannot escape from myself.³⁷³

³⁷² Adalet Ağaoğlu, *Çağımızın Tellalı: Radyo Oyunları* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011), p. 271. The original text is as follows: *Bir üniversite diplomam, bürokrasinin oldukça kocaman koltuklu bir yerinde bir işim, erkeğimi rahatça seçip bırakabilme özgürlüğüm, okumuş yazmış aydınlarla dolu bir çevrem, kazancımı istediğim biçimde kullanabilme ve çocuk istememe hakkım, yıllık izinlerim, mazeret izinlerim, kadınlık ve iki üç günlük “aybaşı” izinlerim var... Kısacası her şey yolunda. Üstelik altına dinamit konacak malım mülküm de yok.*

³⁷³ Ibid.

Female Radio Professionals amidst Fallacious Autonomy

Ağaoğlu's play, *Köpeğin Ölümü*, was not able to pass through the supervision mechanism at TRT. It was found "inconvenient" and was not broadcast on radio, and she abandoned her post at TRT after a short while before the military memorandum on March 1971:

I told Turgut [Özakman] that I left my letter of resignation at the office. My close friend... and our radio office chief said, "I will not accept it..." Was he very surprised or very pleased? It is difficult to understand what is going on when he turns his eyes away. I did not understand... Now I am in a sense of enormous freedom. However, "freedom" is not free. It is the most expensive thing in life.³⁷⁴

Despite the apparent environment of freedom and autonomy inside the radio house, media production was carried out in a censored manner. Young radio professionals of TRT were trained along "a hilly road;" that is, "Sometimes [they] were encouraged to discuss aloud the problems of [their] country; sometimes [they] were kindly reminded of virtues of absolute silence."³⁷⁵

Chief producers assumed the function of disciplining and supervising their young scholars. Betül Mardin explains how she fulfilled this disciplining role as a chief producer against her young workmates:

Bilgesu [Erenus] writes, and she somewhat flies up when she writes. Now I was obliged to make her land. From time to time, for example, she makes someone commit suicide. Suicide is a taboo. Does a Turk commit suicide? ... Now, upon this I go inside and have the suicide scene cut. She comes after a while; that cut part is thrown in front of me. It stays there for three days. That is, do not forget what you have done... It stays there until it goes off. She gave me a lesson.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁴ Ağaoğlu, *Damla Damla Günler*, pp. 18 – 9.

³⁷⁵ Quoted in Dink, Cankaya and Ekici, p. 123. The original text is as follows: *Gün oldu ülkemizin sorunlarını yüksek sesle tartışmaya özendirildik, gün oldu mutlak sessizliğin erdemleri anımsatıldı nazikçe.*

³⁷⁶ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 127.

It was the severe political pressure on TRT that reinforced the development of the censoring mechanism in the institution. The institution became one of the targets of the JP government that was established in 1965. While the party was in opposition, it had acted as one of the ardent supporters of the autonomy of broadcasting.³⁷⁷ Nonetheless, when it came to power, it claimed in its government program that TRT Law would be changed.³⁷⁸ The JP government also made occasional attempts to curb the autonomy of the institution by intervening into its financial sources,³⁷⁹ by trying to win over the members of its board,³⁸⁰ and by putting barriers against its autonomous employment policy.

Minister of Tourism and Publicity Kürşat Başer stated the following about the JP government's approach to radio in 1967:

The 1961 Constitution was a reactionary constitution. And the TRT Law was one of the reactionary laws enacted on the basis of this constitution. However, it had not been considered that radio itself might become a party. Today, radio is not under the command of the government; however, it should not be a radio against the soul and the sacred concepts of the Turkish nation. It should broadcast according to the proclivities and beliefs of the nation.³⁸¹

Turgut Özakman admitted that due to this heavy political pressure, he had to have a security investigation opened against the young radio producers at TRT, who were said to be "communists."³⁸² Dinçmen was one of those producers who faced a

³⁷⁷ *Milliyet*, 10 March 1965.

³⁷⁸ TRT Yayın Planlama ve Koordinasyon Dairesi Başkanlığı, 2003, "Kurumsal Kilometre Taşları: 1965," <http://www.trt.net.tr/Kurumsal/KilometreTaslari.aspx?yil=1965> [19 November 2011].

³⁷⁹ On 27 February 1968, the parliament, where the JP had the majority, adopted the decision to subject TRT's budget to the Prime Ministry. See TRT Yayın Planlama ve Koordinasyon Dairesi Başkanlığı, 2003, "Kurumsal Kilometre Taşları: 1968," <http://www.trt.net.tr/Kurumsal/KilometreTaslari.aspx?yil=1965> [19 November 2011]; and also *Milliyet*, 28 February 1968.

³⁸⁰ *Milliyet*, 12 January 1966.

³⁸¹ *Milliyet*, 11 November 1967.

³⁸² Quoted in Nart, p. 112.

security investigation whereby she was questioned by a member of the National Intelligence Organization about her assumed relationship with an illegal leftist organization:

We learned that... these questions had been asked to all our friends. We, who faced these weird questions..., did not have much time to think about how liberal... the 1961 Constitution was. These questions were not asked in order that we could achieve the right to work in TRT. We had already been recruited. Probably they wondered whether we were members of an organization and were anarchists... We must have been proven innocent that nobody lost his/her job after the investigation... This was the kind of investigation our state deemed suitable for the people who set off for “autonomous” and “impartial” broadcasting.³⁸³

The political pressure over TRT also generated conflicts and disagreements in the institution. Ağaoğlu said the following in this regard:

The autonomy of TRT is about to be lost. The government is on the one hand. We are on the other hand. We continue to fight... Some of my friends talked on the phone about some new plays of the “junta” We named “junta” those who ask us to operate police control, that is, the censorship mechanism... over the programs we allowed to produce.³⁸⁴

Days before the military intervention in March 1971, while the JP government was trying to have the parliament adopt a new TRT Law which aimed to curb the broadcasting, administrative and financial autonomy of the institution, the tension within TRT reached its highest point.

A violent disagreement erupted in one of the meetings of its board between Director General Adnan Öztrak and board member Emil Galip Sandalcı, who accused Öztrak of failing to oppose the government’s law proposal about TRT.³⁸⁵

³⁸³ Dinçmen, pp. 117 – 8.

³⁸⁴ Ağaoğlu, *Damla Damla Günler*, p. 9. The original text is as follows: *TRT’nin özerkliği elden gitmekte. İktidar bir yanda, biz bir yanda; boğuşup duruyoruz... Bazı arkadaşlarım telefonda ‘cunta’nın yeni bazı oyunlarından söz ettiler. Biz, hazırlattığımız programlarda... “polis denetimi” yani sansür mekanizmasını işletmemizi isteyenlere ‘cunta’ adını taktık da...*

³⁸⁵ *Milliyet*, 7 March 1971.

One month later, 250 TRT employees issued a memorandum demanding Öztürk's resignation.³⁸⁶ Their opposition did not yield results, though, as Ağaoğlu wrote in her diary:

This morning I went to our office at TRT. Our cooperation with our friends had not yielded results. A sense of despair in our professional friends... Our male mascot is saying the newcomer board will ameliorate everything. On the other hand, we, the females, have the meaning on our faces that our mascot hopes that he will ultimately obtain a table covered with green leather in the middle, a desk pad on the table, a private phone and a bell next to it, and a secretary who will appear at his door when he rings the bell. On the other hand, the friend who somehow brings to my mind the Selma of *Ankara*,³⁸⁷ who has come here... hoping that she will add meaning to her life in the steppe, is in depression and in dilemmas whether she should endure the members of the Committee of the Union and Progress in the capital or she should regard their penmen as evil ehven.³⁸⁸

The attacks against TRT had already paved the way for supervision over the contents of radio programs although the TRT Law, enacted on May 1 1964, did not include any articles about supervision:

There was not any mechanism called supervision at that time. You will do auto-control yourself. You will know where this people go depending on what you give to them. Of course, the place we called broadcasting planning had been founded together with the establishment of TRT. This broadcasting planning used to release annual plans each year. Think about your programs, make and submit your proposals according to this planning. However, you control yourself. Why? You are responsible for your mistakes against the law.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁶ *Milliyet*, 4 April 1971.

³⁸⁷ *Ankara* was a novel by Republican author Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu. It was published in 1934. It covers three historical periods in Turkey, the War for Independence, the establishment of the Republic and the years between the late 1930s and early 1940s. In this novel, Karaosmanoğlu tried to reflect the social development Turkey experienced during those years by references to the capital, Ankara. The life story of the main female character of the novel, Selma, links these three different periods to each other. For further details about this novel, see Münire Kevser Baş, "Yakup Kadri'nin Romanlarını 'Sosyal Kritik' Olarak Okumak Mümkün müdür?" *Turkish Studies* 8, no. 1 (Winter 2013), pp. 1003 – 32.

³⁸⁸ Ağaoğlu, *Damla Damla Günler*, pp. 11 – 2.

³⁸⁹ Quoted from Özakman in Nart, p. 93.

The old generation of radio professionals had argued for the establishment of a supervision unit in order to achieve unity in media practice. However, because of the concern that it might turn into a censorship mechanism, such a unit was not incorporated into the body of the institution during its establishment.³⁹⁰ Initially, radio programs were supervised by producers themselves mostly in terms of language.³⁹¹

As the chief of the central program office at radio, Özakman warned that a radio writer should “balance the endeavor to purify the language and the principle of fluency with the linguistic taste consciousness.”³⁹² He argued that “failure to establish a common vocabulary for the radio’s language is undesirable,”³⁹³ and defended the young TRT generation on the grounds that they “caused the Turkish radio language, which had fluctuated between Ottoman and pure Turkish, which had changed from one person to another and which had been disconnected from society, to win a common style.”³⁹⁴

Particularly the vocabulary employed by radio generated intense debates in the press and in the parliament. Use of Turkish equivalents of Ottoman originated words by producers was regarded as an uprising, as Dinçmen writes: “The word ‘revolution’ began to create a bomb’s effect. When ‘revolution’ was uttered, those

³⁹⁰ Özakman, p. 112.

³⁹¹ Nart, p. 93.

³⁹² Özakman, p. 107.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 32. The original text is as follows: *Osmanlıca’yla öz Türkçe arasında kişiden kişiye değişen, toplumdan kopuk Türk radyo dili, bugün özellikle genç prodüktörlerin çabasıyla ortak bir üslup kazanmıştır.*

who adopted the judgment that ‘they talk about the communist revolution at best’ gradually got radicalized.”³⁹⁵

The radio’s vocabulary was also said to provoke a generational conflict in society. For example, in 1968 in the Senate session in which the report on the balance sheet of TRT drawn up by the parliament joint commission was discussed, the JP’s representative Yigit Köker claimed that the language used by TRT “set father at odds with their sons.”³⁹⁶ Dinçmen faced a similar condemnation for the words she used in her radio programs:

At that time (1965 – 1966) I was producing a serial. The aim of the program was to bring the intergenerational conflict into light. I frequently used the word *kuşak* [a Turkish word meaning both belt and generation] instead of *nesil* [the Arabic equivalent of the word *kuşak*] of the old. Refii Cevat Ulunay said the following in one of his column articles: “We used to say *nesil*. They call themselves *kuşak*. They are not *kuşak*, but *uçkur* [a Turkish word meaning belt with sexist connotations]...” I have never forgotten this sentence.³⁹⁷

The Central Program Office felt the need to defend itself against such attacks against the vocabulary radio producers employed and started to control extreme radio language. For example, the annual report of TRT in 1967 stated the following about this issue:

The language used in radio programs is an issue the Central Program Office emphasizes considerably. As in the previous program periods, in our new-coming program period efforts will continue to make broadcasts on the Turkish radios via a common language the people can understand easily, and endeavors on the issue of language will be maintained. As a Constitutional institution that is charged with propagating Atatürk’s revolutions, now the language of TRT radios has come as close as it is desired to the aim fostered by the Language

³⁹⁵ Dinçmen, p. 129. The original text is as follows: “*Devrim*” sözcüğü bomba etkisi yaratmaya başlamıştı. “*Devrim*” denilince “*Bunlar olsa olsa komünist devrimden söz ederler*” yargısını benimseyenler giderek radikalleşiyordu.

³⁹⁶ *Milliyet*, 22 October 1968.

³⁹⁷ Dinçmen, p. 129.

Revolution. Indeed, for hereafter, it can be said that *disallowing certain extremities in the radio's language is a point at issue*.³⁹⁸

In 1966 upon the rightist daily *Tercüman*'s reaction to a radio program which dealt with the issue of sexual education, supervision officially started in the Central Program Office following a written order by the Directorate General. From then onwards, contents of all radio talks except for news bulletins and advertisements were supervised. While 1066 programs were supervised in 1968,³⁹⁹ their number reached almost 2000 one year later.⁴⁰⁰

Adalet Ağaoğlu, Sevgi Sabuncu (Soysal) and Nurten Görün were three female professionals employed as the first program supervisors. Supervisors were jointly responsible for the “mistakes” their young scholars made in the radio programs they were charged with. As an example, after a program on Ankara Radio in 1968 which introduced Sartre's work on Cuba, a case was opened against the producers of this program on Prime Minister Demirel's request; they were accused of “transmitting communist propaganda on radio.”⁴⁰¹ This was only one among the 200 legal cases sued against radio programs usually by the initiative of rightist political parties and groups.⁴⁰²

Ağaoğlu was responsible for supervising the content of this program and had given consent to it:

Since I gave consent to the presentation of the book *Sartre on Cuba* in *Kitap Saati* (Book hour), TRT and the prosecutor collaborated to embark upon a case on me. Although the court found [us] “guiltless”

³⁹⁸ Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1967 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1968), p. 6. (The italics are mine)

³⁹⁹ TRT, *1968 Yılı Kar ve Zarar Raporu*, p. 6.

⁴⁰⁰ TRT, *1969 Yılı ve 6 Hesap Devresine Ait Çalışma, Bilanço, Kar ve Zarar Raporu*, p. 10.

⁴⁰¹ *Milliyet*, 17 September 1968.

⁴⁰² Nart, p. 244.

months later, TRT has not withdrawn the punishment of “degree reduction” it had inflicted on me in advance... For good and all, TRT has turned out to be an institution above the judiciary. The nasty smell of fascism... This time I was sent to the “Legal Affairs” Office, and the lawyers in this office told me, “Do say, ‘I gave consent to this program carelessly...’” I got shocked. If I did so..., the young producer lower than me would go before the court alone.⁴⁰³

As a result of the mounting political pressure on TRT towards the late 1960s, female radio professionals started to become disillusioned with their mission at the institution. For example, Ağaoğlu wrote the following sentences in her diary: “Ever since we were dignified as program specialists, we remained confined within the mediocrity at the top of the drama section. It is as if it was the highest heart of censorship; is it the batman of a hidden power?”⁴⁰⁴

She began to think of giving up her post at TRT. “Becoming a petite official” was one reason for her disillusionment with her profession: She said, “When I went back into our room called ‘put on the shelf,’ it bore in upon my head: Each of us is a petite official who complains non-stop. We will evolve into dusty files...Worse than being an insect.”⁴⁰⁵ She added, “I sense very well that I exhausted all my accumulation in the name of authorship by offering it to TRT for the sake of motherland and nation.”⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰³ Ağaoğlu, *Damla Damla Günler*, p. 10.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 21. The original text is as follows: *TRT program uzmanı payesi verileli oyun bölümünün başındaki “mediocrity”ye ram olup kaldık. Hani sanki en tepedeki sansür ocağı burası; meçhul bir gücün emir eri midir?*

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 12. The original text is as follows: *Sabah “kızağa çekilmişler” denilen odamıza yeniden girdiğimde küt diye indi kafama: Herbirimiz durmadan yakınan küçük memurlarız; tozlu birer dosyaya dönüşeceğiz... Böcek olmaktan beter.*

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Ben yazarlık adına bütün birikimi vatan millet uğruna TRT’ye verip tükettiğimi öyle iyi hissediyorum ki...*

In addition to feeling like “the insect of Kafka,” female professionals employed at TRT were challenged by another dilemma. They faced the risk of becoming “housewives” if they gave up their profession:

I will give up the profession of broadcasting. I will write only for myself from now on. Reaching society via sound waves, enlightening our people, increasing social consciousness... Let me leave all these behind. My own inner voice should run down from my pen... Independent pen... All right, but what if I cannot be productive? *What if I turn out to be a housewife instead? Look at that concern which arises from the given values!*⁴⁰⁷

While TRT was struggling to defend its autonomy, it was also making preparations to launch television broadcasts. After Ankara Television’s debut on 31 January 1968, the course of the attacks against TRT’s autonomy changed from radio to television, for the issues that had been pushed into silence were not only audible now, but they also became visible.

Introduction of television technology to Turkey offered novel opportunities for women’s active participation in the public sphere. Television actually opened up a potential arena for women’s self-expression and achievement of public identity. However, this arena was not autonomous any more due to the removal of TRT’s constitutionally guaranteed autonomy after the military intervention in 1971. That is, it was much more constrained by the official ideology. At the same time, women’s attainment of an opportunity to represent themselves on the screen that went beyond the expected gender roles generated new debates. This negotiation over the relation between gender and the mass media was shaped and conditioned by the socio-historical and cultural circumstances of the 1970s, a decade when the developmentalist consensus started to go into pieces along with a deepening economic crisis, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 11. (The italics are mine)

CHAPTER 4

WOMEN AT TRT IN THE 1970S

Being a woman is difficult; it is still very difficult ... for our world is the world of men. Men regulate the world of humanity, particularly the world of women... We, women, wear trousers most of the time. We have neither a minus nor a plus. Thank God, none of us does... perceive ourselves like a man also in those trousers. That is, nothing has changed; we are women in those trousers, too.⁴⁰⁸

The 1970s in Turkey started with developments that pointed at the rupture of the social consensus on the populist economic development model of the 1960s. One indicator of this rupture was the emergence of new political organizations on the right side of the political spectrum, such as the National Salvation Party (NSP) as the representative of the local/small capital. A much more striking indicator was the rise of a dissident and massive labor movement that reached its climax during the demonstrations on 15-16 June 1970.⁴⁰⁹

The early 1970s saw the “sledgehammer” (*balyoz*) operation of the “impartial” government established after the military memorandum on 12 March 1971. This operation symbolized the break-down of the coalition between the military and intellectuals. The intellectuals, whose influence had risen in the previous decade, were politically restrained by the interim military regime. In addition, a

⁴⁰⁸ In 1975, Jülide Gülizar conducted interviews with imprisoned women in Niğde Prison and read the transcripts on the radio program *Kadın Dünyası* (Woman's world), which I will discuss in detail below. Gülizar then edited these interviews in a book titled *Ben Bilmem Beyim Bilir* (I do not know but my husband does). Her words were quoted from the preface to that edition. See Jülide Gülizar, *Ben Bilmem Beyim Bilir* (Ankara: Sinemis Yayıncılık, 2008), pp. 3, 7.

⁴⁰⁹ These labor demonstrations basically protested the amendments to the laws on labor and on unionization, the main objective of which was to prevent the growth of the leftist trade union federation DİSK (Federation of Revolutionary Labor Unions) by restraining workers' trade union rights. For further details, see Aydınoğlu, pp. 319 – 20.

policy of depoliticizing society was carried out. The main ingredients of this policy was constraints on the constitutional rights for political organization, bans on leftist publications as well as the martial law courts' blows to the freedom of thought.⁴¹⁰

The political youth movement also suffered a fatal blow during this period, with most of its leaders either being executed or imprisoned. The suspicious attitude of the regime against the youth had already started before the military memorandum in 1971. Although the active role young people played in the collapse of the DP government was praised right after May 1960, the youth were not accepted as the "guardian of the regime's survival," as Özbay writes,⁴¹¹ within the dominant political discourse of the 1960s. Instead, the increasing number of young people in cities and particularly in universities was regarded as a threat by the regime.

By the late 1960s, the world had faced a novel youth phenomenon called the 1968 movement, which threatened the established regimes in various parts of the world including Turkey. Behind the emergence of young people on the political scene as an autonomous group was the upsurge in the population growth in Turkey

⁴¹⁰ The confiscation of Sevgi Soysal's novel *Yürümek* (Walking) by the martial law court was only one case among many which evidenced the anti-democratic political atmosphere of the early 1970s. In this novel published in 1970, Soysal questioned the gender roles in a middle class, urban family from a woman's perspective amidst the changing socio-cultural environment of Ankara in the 1960s. The novel won the Merit Award in the novel category at the Science, Arts and Culture Awards Contest organized by TRT the same year. Nevertheless, it was found "obscene" and confiscated by the martial law court after the military memorandum. Upon a short period in custody, Soysal was fired from TRT. She was not alone. Around 100 broadcast professionals were dismissed from their posts after March 12. This "purification," as Prime Minister Melen called it in one of his parliamentary speeches, was justified by the Special Instructions for Protective Security issued by the TRT administration, which included an article stating that an investigation is carried out about those employed at posts requiring confidentiality. The same article also provided that those with unfavorable investigation results are immediately dismissed from the institution and not hired again. For further details, see *Milliyet*, 2 February 1973; and also Vildan İyigüngör, *Medyada Tanıklık: Türkiye'de Askeri Darbeler* (Istanbul: Beta, 2009), p. 167.

⁴¹¹ Enactment of the Law for Population Planning in 1965, which signaled the transition from a pro-natalist to anti-natalist population policy, was basically a footstep taken to govern this "youth problem." For further details, see Ferhunde Özbay, "Türkiye'de Gençlik, Nüfus ve İktidar," in *Türkiye'de İktidarı Yeniden Düşünmek*, ed. K. Murat Güney (Istanbul: Varlık Yayınları, 2009), pp. 184 – 5.

after the Second-World War, which started to bear its fruits in the 1960s.⁴¹²

Particularly in the second half of the 1960s, mass numbers of university students, both men and women, marched in the streets, not only making demands for improvement in educational facilities, but also a more just society.

The majority of the female members of the 1968 generation in Turkey came from well-off urban families. They were the children of the enlightened generation of the Republic, discussed above. These women were raised as free and self-confident individuals and encouraged to take up active roles in public life by their families.⁴¹³

At university, they met the leftist thought and followed the developing cultural and intellectual life closely. Although some of them were aware of the development of feminism in the West mainly as a result of having a second language, they did not put it at the forefront of their political agendas. Being a female member of the 1968 generation meant keeping silent about “feminine” issues if one did not want to be condemned for submission to petit bourgeois aspirations.⁴¹⁴

Nevertheless, in these women’s lives, 1968 also symbolized the daughter’s uprising against her family: They sought mobility, challenged the traditional family ties, and tried not to replicate their mothers’ life trajectory.⁴¹⁵ For example, as

⁴¹² As a result of the high mortality rates, national population grew slowly between 1927 and 1945. However, the improvement in mortality conditions after the end of the Second World War resulted in the rise of the national population growth rate by three quarters to a half over its level before the War from 10% to 30%. For further details, see Leila Erder, “The Women of Turkey: A Demographic Overview,” in *Women in Turkish Society*, ed. N. Abadan Unat (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), p. 48.

⁴¹³ Ayşe Yazıcıoğlu, ed., *68’in Kadınları* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2010), p. 198. Most particularly, the figure of “democratic father” was a frequently observed theme in their self-narratives. For example, interviewee S.Ü, who has worked as a radio and TV producer at TRT till 1973, mentioned that her father always encouraged her to work as a professional, and he respected her decisions.

⁴¹⁴ Ayşe Kadioğlu, “Cinselliğin İnkarı: Büyük Toplumsal Projelerin Nesnesi Olarak Türk Kadınları,” in *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, ed. A. Berkay Hacımırzaoğlu (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), p. 97.

⁴¹⁵ Yazıcıoğlu, p. 198.

already quoted from İ.Ç. in the previous chapter, she migrated to Ankara from Istanbul in the late 1960s to have university education “so as to be emancipated from the family.”⁴¹⁶

Many female broadcast professionals who worked at TRT in the 1970s had graduated from university in the late 1960s and early 1970s. They were members of the 1968 generation and influenced by the spirit of resistance that had characterized it, as stated by a female TRT producer:

Before 12 March 1971 were the years when the 1968 movement was intensely experienced in our country and in the world. Of course, we could not isolate ourselves from that. We were at our twenties, and we were young, too. We attended demonstrations.... Although some... administrators said, “Do not do this or that,” who would listen to them? We had been influenced by the 1968 generation.⁴¹⁷

The primary issue on these women’s agenda was all-encompassing social transformation. They described themselves as “missionary soldiers” working for social change:

We saw ourselves as the owners of a mission..., as soldiers who served the audience, who informed them, who searched for solutions to their problems. We accepted it as our duty to visit mountains, hills, shanty towns and the farthest places in Anatolia and to transmit the problems of people living there.⁴¹⁸

Their perception about the profession of broadcasting as a missionary duty on behalf of overcoming social problems was heavily influenced by the almost hegemonic impact of the leftist ideology over the political sphere of that time period. If the 1960s in Turkey was a decade in which the Pandora’s Box was opened, as discussed in the previous chapter, the climate released from that box covered the entire country,

⁴¹⁶ İ.Ç.

⁴¹⁷ Quoted in İyigüngör, pp. 164 – 5.

⁴¹⁸ Quoted in ibid, p. 268. The original text is as follows: *Kendimizi bir misyonun sahibi olarak... dinleyicilerin hizmetinde onlara bilgi aktaran, onların sorunlarına çözümler arayan nefer gibi görüyorduk... Dağ, bayır, gecekondu, Anadolu’nun ücra köşelerine gidip oralarda insanların sorunları aktarmayı görev biliyorduk.*

especially in the second half of the 1970s. Although the left was apparently crushed in the coercive March 12 period, the military intervention failed to destroy the left's prestige in society, and the retreat of the military regime brought dynamism to the growth of the leftist movement.⁴¹⁹

Turkey entered the latter part of the 1970s with a growing and strengthening organized labor class. In fact, the years between 1975 and 1980 were the heyday of the labor class struggle in Turkey. Whereas the number of trade unionized workers was only around 300,000 in 1963, it had reached to somewhere between 1.5 and 2 million by the end of the 1970s, and workers, both in the private and in the public sector, took significant steps to improve their wages and rights by a number of strikes, resistances, and massive demonstrations.⁴²⁰ Along with the development of a massive and dissident labor class, numerous leftist/socialist organizations emerged and constituted what Aydınoğlu describes as “a huge leftist galaxy”⁴²¹ embracing large numbers of people.

Admittedly, not all of the women on the professional staff of TRT were practically involved in the leftist movement in the 1970s. Many of those came from urban families who had transmitted to their offsprings a cultural capital constructed upon modernist/ Republican dispositions. In fact, some preferred to describe themselves as “Republicanist” instead of manifesting an affiliation with the political left.⁴²²

⁴¹⁹ Aydınoğlu, p. 283.

⁴²⁰ Still, the proportion of unionized workers was not more than one-third of the whole labor class in the 1970s. Especially those employed in small enterprises were deprived of the rights acquired by unionization, such as those for collective bargaining and striking. They were not able to benefit from regular wage increases unlike the unionized labor, too. For further details, see Keyder, pp. 196 – 7.

⁴²¹ Aydınoğlu, p. 329.

⁴²² C.O.

Still, in a period when the official ideology of developmentalism also incorporated certain leftist resonations, women who worked for TRT as critical mediators of this ideology throughout the 1970s reconfigured their inherited Republican cultural capital within a leftist framework on air. This entailed questioning the idea of nationhood as a unified and coherent entity from a more or less class-based angle and bringing to the public eye various cultural and socio-economic gaps, including gendered ones, which this idea concealed.

Although the female broadcast professionals of the period concerned themselves with advancing women's status in society and produced programs to this end, gender was not the center around which their self-definitions rotated. Many of the women interviewed for this study actually claimed that they did not face discrimination against their gender or have such a concern at TRT at all. For example, Ö.C. stated the following in the interview: "There might be matters of choice within the internal operation of the institution. However, honestly for my part, I never felt any discrimination... I was never aware of my gender."⁴²³

N.Ç., who has worked at TRT as a producer since 1973, said the following in this regard:

I attended many international meetings... where we were always said the following: "You have a lot of female executives. Your women can arrive at the upper levels. We can only move up to clerkship..." Maybe, we have not had a female deputy director-general. However, in terms of top decision making ... we did not feel pushed into the background... *Indeed, we did not have such ambition.* We were here to make programs... There is no person who has not been promoted because she is a woman.... Here, there has never been such an understanding. Discrimination concerning women has never occurred.⁴²⁴

⁴²³ Ö.C. The original quotation is as follows: *Yani kurumun iç işleyişinde belki tercih meseleleri olabilir, ama... bir ayrımı ben doğrusu kendi adıma hissetmedim... Ben cinsiyetimi hiç fark etmedim.*

⁴²⁴ N.Ç. (The italics are mine)

This does not mean that the female broadcast professionals of the 1970s were passive beings who accepted the given gender regime as normal. As highlighted by Birgöl Akkoca Ergev, who worked at TRT as a reporter-editor upon her graduation from the Turcology Department at Istanbul University in 1970, as women they “completely trusted in [themselves].” They were not “of the type who is oppressed and who could be oppressed.”⁴²⁵

Furthermore, whereas gender equality at work was not their primary concern, they were not unconscious of the gendered nature of their profession. Both during the interim military period and afterwards, they encountered various constraints arising from the dominant gender ideology, which also informed the professional field of broadcasting. As boldly expressed by C.O., who has worked for TRT as a TV producer since 1974, they were “struggling for survival within a wheel spinned by men,”⁴²⁶ and they tried hard not to disappear in the midst of its gears.

Their efforts to achieve and maintain a position in the field of broadcasting against those gendered challenges of their profession mostly followed individual paths amidst the lack of an autonomous women’s movement in that decade. Instead of organizing around a shared identity of womanhood and politicizing their particular concerns and experiences as women, they individually negotiated their existence in this field.

According to H.T., who worked for TRT TV as an assistant producer in the second half of the 1980s, gender was not the main frame of reference around which the previous generation of female broadcast professionals’ worldview had been

⁴²⁵ Quoted in Yazıcıoğlu, p. 34. The original text is as follows: *Kendimize güvenimiz tamdı. Öyle ezilen ya da ezilebilecek tipler değildik.*

⁴²⁶ C.O. The original quotation is as follows: *Erkeklerin çevirdiği bir çarkta varolma mücadelesi veren kadınlardık.*

shaped. In her own words, “It is normal for [them] to claim that they did not feel any gender discrimination in the 1970s at TRT since... the struggles were not experienced in gendered terms then.”⁴²⁷

As implied by her wording, under the growing influence of the leftist ideology throughout the decade, the issue of class seemed to be a more central concern in political struggles, concealing contestation and change in the field of gender. In spite of some examples of a seemingly progressive approach to gender politics, the question of gender equality did not attract much public attention until the 1980s. Still, there were moments in the 1970s where the question could be recognized, and broadcasting was certainly one of those cultural fields which opened up a space for these moments on air, as will be discussed below.

Female Broadcast Professionals in the “Shadow of Rifles”

The removal of TRT’s autonomy was high on the agenda of the political authority after the military memorandum. First, General Musa Ögün was appointed as the director-general of the institution. Then on 20 September 1971 article 121 of the Constitution, which guaranteed the autonomy of radio and television broadcasts, was changed: TRT was redefined as an impartial institution with no mention of autonomy.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁷ H.T. The original quotation is as follows: *Kadınlığımızı hissetmedik demeleri normaldir. Çünkü o zaman... mücadeleler kadın-erkek ekseninde yaşanmıyordu.*

⁴²⁸ While the amendments to the 1961 constitution were being discussed at the parliament, Prime Minister Nihat Erim said that the real duty of TRT, which was the “voice of the Turkish nation and the Turkish state,” was to assist the development of the Turkish culture. He added, “TRT should serve the Turkish state and nation on behalf of the lofty interests of Turkey in a world where a war of propaganda was waged through radio and TV.” He defended that these could be achieved without autonomy. For further details, see *Milliyet*, 14 April 1971.

A later attempt was to amend the TRT Law. In the new version of the law, which came into force on 9 March 1972, the phrase “assisting culture and education,” included in the definition of TRT’s role, was replaced as follows: “obeying the main principles of Turkish national education in its task of assisting national culture and education.” The amended version of the law also listed these among TRT’s functions: “following the requirements of national security and general morality as well as national traditions,” and “reinforcing the integrity of the Turkish state with its territory and its nation.”⁴²⁹ The law also reorganized TRT’s administrative structure so as to make it a government-controlled entity. The two seats allocated to the staff in the board were removed, and the number of the governmental representatives in it rose from two to three.⁴³⁰

During the military period, supervision and censorship over radio and television broadcasts was reinforced, mostly targeting the Turkish language used in programs. The administration attempted to prevent the employment of pure Turkish by producers and speakers. The purist emphasis was seen as a symbol of Kemalist-leftist intellectuals’ hold over the institution, which was now under attack. The staff was both sent a vocabulary memorandum instructing them about which words to use

⁴²⁹ After the amendments to article 121 of the 1961 Constitution, a law titled “Amendment of Some Articles of the Turkey Radio and Television Corporation Law Dated 24.12.1963 and Annexation of Additional and Temporary Additional Articles to That Law” was enacted as numbered 1568. This law changed 19 articles of the previous TRT Law. For details, see Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, pp. 94 – 5.

⁴³⁰ Furthermore, various public and civil society associations, which were previously authorized to directly appoint a representative member for the board, were deprived of this right. Instead, the amended law provided that TRT Election Committee would choose the representative members from among the ones proposed by these associations. This committee was introduced to the body of the institution by the amended TRT Law. It was composed of four university rectors appointed by the President, in addition to the secretary of the National Security Council. The committee was tasked to choose the members of TRT’s board of directors. For further details about the changes in the organizational structure of the institution, see *ibid.*, pp. 95 – 6.

and not to use⁴³¹ and re-disciplined about “proper” use of Turkish through on-the-job language courses.⁴³²

The military administration also intervened into contents of programs directly. Many TV and radio programs were charged with propagating communism by the political authority and by the press,⁴³³ and they failed to pass through the supervision mechanism at TRT. Programs concerning women, especially those which aimed to educate them about their rights, also became a victim to the supervision. They were condemned for violating family values and morality:

When 12 March 1971 happened, we saw that any program we planned to make on behalf of society was judged in the public opinion... I had a serial broadcast in the morning, and it had a large audience. I started to transmit information about the personal law... As if they were in a public school, by switching a button on the radio, people had access to the information that... was monopolized by lawyers and judges... When I came to the issue of divorce, two people asked each other how people get divorced according to the related articles of the civil law. It explained that a woman and a man have the same right to divorce. One morning a columnist from the daily *Tercüman* [wrote] something as follows: “Family women in Turkey are encouraged to commit immorality in the morning; what are the TRT producers in Turkey trying to do? They are encouraging women to immoral ways...” It became clear that it was about my program... They [the headquarters] demanded the program records and the program script be sent to Ankara, probably in 1972... This began to create repression over us.⁴³⁴

⁴³¹ Director-General Ögün issued a language memorandum in February 1973, stating the following: “Despite several orders and the *TRT Dictionary*, which has been distributed to all the units, it is seen that announcers, presenters and speakers fabricate words that could not be understood by any but them and that producers use these fabricated words a lot in some scripts they prepare. Hereafter, a conclusive act will be taken on those who use the fabricated words not included in the *TRT Dictionary*, and they will be broken off from the institution. Supervisors will investigate programs also about whether they include such fabricated words or not and communicate those they can detect to the Office. I demand that the joint chiefs pay attention to the issue, the order be signed by the staff and such events be not allowed to repeat.” See *Milliyet*, 26 February 1973.

⁴³² İyigüngör, p. 115.

⁴³³ Prime Minister Nihat Erim described such programs as *Köyün Saati* (Hour for the village) as “dreadful.” In a similar vein, Burhan Felek wrote in his column that this program made a call for changing the order in an artistic fashion. He claimed that use of the term “common property” in the program served communist propaganda. For details, see *Milliyet*, 14 July 1971; and *Milliyet*, 19 July 1971.

⁴³⁴ Quoted from Ö.C. in İyigüngör, pp. 268 – 9.

The military's intervention into TRT also changed the working atmosphere at the institution, overwhelming it by an extremely disciplined manner. Besides the stricter controls at the gate,⁴³⁵ new dress codes for work were imposed, and the female staff was not allowed to wear miniskirts or "ostentatious" clothes.⁴³⁶ Ö.C. said that nothing but these restrictions on dress made her recognize her gender identity at TRT.⁴³⁷

In 1973, TRT held a public exam for recruiting broadcasting staff. S.Ü. described it as the "TRT's first serious professional exam held open to the public."⁴³⁸ Despite not being the first, unlike she claimed, this admission exam was distinguished from the previous ones by the large number of high school and university graduates who took it, 2,753. One hundred thirty of them passed the written exam. Their number was further reduced to 97 after a two month course, and they were employed as reporters, producers, speakers and editors.⁴³⁹

N.Ç. described the challenge of the admission process as follows: "We worked seriously hard...For us, it became an occupation with which we took pains a lot and into which we entered by being distinguished."⁴⁴⁰ However, it appeared that the senior TRT authorities were not satisfied with the results of the exam, which they thought revealed the lack of desired educational capital among the candidates. A round-table discussion titled "The Staff Problem at Turkish Television," during

⁴³⁵ N.Ç.

⁴³⁶ S.Ü.

⁴³⁷ Ö.C.

⁴³⁸ S.Ü.

⁴³⁹ Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu, *1973 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bütçe Raporu*, p. 72.

⁴⁴⁰ N.Ç. The original quotation is as follows: *Biz çok ciddi emek verdik... Bayağı bir emekle ve seçilerek girdiğimiz bir iş oldu bu bizim için.*

which executives from TRT discussed this problem and mostly blamed universities for not raising well-equipped broadcasting staff,⁴⁴¹ was broadcast on TV in February 1973.

In *Cumhuriyet*, M. Tali Öngören, the first head of Ankara TV before March 12, criticized the TV panel for serving the political authority's attack on university autonomy. Actually, following the panel, some press organs and columnists opened fire on the overall university education. They particularly attacked the high schools of press and broadcasting which had been established in the late 1960s, first in Ankara and then in Istanbul and Izmir by the private sector in order to meet the increasing demand for qualified staff in those fields.

Öngören accused the TRT administration itself of not training the junior TV staff properly.⁴⁴² He said that the rapid growth in the total TV transmission hours during the interim military period had created an urgent need to fill the screen. This sense of urgency had resulted in the TV administration's failure to train the TV personnel. Unlike the radio personnel, who benefited from a rather well-institutionalized in-house training process, the staff recruited for TV had to train themselves.

The administration's apparent ignorance of training the TV personnel on the job continued well into the 1970s. For example, interviewee C.O., who started to work for TRT TV as an assistant producer in 1974, said, "in-house training was

⁴⁴¹ For example, one TRT executive claimed, "In Turkey, there is no resource which can raise staff for us," overlooking the fact that a number of high schools of press and broadcasting had been established by then, with those operating under *Mülkiye* as well as under Ankara and Eskişehir Academies of Economics and Commercial Sciences being the most distinguished ones. See *Milliyet*, 23 February 1973.

⁴⁴² *Cumhuriyet*, 16 March 1973.

offered to the TV producers once in a blue moon, thus we learned our work by practice.”⁴⁴³

From *Milliyet*, Haluk Ülman also accused the TRT administration itself of not cooperating with schools of radio/TV broadcasting in the training of its staff. Yet, unlike Öngören, what Ülman opposed most was the requirement that the applicants have completed their military service. He wrote, “As a matter of fact, since this was required, most of the talented students who finished faculty or high school in the last two years were not able to take this exam.”⁴⁴⁴ He argued that the “unsophisticated” answers given to the exam questions had been a result from the applicants having been female. This argument, which he based on the presumption that men inherently had a greater intellectual capacity than women, implied that the requirement of completion of military service for attending the TRT’s exam had led to the placement of women in this institution in unfair numbers.

S.Ü. recalled that the majority of those who had attended the exam in 1973 had been women. She defined the requirement of the fulfillment of military service as a case of “discrimination against men.” In her words, “Our male friends had such misfortune... Simply for this reason, they sometimes complained to us. They said that the equality between men and women was disrupted at that point.”⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴³ C.O. The original quotation is as follows: *TV yapımcılarına kırk yılda bir eğitim verilirdi. Bu yüzden işi yapa yapa öğrendik.*

⁴⁴⁴ *Milliyet*, 23 February 1973. The original text is as follows: *Şurası bir gerçektir ki, bu şart aranınca son iki yılda fakülteleri, yüksekokulları bitirmiş olan yetenekli öğrencilerden çoğu sınava katılamamışlardır.*

⁴⁴⁵ S.Ü. The original quotation is as follows: *Erkek arkadaşların öyle bir şanssızlığı oldu... Sırf bu nedenle bize zaman zaman sitemde bulundular... Kız erkek eşitliği işte burada bozuldu, dediler.*

Due to its urgent need for intellectuals in the second half of the 1960s, TRT had not set the completion of military service as a criterion for admission.⁴⁴⁶ As time passed on, university graduates, whose number rose almost four-fold between 1960 and 1970,⁴⁴⁷ began to discover a prestigious and charming public enterprise which offered its employees generous financial and social benefits. To the male graduates' dismay, however, TRT now required that applicants had performed their military duty, partly in order to prevent overcrowding at its gate and partly because of the administration's distrust of young men who had not undergone military disciplining. This turned into an opportunity for women, but they were made to pay for it by incurring the blame for taking men's place undeservedly.

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the public nature of its admission exams was highlighted to support the claim that the basic criterion for the recruitment to TRT as a professional was merit. Nevertheless, the press covered stories which demonstrated that discriminatory practices, even if not against women, were a part of the TRT's examination practices.⁴⁴⁸ For women, things did not run smoothly, as well. Certain departments such as TV production were shut to women who had passed the 1973 admission exam mainly on the pretext of gender:

⁴⁴⁶ For example, the TRT's admission exam announcement in 1970 did not include this requirement as regards male applicants. See *Cumhuriyet*, 15 February 1970.

⁴⁴⁷ Against 6,025 university graduates in the academic year 1960/1961, there were 22,856 in 1970/1971. See TUIK, *İstatistik Göstergeler 1923 – 2009* (Ankara: TUIK Matbassı, 2010), p. 76.

⁴⁴⁸ For example, a non-Muslim reader expressed his following complaint in a letter he wrote to the press: "It was announced for days both on radio and on TV that TRT was to recruit speakers by exam. Thinking that I possessed all the requirements, I went to the Istanbul Radio House Directorate. The man at the information desk gave me a piece of paper.... Although I did not expect to receive a negative answer, I asked whether my non-Muslim identity posed an obstacle or not probably because I had not been able to be free of the impact created by the fact that I had experienced the same bitter results in many other places. The guy said excitedly, 'It is impossible, my brother. You a must to be a Turkish citizen!' ... I grew stone cold. I left the paper and went out, unable to say anything. Are not we Turkish citizens? If we are not, let's learn the citizens of what [country] we are." For the rest of his letter, see *Cumhuriyet*, 23 May 1973.

We started to work at Ankara Radio... There, we also experienced something about which we later said, “Why did we sign that paper?” The exams ended. We were hired, yet they told us something like this: Girls will not choose television because the work there gets delayed when they marry and have children. On the other hand, in practice women always worked a lot both on radio and on television. However, we signed a paper. Some of them went to the Foreign Broadcasts; some chose radio. What other options did we have? Those were all. That is, television was not an option.⁴⁴⁹

This constraint was justified by the allegation that women were inclined to give more priority to their domestic life than their work:

There were plenty of female producers working on television, and they did not want to go to the stuff. That is, they were “said so;” the administration expressed it in that way. They did not want to go filming in Anatolia. They did not want to leave Istanbul or Ankara. They said this to us as the justification. “Women should choose radio because they do not go outside when they work for television.” On the other hand, when my daughter was only six months old, I went on a business trip in the Black Sea [region] for ten days. We never had such a problem, yet this was the decision of the administration. Actually, this was against the Constitution, against the principle of equality.⁴⁵⁰

During the interview, N.Ç. and S.Ü. were asked whether they showed any reaction to the confinement of women to certain broadcasting departments other than TV production. They replied that as young women who had recently graduated from the Department of Radio Television and Cinema at Ankara University and who were eager to be where they were “already destined” to be, they did not have much power at their disposal to challenge the administration’s decision:

We did not have our present mind at that time. We were too young. Also, we wanted to enter TRT very much. We did not have the chance for private television, too, of course. We had to enter there in order to do our profession, or we would have gone to banks, to ministries, like some friends of ours. That is, we were willing to accept anything in order to be at the institution.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁹ S.Ü.

⁴⁵⁰ N.Ç.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

The account of another interviewee, C.O., who started to work for TV one year after them, also shows the professional underrepresentation of women in TV production at that time. She said that when she was recruited, the great majority of the TV producers in Ankara had been men, and she gave the example that there was only one female producer of TV music programs in Ankara.⁴⁵²

Although C.O. had been planning to work as a performer of music on the radio until then, she opted to become part of the TV staff instead in 1974. She explained why she changed her mind as follows: “When I got the taste of TV broadcasting, I did not want radio. I found radio uninteresting due to its lack of visuality.” She added that she considered TV “much more full of enthusiasm, excitement and wonder” than radio.⁴⁵³

The glamour and prestige besides the sense of adventure and unpredictability this new medium offered to its staff encouraged many women to enter the field as professionals and to exploit it as a means to attain public identities. In addition, in the rapidly changing social environment of the 1970s, the TV screen became a highly popular site where a negotiation on the audio-visual definitions of various cultural ideals, including womanhood, took place. Nevertheless, with each step female broadcast professionals took to participate in this process on an equal footing with men, they encountered the frontiers of the dominant gender ideology. How they were positioned and positioned themselves against the screen and how they managed the

⁴⁵² Admittedly, it does not seem possible to give definite answers to the question about the proportion of men and women in the workforce at TRT during that time period. Records were patchily kept and the institution’s annual reports were often gender-blind. However, the figures available as snapshots of women’s status in TV broadcasting will be considered as representative of the overall situation.

⁴⁵³ C.O. The original quotation is as follows: *Televizyon yayıncılığının tadını alınca, radyoyu istemedim. Radyoyu görsellik olmadığı için yavan buldum.*

gendered specificities of their profession is what the following part of this chapter will discuss.

Women on and off the Air in the First Half of the 1970s

The debut of national TV broadcasts in Turkey occurred after a protracted process. Whereas radio technology started to be used in Turkey just a short period after its first application in the West, television had to wait for almost 35 years to arrive.⁴⁵⁴ Actually, during the DP years there were lobby efforts for the introduction of television technology to Turkey by 17 different American firms. Yet, with the dismissal of the government by the military coup in 1960, these endeavors came to nothing.⁴⁵⁵

After the coup on 27 May 1960, the issue of television appeared high on the agenda of the Directorate General for the Press. However, the first Five Year Development Plan (1963-1967), drawn up by the newborn and outstanding institution of the planned economy period, the State Planning Organization (SPO), did not include any investment to TV technology. It covered only one sentence about television: “The issue of television can be handled according to changes in technology and in costs, without allowing it to challenge our economy.” Instead, the

⁴⁵⁴ Limited television broadcasts started in Germany in 1935, in Britain in 1936 and in the USA in 1939. Although World War II hindered the development and extension of television technology for a while, the “golden age” following the war promoted a rapid growth in television. See Lyn Gorman & David McLean, *Media and Society in the Twentieth Century: A Historical Introduction* (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p. 127.

⁴⁵⁵ See Semih Tuğrul, *Türkiye’de Televizyon ve Radyo Olayları: Olaylar, Belgeler, Gerçekler, Açıklamalar* (İstanbul: Koza Yayınları, 1975), pp. 144 – 7.

plan emphasized the need for more adequate and wider use of radio, particularly for the purpose of education.⁴⁵⁶

Technocrats from the SPO actually regarded television as a luxury commodity and defended the idea that due to the high price of TV receivers, any state investment in television technology would serve only the dominant income groups. They argued for the establishment of a national TV receiver industry that would supply inexpensive television receivers to people from lower income groups before the installation of a country wide broadcast network.⁴⁵⁷ Besides the SPO's reluctance, the center of the right JP government apparently refrained from allocating resources to TRT for launching TV broadcasts since it regarded TRT an "enemy institution," so to speak, judging from the leftist intellectuals' hold over its internal operations and decision-making mechanisms.⁴⁵⁸

By the time Turkey met television, public television enterprises had already been established in many of its neighboring countries such as Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Iraq and Syria. TV receiver owners in Istanbul, whose number was estimated to be around three thousand by the SPO in 1967, were able to watch the broadcasts of Bulgarian, Romanian and Yugoslavian TV stations as well as the trial TV broadcasts of Istanbul Technical University, which lasted from 1952 to 1970. In addition,

⁴⁵⁶ Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, *Kalkınma Planı: Birinci Beş Yıl (1963 – 1967)*, September 1963, <http://ekutup.dpt.gov.tr/plan/plan1.pdf> [4 December 2012], p. 384. The original text is as follows: *Televizyon konusu teknoloji ve maliyetlerdeki değişmelere göre, ekonomimizi zorlamayacak şekilde ele alınabilir.*

⁴⁵⁷ Tuğrul, pp. 140 – 1.

⁴⁵⁸ M. Tali Öngören, *Ayıptır Söylemesi: TRT'nin İçinden* (Yazko: İstanbul, 1983), pp. 10 – 15.

around four thousand people in the border regions in the south watched TV broadcasts from the neighboring countries with TV broadcast networks.⁴⁵⁹

As the number of local TV stations in these neighboring countries was increasing, the demand for TV receivers in Turkey was also rising. Particularly for high income urban families, owning a TV receiver started to become a symbol of prestige. Part of this demand was met by the TV receivers the Turkish labors working abroad brought back Turkey. Also, a number of foreign enterprises started to produce TV receivers on the assembly line in partnership with the local bourgeoisie from the second half of the 1960s onwards.⁴⁶⁰



Fig. 10. A TV receiver advertisement demonstrating a typical middle class urban family with their TV set⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁹ Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, *Kalkınma Planı: İkinci Beş Yıl (1968 – 1972)*, 1967, <http://ekutup.dpt.gov.tr/plan/plan2.pdf> [4 December 2012], p. 590.

⁴⁶⁰ Semih Tuğrul, who was the chief of the team tasked with implementing the trial broadcasts of Ankara TV, mentioned that by 1975, the number of the foreign firms producing TV receivers in Turkey within partnership with the domestic bourgeoisie had reached to 15, most of which were of German origins, such as Schaub–Lorenz (ITT), Nordmende, Saba and Körting. For further details, see Tuğrul, p. 159.

⁴⁶¹ Copied from *Milliyet*, 24 January 1975. The caption beneath the picture is read as follows: “I would not change my Philips television, which has worked for eight years without trouble and which has the sharpest image, for any other.”

Despite the apparent hesitation about investment in television technology among the state circles, in April 1963, almost one year before the establishment of TRT, a technical agreement was signed between the Turkey and the Federal Germany for the foundation of a TV Training Center in Ankara. According to the agreement, the technical hardware for this training center would be donated by the German authorities. Also, as provided by the agreement, a number of engineers, technicians and producers from Ankara Radio received training in TV broadcasting in Germany.

The transfer of technology from central to peripheral countries was one of the main channels whereby the latter were integrated to the world capitalist economy within a framework of dependence after the Second World War. The start of TV broadcasts in Turkey followed this pattern, as well. Although the apparent goal of the agreement with the Federal Germany government was to develop a skilled work force for TV production, it ultimately resulted in the dependency of the technical hardware of broadcast TV in Turkey on the powerful electronics industry of Germany at a rate around 80%, along with public tenders later made with German firms.⁴⁶²

On 14 August 1966, closed-circuit TV broadcasts started at the training center established in the basement of an apartment building in Mithatpaşa, Ankara. Initially, this center was not supposed to be linked to a TV transmitter broadcasting outside. Instead, its main objective was to raise technicians and production personnel for future TV broadcasts. However, as the term of office of the first Board of TRT was about to end, some members of the board came to the belief that TV broadcasts over Ankara should be launched by using the facilities at this training center. To this end,

⁴⁶² Tuğrul, p. 158.

TRT also opened courses in TV broadcasting under the supervision of TV professionals from the BBC and recruited around 40 TV production staff.

Upon an expedited process, trial broadcasts of Ankara Television began on 1 October 1967. Around three months later, on 16 January 1968, the TV production staff presented a special program for the members of the Parliamentary Planning and Budget Commission in order to persuade them to allocate resources to television technology. And TV was ultimately introduced to the inhabitants of Ankara on 31 January 1968 with speaker Nuran Emren's⁴⁶³ opening announcement, by using a 5 KW TV transmitter donated by the government of the Federal Germany.

When television broadcasts started, TV receivers were a luxury commodity only a small number of upper class urban families could afford. According to the research by Abadan-Unat, at that time only about one percent of Ankara's inhabitants owned a TV receiver set in their homes.⁴⁶⁴ Furthermore, television covered a small area within a limited transmitting power. Nonetheless, TV broadcasting was developed in technical terms during the 1971 military administration mostly because budget restraints on the state's investment in television technology were easily removed in the authoritarian political climate. With these technical developments, the coverage area of TV expanded. The number of registered TV receiver owners rose from 101,000 to around 270,000, and the transmission hours increased from around 310 per year in 1968 to nearly 1200 at the end of 1973.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶³ She was the first female TV announcer in Turkey. While she was studying at the Faculty of Language, Geography History at Ankara University, she attended a speakership admission exam. She failed in this exam, yet it was cancelled. She succeeded in the following exam. However, she got married three years later and gave up her post on TV. See "İlk Türk kadın TV spikeri Nuran Emren Devres'tir," 2011, http://spikerlerdernegi.com/duyuru-ilk_kadin_tv_spikeri_nuran_emren_devres-54.html [4 December 2012].

⁴⁶⁴ *Milliyet*, 10 June 1968.

⁴⁶⁵ The technical developments in television technology during the military period can be listed as follows: Istanbul Television, which broadcast from the Istanbul Technical University until

The allocation of generous financial resources to TRT by the military administration was closely related to the government's aim of rendering TV a more effective apparatus of the state ideology. In addition, the concern that people living in the border regions opted for watching foreign broadcasts triggered the government's endeavors for improving television technology, particularly in cities close to the border such as Edirne, Erzurum, and Antalya.

The introduction of television technology generated a wide-ranging discussion about its role against society. Even reviews about particular TV programs, such as a discussion of "last night's viewing," included an assessment of the very existence of television. The discussion on TV mostly revolved around the tension between what Thumim describes as "giving the public what it ought to need and giving the public what it wants."⁴⁶⁶

In the initial years of television broadcasting, there was a tendency among intellectuals and politicians to describe television as a teacher.⁴⁶⁷ The *raison d'être* of television production was seen as informing and educating the audience, while also entertaining them. In 1967, Prof. İsmet Giritli, who was a member of the TRT's

1971, was linked to Ankara. The power of the TV transmitter in Ankara was increased from 50 to 500 kilowatt in a small time period. As of the end of 1971, TV broadcasts started in Eskişehir and İzmir, in addition to Ankara and Istanbul. Also a TV transmitter was established in Çamlıca, Istanbul in 1972 at 2.5 kilowatt power. Moreover, Edirne, Antalya and Erzurum TV stations became a part of broadcast TV by producing package programs with their transmitters of 5 kilowatt power each. See Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1973 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bütçe Raporu*, pp. 15 – 20.

⁴⁶⁶ Janet Thumim, *Inventing Television Culture: Men, Women and the Box* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 18.

⁴⁶⁷ Although the technical software for the debut of Ankara TV was provided by Germany, TRT TV followed the BBC's programming principles at the beginning of its development with many of its programmers having been sent to Britain to get on the job training. The BBC's approach to broadcasting has been called "paternalist" by Raymond Williams. This understanding located the broadcasting institution outside and above society and defined it as a public educator. It was expected to educate the audience in order to equip society with a "richer and higher" culture and to isolate the influence of the American pop culture. Sir John Reith, the "founding father" of the BBC, defended this paternalist mentality by purporting that a more "democratic" instrument of communication might create lower cultural standards. For further details on his approach to broadcasting, see Erol Mutlu, *Televizyon ve Toplum* (Ankara: TRT Eğitim Dairesi Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1999), p. 24.

board, started one of his columns with a Chinese proverb, “A picture substitutes for ten thousand words.” Taking attention to problems in education such as the low rate of literacy, he argued that the establishment of TV stations was intended to satisfy society’s need for continuous education. Emphasizing the role of mass media for the development of equal educational opportunities, Giritli demanded that the primary objective of TV be universalizing education.⁴⁶⁸ Similarly, Haldun Taner wrote, “Our TRT should act as an educator which gets ahead of [the people]..., and which presents programs at the level it is supposed to achieve.”⁴⁶⁹

The Second Five Year Development Plan (1968-1972), published in the *Official Gazette* one year before the start of TV broadcasts, apparently abandoned the previous reluctant approach to the issue of television and provided that the construction of a national TV network would be completed in three consecutive planning periods. Similar to the manner it handled radio, this plan stated, “Television will be used as an instrument of education.”⁴⁷⁰ Actually, it regarded television a means of raising the necessary labor power for industrial development. Within the belief, “Social changes depend on social laws, but backward nations could accelerate social change by using technology,”⁴⁷¹ it defended that by broadcasting vocational courses on TV in Turkey, which has inadequate educational facilities, it would be possible to move up the available labor power supply to the required level for industrialization.

⁴⁶⁸ *Milliyet*, 6 April 1967.

⁴⁶⁹ *Milliyet*, 24 December 1974. The original text is as follows: *TRT’imiz [halkın] önüne geçip... yetişeceği seviyede programlar sunan bir eğitimci gibi hareket etmelidir.*

⁴⁷⁰ Başbakanlık DPT, *Kalkınma Planı: İkinci Beş Yıl*, p. 191. The original text is as follows: *Televizyon bir eğitim aracı olarak değerlendirilecektir.*

⁴⁷¹ Quoted in Oskay, p. 20. The original text is as follows: *Sosyal değişimler sosyolojik kanunlara tabiidir, ancak geri ülkeler teknolojiye yararlanarak sosyal değişimleri hızlandırabilirler.*

Ironically enough, despite the plan considered television basically a medium for educating and uplifting society, it suggested that the establishment of the TV network should start from the cities of Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir. As was said before, in these cities, the profile of television receiver owners was heavily dominated by high income families who would rather watch TV for entertainment purposes. Notwithstanding that it recognized this situation, the plan justified giving precedence to these cities in the development of the TV network as means to increase revenues from advertisements, which would then be used for extending the reach of television to the Eastern regions.⁴⁷²

As was clearly seen in the way the SPO dealt with the case of television, beneath the discourse which glorified television as an effective means of citizen education flew the state authority's concern for making a profit out of this public service. Therefore, the development of television broadcasts in Turkey in the 1970s was informed by the two apparently competing motives: the ideal of uplifting society as dictated by the public service mandate and the objective of making television a lucrative business.

Many intellectuals had suspicions about the state investment in TV technology since they regarded this medium as a means of entertainment for well-off social classes in the cities. They cautioned that unless a completely domestic industry for producing TV receivers was established and unless TV sets were supplied to the larger public at lower price rates, television would not only be a burden on the domestic economy by reinforcing its dependence on the foreign capital, but also

⁴⁷² Also, two other motives informed the changing approach of the SPO to the issue of television, as stated in the Second Five Year Development Plan. Television was said to have positive impacts in terms of "national security," and to be highly useful for introducing "national ideas and ideals" to foreign countries. For further discussion, see *ibid.*

continue to address only those urban groups inclined to watch it for entertainment instead of education.⁴⁷³

On the other hand, if we scratch the surface of this early discussion on television, we come across a powerful combination of paternalism, which perceived the audience as an easily manipulable mass and thus dependant on the elites' guardianship, and opposition to the artefacts of popular culture. This discourse was informed by a kind of cultural snobbery which dictated that the majority of popular TV programs, particularly TV series imported from the US, were inherently damaging to the audience. The assumption that these series, whose weight on the air actually increased after the 1971 military intervention,⁴⁷⁴ narcotized the people of Anatolia by introducing them to an imaginary world they could never achieve otherwise pervaded many television viewers' columns, while such programs did actually attract and hold large numbers of audience and eventually became much-loved examples of early television.⁴⁷⁵

The objection to light entertainment TV productions targeted their intellectual level, as well. Critics usually expressed the low value they ascribed to this TV

⁴⁷³ For example, see *Milliyet*, 15 June 1968.

⁴⁷⁴ As Cankaya demonstrates in her analysis of the TV programming structure in Turkey, the sense of urgency to fill the increased transmission hours after the 1971 military intervention reinforced the temptation to import more TV programs, most of which were American light entertainment productions. Particularly foreign drama series were considered effective means of engaging audiences through their promise of predictable and regular provision of well-liked characters. The importing of ready-made materials was also favored in terms of the industrial imperative for decreasing costs. For further details, see Özden Cankaya, *Türk Televizyonunun Program Yapısı* (Istanbul: Mozaik Basım ve Yayıncılık, 1986).

⁴⁷⁵ One example was Öngören's following review about the American TV series *Fugitive* and *Star Trek*, both of which were broadcast on Ankara TV after March 12: "The broadcasts which have the highest influence on our people are those coming from abroad... After the depression Turkey lived in recent years, you think that the aim of the expansion of our TV is to introduce handsome Captain Kirk of the program *Star Trek* to the entire Anatolia. Now, Dr. Kimble of the new series titled *Fugitive* will visit those places in Anatolia which have probably never seen a doctor until now and will create a new yet bare world there. Look, Anatolia, which lacks doctors, will meet a doctor thanks to television." See *Cumhuriyet*, 24 May 1973.

broadcast material in such terms as “frivolous,” “light,” “distracting,” or “mindless.”

For example, Öngören said,

Today with its low quality films and entertainment programs, TV damps the people’s already insufficient enthusiasm for reading, theatre and cinema; it makes the people have a poor taste, and creates a society which is sick of contemplating, which is completely frivolous and miserable.⁴⁷⁶

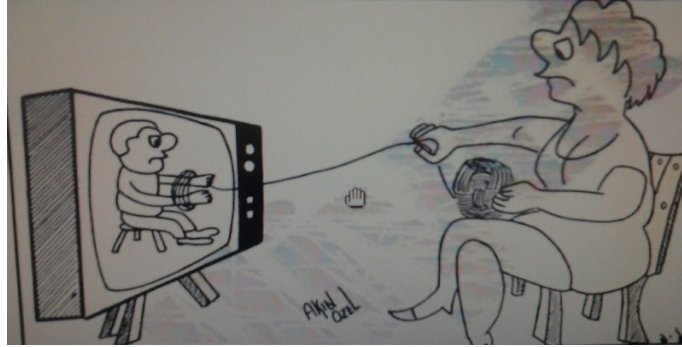


Fig. 11. A cartoon depicting a female viewer⁴⁷⁷

Not only were intellectuals concerned with content of TV programs, but they also showed disquiet about the habit of viewing itself. They regularly attacked the passivity of the audience in front of the television screen. For example , Haldun Taner considered TV viewing “a lazy act and a passive preoccupation:” According to him, since it creates no need for contemplating or for making choices, TV refashions a primitive kind of perception, thereby becoming “a comfortable way that mostly suits lazy minds’ interests.”⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁶ *Milliyet*, 31 January 1972. Original text is as follows: *[TV] bugün kalitesiz filmleriyle ve eğlence programlarıyla halkın zaten az olan okuma, tiyatro ve sinema hevesini kırarak, onu zevksizleştirecek, düşünmekten bıkmış, bomboş ve mutsuz bir toplum yaratacak niteliktedir.*

⁴⁷⁷ *Milliyet*, 27 November 1972.

⁴⁷⁸ *Milliyet*, 24 December 1974.



Fig. 12. A screenshot from a TV entertainment program from the early 1970s⁴⁷⁹

The caption beneath the picture above was as follows: “Entertainment or education program? Which one benefits the audience more?” Actually, the female figure with her spotlighted sexuality, as in Figure 12, was usually employed to symbolize and deplore television’s entertaining function in the critical discourse on TV that circulated in the press. Many TV critics thought that the figure of woman as a sexual being on TV signified a retreat from the TRT’s duty to educate and inform the “ignorant masses” and to mobilize them on behalf of social development. The cartoon copied below strikingly illustrates the perception of women’s visibility on the screen as a blow to TV’s educating role, particularly regarding peasants.

⁴⁷⁹ Copied from *Cumhuriyet*, 14 January 1974.

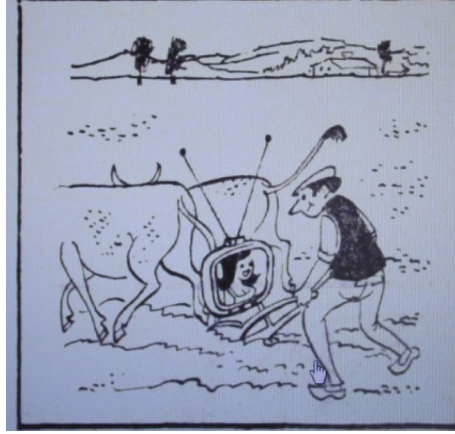


Fig. 13. A cartoon depicting a TV program addressing villagers, *Dağarcık* (Repertory)⁴⁸⁰

Many contemporary female broadcast professionals shared these concerns and regarded television mainly as a means of educating and elevating society. Therefore, they believed in the necessity of downplaying their sexuality at work and defined their professional identity in accordance with this belief. These women actually stood up to the reduction of their professional roles to their femininity, yet their opposition met a double bind. On the one hand, the belief that women were inherently inclined to fail in bracketing aside their sexuality was revoked to justify their isolation from certain genres, such as news and current affairs. On the other hand, they were expected to act as “decorative objects” on screen, more often than not.

Famous TV presenter Halit Kıvanç mentioned a striking anecdote in this regard: During the general elections in 1969, a special office tasked to broadcast the election results was set up in TRT headquarters in Ankara. However, the number of the staff assigned to the election program on TV was very limited as the majority was delegated to radio. To solve this problem, the chief of the graphics-decoration unit suggested having the “girls” working for this unit sit in the studio as “accessories” without paying them in turn for their overtime, and hanging up mirrors on the

⁴⁸⁰ Copied from *Cumhuriyet*, 9 April 1973.

opposite walls in order to pretend that the number of the guests in the studio was higher than it really was. While Kıvanç was discussing with the chief about this suggestion, another man came close to him and whispered in his ear, “Maybe poor girls will find husbands when they appear on TV so that we receive God’s blessing.”⁴⁸¹

Cem’s Term at TRT: Was It a “Golden Age?”

The coalition of the RPP and the NSP, the first democratic government established after the military intervention in 1971, appointed İsmail Cem as the TRT’s director-general by a special decree on 15 February 1974.⁴⁸² Cem’s appointment as the head of TRT was welcomed particularly by the staff aligned with the left. As a relatively young journalist with leftist affiliations, Cem was a personality with whom they could identify more easily. Jülide Gülizar described her feeling about Cem’s appointment as follows: “After the acts of a military period of two years and eight months, which could probably be considered normal but difficult to endure, we felt ourselves as indefinitely *free*.”⁴⁸³ A well-known leftist journalist, Ayşenur Arslan, started to work at the TRT News Office as an editor-reporter upon her success in the

⁴⁸¹ Halit Kıvanç, *Telesafir: Bizde TV Böyle Başladı* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2002), pp. 58 – 9. The original text is as follows: *Gariban kızlar da TV’ye çıkınca belki koca bulurlar, sevap olur.*

⁴⁸² In order to make appointments to managerial positions in some public enterprises like TRT, the SPO, the Anatolian Agency, the Directorate of State Theatre and the Cooperatives Counsellorship, the RPP-NSP coalition government issued a decree law, numbered 11, amending ordinances, in February 1974. According to the existing body of law, a person had to complete a 10 to 15 year term in the public service in order to be appointed to these managerial positions. It prevented appointment of those employed in the private sector or those with a shorter term in office to these posts. However, by this decree, the government increased the number of “exceptional offices,” thereby circumventing the requirement of working for a certain period as a state official. For further details, see *Milliyet*, 11 February 1974.

⁴⁸³ Gülizar, *TRT Meydan Savaşı*, pp. 72 – 3. The original text is as follows: *İki yıl sekiz ay süren bir askeri dönemin, belki olağan sayılabilecek, ama katlanılması zor uygulamalarından sonra, kendimizi sonsuz özgür sayıyorduk.*

admission exam held after Cem's appointment in 1974. She also recalled how she felt on her first day at work as follows:

Television was still as fresh as daisy, and it was also headed by a very young name, İsmail Cem, whom all of us were fond of even before we met him. I fell in love with my "job" from the very first day on. I was keen on learning everything "immediately," and doing it "immediately." I was very excited. I was very happy.⁴⁸⁴

İsmail Cem gave a press conference on 11 March 1974 during which he announced the changes in the broadcasting policy he planned to realize. The most striking part of his speech was his criticism about the TRT's paternalist understanding of broadcasting. He promised that during his term he would not regard the audience as "an abstract student" and TRT as "a man of intellect who knows all the truth." He added that one of the primary criteria for broadcasts should be "what the people demanded and enjoyed."⁴⁸⁵

Erol Aksoy, assigned as the chief of the TV Cultural Broadcasts Office by Cem, further clarified the new administration's approach to broadcasting in an interview with the press. He replied the question whether TV should give the public what it wants or should lead the public to higher standards of culture as follows: "Whereas the former aim results in cultural corruption, the latter leads to isolation from the public."⁴⁸⁶

Aksoy defended a rather "softened" understanding of broadcasting as a public service that "pursues the aim of uplifting the people but without turning totally away from their cultural norms, beliefs and attitudes." This "middle of the route" approach was still informed by a patronizing perception about the audience, however much it

⁴⁸⁴ *Radikal*, 11 April 2004.

⁴⁸⁵ İsmail Cem, *TRT'de 500 Gün: Bir Dönem Türkiye'sinin Hikayesi* (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1976), p. 29.

⁴⁸⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 21 October 1974. The original text is as follows: *Birinci amaç bizi yozlaşmaya, ikincisi de halktan kopmaya götürür.*

entailed the establishment of a more intimate contact with it. Aksoy stated that in the new period, “TRT would hold the people’s hands warmly... and carry them to the desired place without ever abandoning their hands.”⁴⁸⁷ Once again, the TV audience was deemed in need of guardianship by the broadcasting institution if it was to reach a “desirable” cultural level.

İsmail Cem started to implement his ideas about broadcasting from the screen.⁴⁸⁸ Actually, the period of İsmail Cem, when TV started to address a large number of audiences with the introduction of many popular productions, both foreign and domestic, has been considered the “golden age of television” by leftist intellectuals and politicians today.⁴⁸⁹ Nevertheless, this “golden age” narrative hides from the sight the political struggles that took place among the leftist groups inside TRT during Cem’s term.

Cem himself defined some left-aligned figures in the institution as “so-called revolutionaries,” which he said to include “leftist-Kemalists and petite bourgeois radicals.” He wrote the following about their critical attitude towards his broadcasting policy:

This group... did not wait even for one month to attack TRT and me. In their view, giving place to rightist parties in news or producing entertainment or sports programs was almost treason itself. Besides, if you accidentally softened a broadcast that violated religious sentiments

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Önemli olan önce halkın elinden tutup onu... istenilen yere götürmek.*

⁴⁸⁸ By the end of his term, television had been watched six days a week including weekends, and many investments in TV technology, which the military administration initiated, had been fully realized. For example, in 1974, subsidiary TV transmitters were put into use in seventeen different points in Turkey in addition to the establishment of new transmitting stations in cities of Adana, Edirne, Ankara (Elmadag) and Balıkesir (Mudanya). With these investments, the total transmitting power of TV increased from 220.1 KW to 389.65 KW at the end of 1974. A TV magazine published in the West Germany, *Gong*, listed TRT TV as the fifth in terms of developments in television programming and technology in Europe. For details, see Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu, *1974Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bütçe Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1975), pp. 3 – 4, 31.

⁴⁸⁹ It is highly meaningful that the Metropolitan Municipality in Antalya, currently from the RPP, named the Television Awards, it has organized each year since 2010, after him.

or removed an obscene scene on the basis of child psychologists' suggestions and not out of ignorance, only because you considered children, it would mean that your reactionism was immediately registered.⁴⁹⁰

Evidently, there were a remarkably high number of female producers among those who objected to Cem's populist TV broadcasting policy. S.Ü. said that many female producers found it difficult to come to terms with certain components of Cem's programming policy, such as live broadcasts of Mawlid recitations from mosques, which were not available on screen before his term. They perceived such productions as a retreat from TV's mission of educating and uplifting society and as a means of "narcotizing" audiences.⁴⁹¹

Interviewee N.Ç.'s account about one of these female producers is as follows:

When Cem gathered the producers together at a meeting in the cafeteria of the television and was talking to them, an experienced female producer stood up and said directly to Cem, "You are trying to put society to sleep as in Argentina and Brazil. Match broadcast is a thing made in the underdeveloped Third World countries. You are making a mistake." ... That lady was the daughter of a highly valuable journalist. She was a well-educated and cultured lady who could see the truth.⁴⁹²

Employing a highly misogynist language, on the other hand, Cem said that everybody but "brilliant leftist women who have been left on the shelf," was pleased with the new broadcasting period, which started on 9 September 1974.⁴⁹³

⁴⁹⁰ Cem, p. 103. The original text is as follows: *Bu grup... bana ve TRT'ye saldırmak için bir ay dahi bekleyemedi. Bu düşünce açısından, haberlerde sağ partilere yer vermek, eğlence programı ya da spor yayını yapmak neredeyse ihanetin ta kendisiydi. Hele kazara dinsel duyguları istiskal eden bir yayını yumuşatsanız yahut açık bir görüntüyü çocuk psikologlarının önerisiyle ve bağınazlıktan değil, sırf çocukları düşündüğünüzden kaldırsanız, gericiliğiniz hemen tescil olunmuş demektir.*

⁴⁹¹ S.Ü.

⁴⁹² N.Ç.

⁴⁹³ Cem, p. 61.

Anxiety over the Feminine Image on Screen

As most TV scholars have argued, images offered on domestic screens, the discourse of which is as much visual as it is verbal, could not be always contained. In Turkey, this recognition produced remarkable and widespread suspicion about the implications of television watching for the cultural “health” of the Turkish nation. This anxiety over the potential lack of control over television was mostly displaced onto the female characters of popular drama series and films that went beyond the taken-for-granted gender roles for women.

Referring to a popular American TV series, *Love Story*, broadcast on the Turkish television during Cem’s term in 1974, Öngören questioned whether “giving the public what it wants” meant displaying the kind of behaviors on the screen which the public was likely to find “undesirable.” He based his objection on the belief that in an “underdeveloped” country like Turkey “TV broadcasts should be adjusted to the popular morality instead of pleasuring the well-off urban minority.”⁴⁹⁴

Öngören contrasted this series, which showed “young students making love or mothers advising their unwed daughters to use contraceptives,” with the TV documentary *Soylu Yabani* (Loyal savager), which was condemned for displaying obscenity.⁴⁹⁵ According to him, *Soylu Yabani* showed the objective truths about the people of the Amazon within their natural images as a documentary was supposed to

⁴⁹⁴ See *Cumhuriyet*, 2 December 1974. Also, a certified copy of the script of the mother-daughter dialogue in *Love Story* about use of contraceptives was attached to the documentation submitted by the Nationalist Front coalition government, which attempted to nullify Cem’s appointment as the head of TRT, to the Council of State in order to support its cause against Cem. For further details see, İsmet Solak, ed. *İsmail Cem Dosyası* (Ankara: Anka Yayınları, 1975), p. 309.

⁴⁹⁵ This imported documentary was broadcast in October 1974 on TV. Right after its transmission, it was condemned for displaying obscene scenes by Minister of Justice Şevket Kazan, from the Islamist NSP, who then ordered the Ankara Prosecution Office to open up an investigation about this broadcast. However, upon the investigation, the prosecutor declared a non-suit about the issue. See *Milliyet*, 26 October 1974; and also *Milliyet*, 5 November 1974.

do. Therefore, the opposition against it arose from a “backward mentality,” while *Love Story*⁴⁹⁶ “totally contradicted with the values of our society,” thereby deserving the antagonism it gave birth to.⁴⁹⁷

Not surprisingly, rightist politicians also stood up to various artefacts of the popular culture on screen by condemning their “obscene” scenes for “violating the morality of the Turkish nation.” For example, JP parliamentarian Ali Naili Erdem said the following at the parliamentary session on 10 December 1974:

It is our national morality that has been teased. It is our institution of family which they have attempted to introduce as primitive. We are watching a film together on the screen. It depicts the meaninglessness and needlessness of virginity for marriage. They once asked a painter, “What is the most beautiful color that suits women?” He said, “It is modesty.” The Turkish history has the brightest sheets due to the Turkish women’s chastity.⁴⁹⁸

The left’s discourse about TV in the 1970s was usually informed by an elitist understanding that regarded itself as an educator above the masses, whose morals they found “backward” or “ignorant,” at best. Accordingly, many from the leftist intelligentsia defined their position against populism within the overall societal discussion on television. Nonetheless, when television introduced any plots and images that threatened the taken-for-granted norms of behavior for women, some leftist intellectuals met on the same platform those from the right and attacked television on behalf of the “morality of the masses” from an apparently populist vantage point.

Actually, Öngören’s critical review about *Love Story* did not diverge much from the way the left addressed women particularly after 1974, when it started to

⁴⁹⁶ Against the outrage the series *Love Story* generated, the Cem administration first rescheduled it at a later hour in the evening and then removed it from the TV schedule entirely. For details, see *Cumhuriyet*, 9 December 1974; and *Cumhuriyet*, 30 December 1974.

⁴⁹⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 2 December 1974.

⁴⁹⁸ Solak, ed., p. 50.

acquire a mass appeal. One of the premises about women adopted by the left in the second half of the 1970s was the ideal of self-sacrificing mother and wife. Many socialist and leftist organizations of the decade deployed this ideal in their political discourse as they called women into political action as “sisters and mothers” within a populist framework.⁴⁹⁹

Women’s Programs in the First Half of the 1970s

Particularly at the initial years of TV broadcasts, television’s address to women was accepted as highly significant because they were regarded as one of those audience groups deemed in need of education. Therefore, programs that directly appealed to women were produced.⁵⁰⁰

One of these women’s programs was *Kadın ve Ev* (Woman and home), broadcast in the early 1970s. It mostly addressed its audience as housewives-mothers. The topics it covered ranged from the “subtleties of sewing” and fashion styles in dress to problems with child-bearing, influence of marriage on women’s psychology, and examples from women’s lives in foreign countries.

The program was marked by a desire to be useful to women as entailed by the public service imperative enshrined in the TRT’s charter. Producer Deniz Adanalı’s hereby-quoted concern illuminates that she produced *Kadın ve Ev* as informed by a

⁴⁹⁹ For further details, see Ayşe Kadioğlu, p. 97; and also Emel Akal, *Kızıl Feministler: Bir Sözlü Tarih Çalışması* (Istanbul: Tüstav, 2008), p. 147.

⁵⁰⁰ According to the broadcasting plan issued by the TRT administration in 1973, women’s TV programs were supposed to deal with: the rights and freedoms the Republic brought to Turkish women, women’s place in family and society, time and energy efficient household management with the importance of planning for housework, health of body and psyche, nutrition, population planning, women’s engagement in social and cultural events, working women and their contributions to family and country, and lastly village women. See Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1974 Yılı Genel Yayın Planı* (Ankara: TRT Program Planlama Dairesi Başkanlığı, 1974), pp. 88 – 90.

didactic mandate, albeit in which all instruction and information centered on women's domestic responsibilities: "I am afraid these lectures on sewing are so complicated that *we cannot teach anything to the audience.*"⁵⁰¹



Fig. 14. A cartoon depicting the lectures on sewing in *Kadın ve Ev*⁵⁰²

According to the results of a pool survey conducted by *Milliyet* about TV programs, the audience of *Kadın ve Ev* complained that they could not understand what type of women the program addressed.⁵⁰³ The major part of the problem was its scheduling at eight o'clock in the evening. The program's producer shared the audience's concerns. She said that women's programs were usually broadcast in the morning in many European countries, whereas in Turkey it was scheduled at a time when women were the most occupied with their domestic duties and when male members of the household were at home. Yet, at that time weekday TV broadcasts started at

⁵⁰¹ *Milliyet*, 22 January 1973. The original text is as follows: *Bu dikiş dersleri o kadar karışık ki, seyirciye bir şey öğretemediğimizden korkuyorum.* (The italics are mine)

⁵⁰² Copied from *ibid.*

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*

around seven o'clock in the evening, making it impossible to schedule a woman's program earlier.

Adanalı received a number of letters from male audiences in which they teased the program content, for example by writing "Miss Deniz, you helped us a lot."⁵⁰⁴ Some TV critics also opposed the scheduling of a TV program that addressed housewives in the prime evening hours.

There was an implicit misogyny in these objections which suspected a particular appeal to women and employed it as evidence for its low cultural worth for the general audience. For example, Öngören wrote that such topics as "producing simple toys for children, cooking pasta sauce, purchasing and keeping food, sewing skirts, caring for hair and skin as well as recipes," which *Kadın ve Ev* covers, only address those women "who sit at home."⁵⁰⁵ Therefore, he argued, this program should not be broadcast in the evening when male family members took their seats in front of the screen.⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 February 1974.

⁵⁰⁶ Öngören also reviewed the TV program *Kadın Magazin* (Woman magazine), which started to be broadcast on Sunday evenings in early 1974. He criticized the way it portrayed a well-known female author, Firüzan. He argued that she must have been introduced to the audience in a cultural program instead by focusing more on her professional contributions to the art of literature. Actually, he showed distrust of the way television packaged femininity in ways that defined a woman of intellect merely with her gender identity. See *ibid.*



Fig. 15. A feature of a TV women's program *Kadın Magazin* broadcast in the early 1970s⁵⁰⁷

Öngören also criticized *Kadın ve Ev* for its indifference to women's social and economic problems and associated it with the strict censorship imposed over TV broadcasts after 1971.⁵⁰⁸

In the new broadcasting period that started after Cem's appointment, a remarkable change was seen in women's TV programs. First of all, *Kadın ve Ev* and *Kadın Magazin* were terminated in September 1974.⁵⁰⁹ To replace them, TRT TV started to broadcast a new magazine program titled *Kadınlarımız* (Our women), produced by a woman and a man, Süheyla Tezel and Atilla Arsoy. It covered topics like fashion from a socio-economic point of view, women's interest in world events and their habits of using instruments of mass communication, inequities faced by the

⁵⁰⁷ Copied from *Milliyet*, 18 May 1977.

⁵⁰⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 February 1974. In a similar vein, some TRT employees recalled that after March 12, magazine-formatted TV programs like *Kadın ve Ev* were privileged over those covering social and/or economic issues since the former were thought to offer the audience a way out the painful and chaotic environment brought by the military intervention. See İyigüngör, p. 72.

⁵⁰⁹ On its last episode on 9 September 1974, *Kadın ve Ev* covered the problems the migrant Turkish women working in the West Germany faced. See *Milliyet*, 9 September 1974.

women employed in agriculture, women's changing roles in the modern society as well as the problems with female state officials and workers' retirement.⁵¹⁰

Kadınlarımız apparently satisfied the expectations of those intellectuals and critics who argued for the use of television as a means of educating and uplifting society. For example, Oktay Akbal wrote a highly favorable review about the program's episode that covered the problems of the female cotton pickers in the Çukurova region. Against Süleyman Demirel's cry that television had abandoned its *milli* [Arabic equivalent of the word national] character during Cem's term, Akbal acclaimed the program for being "really *ulusal* and *ulusçu* [Turkish equivalents of the words national and nationalist with leftist-Kemalist connotations]," since "it demonstrates the living conditions, suffering and pains of our people, familiarizes the public opinion with these problems, and pushes to find solutions to all these deficiencies and disorder."⁵¹¹

In his discussion of this episode of *Kadınlarımız*, broadcast the same week as the above-mentioned documentary *Soylu Yabani*, Öngören highlighted the similarities between the living conditions of the people of the Amazon and the women in Çukurova as follows:

TRT TV expressed the problems of the woman cotton pickers in the Çukurova region in Turkey, who have been deprived of various rights like the local people of the Amazon. They also work as deprived of social rights, modernity and even 'a single orange.' They do not know anything about their future.⁵¹²

⁵¹⁰ See *Milliyet*, 7 October 1974; *Milliyet*, 12 November 1974; *Milliyet*, 26 November 1974; and also *Milliyet*, 12 December 1974.

⁵¹¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 24 October 1974. The original text is as follows: *Halkımızın yaşam koşullarını, çektiği çileleri, acıları göstermek; halkoyunu bu konulara karşı yakın kılmak; bütün bu aksaklıkları, düzensizlikleri ortadan kaldırmanın yollarını aramaya itelemek...*

⁵¹² *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1974. The original text is as follows: *TRT Televizyonu, Türkiye'de, Çukurova bölgesinde, Amazon yerlileri gibi çeşitli haklardan yoksun bırakılmış kadın pamuk toplayıcılarının sorunlarını dile getirdi. Onlar da sosyal haklardan, uygarlıktan ve hatta "bir tane portakaldan" bile yoksun çalışıyorlar.*

Despite the fact that it did not confine women, *Kadınlarımız* was informed by a patronizing style of representing women as its title suggests: It is “our women,” besides all, who will be looked at on screen through the male eye. The presumed audience of the program was not only women but anybody supposedly “ignorant” about the oppression and unfairness women experienced. Thus, Öngören advocated that this program had better be scheduled in the prime evening hours when “everybody could watch it.”⁵¹³ Similarly, Akbal wrote, it was all the Turkish citizens whom the program about the female cotton pickers addressed.⁵¹⁴

Assuming that this was equivalent to an egalitarian address which embraced both male and female audiences, what the program seemingly did was, indeed, to adopt a masculinist voice for speaking about women, positioning them as disempowered victims to social problems: Women were objectified as passive beings who lived a miserable life without having any control over their future, whereas the audience, positioned as masculine, was “enlightened” about their desperate situation. That is, the program sustained the assumption, as Thumim observes, that “problems are in women and opportunities [to ameliorate them] are for men.”⁵¹⁵

Kadınlarımız was broadcast as a documentary series in the last three months of 1974. Apparently, the TV authorities were so proud of the program that they considered displaying it in the Monte Carlo International Television Festival⁵¹⁶ as representing the Turkish television. Although they later abandoned this idea, they

⁵¹³ Only this episode was scheduled early in the morning at weekend, whereas the others were at weekday evenings. *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1974.

⁵¹⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 24 October 1974.

⁵¹⁵ Thumim, *Inventing Television Culture*, p. 118.

⁵¹⁶ It is an international festival and competition focusing on productions for television, founded in 1961 and based in Monaco. The festival’s ambition was to publicize TV’s role for bringing cultures together and enhancing their respective knowledge in the service of world peace. For further details on it, see “Monaco International Film Festival,” n.d., <http://www.monacofilmfest.com/> [March 3, 2013].

continued to cite *Kadınlarımız* as the evidence for their progressive understanding of broadcasting.⁵¹⁷

In 1975, however, this program disappeared from the daily TV schedule. In fact, that year TRT produced no TV programs catered to a specifically female audience. The annual report of the institution that year did not include the genre of women's programs as a stand-alone item in its list of TV programs either.⁵¹⁸ On the other hand, the vacuum created on the screen by the abandonment of women's programs was filled with a number of popular drama series, like US-produced *Bewitched*⁵¹⁹ and *Little Women*⁵²⁰ as well as Britain-produced *The Avengers*.⁵²¹

⁵¹⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 27 October 1975.

⁵¹⁸ TV's apparent ignorance about women was all the more striking since 1975 was declared as the International Women's Year by the United Nations in the First World Conference on Women held in Mexico City from on 9 – 12 June, where the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was drafted.

⁵¹⁹ *Bewitched* was a series produced in 1964 by the ABC-TV in the USA, starring Elizabeth Montgomery as a witch who abandons her magical identity so as to be a housewife-mother. Although she sometimes did a little magic, it was only for completing domestic chores, competing over men or helping men overcome embarrassing situations. According to Halper, the timing of *Bewitched* in the USA was no coincidence. This series appeared on the screen right after the publication of Betty Friedan's best-selling *Feminine Mystique* and the enactment of the equal pay act. In a decade when young women began to attend college in increasing numbers and when Friedan told women "there really was more to life than housework," the popular series like *Bewitched* disseminated the idea that "the danger of a woman having too much freedom is obvious: Her powers must be channeled and contained." For more discussion on this popular series, see Donna L. Halper, *Invisible Stars: A Social History of Women in American Broadcasting* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), pp. 197 – 8.

⁵²⁰ The plot of *Little Women* revolved around four lead female characters who are sisters living with their mother in New England. Their father is away, serving as a chaplain in the American Civil War, and the sisters struggle to support themselves and keep their household running despite the fact that the family recently lost its fortune. This TV adaptation of May Alcott's novel *Little Women* was criticized for not questioning the value of domesticity for women. However, we can not dismiss it as simply reinforcing the domestic ideal for women. It paid substantial narrative attention to women's experiences and concerns and gave place to strong female characters. The plot insisted that the domestic sphere could encourage women's individuality and turn them into young adults who could make their way in the world. It also normalized characters of ambitious women as an alternative to the previously taken-for-granted gender roles. For further details, see Sarah Elbert, *A Hunger for Home: Louisa May Alcott's Place in American Culture* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987), pp. 193 – 4, 287.

⁵²¹ It was a television series created in the 1960s. It ran on the commercially funded ABC Television in Britain from 1961 until 1969, broadcast as one hour episodes. It initially focused on Dr. David Keel and his assistant John Steed, who became the main character after the doctor's leave. Steed was partnered with a succession of assistants. Steed's most famous assistants were intelligent, stylish and assertive women. *The Avengers* did feature female characters only as secondary to the central male protagonist, with their femininity defined as desirable and attractive for the male eye.

We should question whether giving up a direct address to the female audience was a progressive move or not. Women's programs generally were accused of reinforcing the disempowered status of women or of compartmentalizing their concerns on the air, at best. On the other hand, as exemplified by BBC Radio's *Women's Hour* broadcast since 7 October 1947, a magazine program produced "by and for women" could privilege a female audience and be still concerned with advancing their status in society without reproducing a patriarchal narrative for women.⁵²²

In Turkey, as well, it was not TV but radio which opened up a space on the air for this possibility by its woman's program *Kadın Dünyası*, which was introduced into the schedule during Cem's term. *Kadın Dünyası* belonged to the genre of zone radio programming, first implemented by the initiative of Hıfzı Topuz, appointed by Cem as his assistant in charge of radio broadcasts, as a means to ameliorate the plummeting radio listening figures against TV's growing popularity.⁵²³

Zone programs, which started trial broadcasts on 5 August 1974, transmitted short, useful and factual information about multiple issues in a single episode within

However, as Thumim writes, the "challenge to women's assumed collusion with male dominance" occasionally informed the dialogues of the male and female lead characters of this series. For further details, see "TV Guide Names the Top Cult Shows Ever – Today's News: Our Take," 29 June 2007, <http://www.tvguide.com/news/top-cult-shows-40239.aspx> [31 March 2013]; and also Thumim, *Inventing Television Culture*, pp. 171 – 2.

⁵²² Sally Feldman, "Twin Peaks: The Staying Power of BBC Radio's *Woman Hour*," in *Woman & Radio: Airing Differences*, ed. C. Mitchell (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 64 – 72.

⁵²³ Despite the technical developments in radio broadcasting, figures of radio listening had decreased towards the second half of the decade after TV achieved popularity. The *1975 Broadcasting Program* took particular attention to this problem. In addition to the introduction of zone programs to the radio schedule, the posts of TRT I, TRT II and TRT III were separated and distinguished from one another in purpose and kind. TRT I radio went on the air on 9 September 1974. It aimed at "enlightening the large masses of audience, giving impartial and immediate news and also entertaining the audience." On 1 January 1975, the posts of TRT II and III started their broadcasts. TRT II was expected to act like a "public university" or a "culture radio" with the aim of providing the audience with opportunities to expand their knowledge and culture. It planned to transmit detailed news bulletins, commentaries, cultural and artistic events and "high quality" music. TRT III, on the other hand, was organized as a common broadcast of Ankara and Istanbul Radios. For further details, see Nart, p. 189 – 95.

a multi-voiced and lively manner. Unlike the previous format of block programming which included talks by authorities about only one particular issue, these programs gave an opportunity to the audience for expressing their own observations and suggestions on the air. They covered examples from audiences' lives, answers to their questions submitted by mail or by phone as well as efforts to share their problems and to find solutions to them.⁵²⁴

Broadcast live in the morning on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for around one hour, *Kadın Dünyası* was distinguished from the previous women's radio programs both by its generic format that aimed to create a live connection between radio and its audience and by the way it reflected women's concerns on the air. The previous radio programs that specifically addressed women gave primacy to such topics as recipes, health issues, fashion and child bearing.⁵²⁵ On the contrary, as they put it, the producer-speakers of *Kadın Dünyası* Filiz Ercan⁵²⁶ and Günseli Alkol⁵²⁷ set off their journey with the belief, "Since half of society is composed of women, anything which interests society also interests women,"⁵²⁸ and explained the range of issues they covered in the program as follows:

⁵²⁴ Ibid., p. 191.

⁵²⁵ According to Sibel Nart, after the military memorandum women's radio programs were also produced within the same understanding. Although these programs covered topics like women in urbanization and industrialization, working women and women's engagement in literary or artistic activities, it was women's domestic life what they attached primacy. See *ibid.*, p. 170.

⁵²⁶ Born in Edremit, Balıkesir, she completed her primary and secondary education there. After graduating from Çamlıca High School for Girls in Istanbul, she attended the Department of Pedagogy at Istanbul University. She succeeded in the radio's admission exam in 1961 while she was a student and started to work as a producer-speaker at radio. She was employed at Istanbul Radio until 1966, when she migrated to Ankara, and started her term of office at Ankara Radio after she married. See *Cumhuriyet*, 2 June 1975.

⁵²⁷ Born in Acıpayam, Denizli, she completed her primary and secondary education in Ankara. She graduated from the School of Law at Ankara University. She started to work at Ankara Radio in 1961 as a speaker-producer. She read fairy tales in child's programs. She both produced and presented a program for the first time within *Kadın Dünyası*. See *ibid.*

⁵²⁸ Quoted in Nart, p. 198. The original text is as follows: *Toplumun yarısı kadın olduğuna göre toplumu ilgilendiren her şey kadını da ilgilendirir.*

Communication between spouses, family law... These certainly interest women. If that communication occurs in a healthy manner, it will relieve children, and thus society. Therefore, of course, we covered husband-wife relations, children... education and recipes if necessary. However, besides that, we particularly tried to follow current affairs.⁵²⁹



Fig. 16. Producers of *Kadın Dünyası* at the radio studio⁵³⁰

The program also aimed at raising women's interest in politics by disseminating information about the political mechanism as well as women's political rights and responsibilities. Once a week concepts about politics and law were covered for a fifteen-minute period, and it was Jülide Gülizar who read this section of the program on the air. She also made interviews with particular groups of women, such as those in the Niğde Prison, bringing their personal narratives to the air.

Ercan and Alkol stated that the aim of the program was basically to establish a bridge between urban housewives, who spent most of their time at home, and the outer world. They planned to offer women, who demonstrated a lower rate of literacy than men and who could not participate in many cultural activities, a "window" from where they could see the world events more comfortably. The program was actually

⁵²⁹ Quoted in *ibid.*

⁵³⁰ *Milliyet*, 12 July 1979.

informed by an educating mandate against society, as the producers put it out:

“Through educating our women, we also want to educate families that compose society, thereby helping the rise of the cultural level of our society.”⁵³¹

When the program started, the producers did not intend to incorporate working or rural women into their audience profile, but as time passed, the audiences’ letters made them realize that they had many followers among those groups of women, as well, which encouraged the producers to include these women’s problems in the content of their program. Accordingly, they redefined the purpose of *Kadın Dünyası* as establishing a platform on the air where divergent groups of women can share their experiences, thereby as building their consciousness of womanhood:

We came to the belief that we were useful for women of various age groups and life styles to know each other and to learn about their problems from their own voices or writings... Of course, as producers we cannot claim to solve all women’s problems. We only assumed a duty for bringing suggestions to their problems, to analyze these problems in the light of modern scientific ideas, and to help women acquire consciousness.⁵³²

The style of address deployed in *Kadın Dünyası* highlighted the gender of its producers as woman. The producers frequently evoked that they were having experiences similar to their presumed audience’s. Actually, it was the radio authorities themselves who asked Ercan and Alkol to feature their own feminine identity in their address to the audience in order to reinforce a relation of intimacy with them:

⁵³¹ See ibid. The original text is as follows: *Kadınlarımızı eğitmek suretiyle toplumu oluşturan aileleri de eğitmek, böylece toplumumuzun kültürel seviyesinin yükselmesine yardım etmek istiyoruz.*

⁵³² *Cumhuriyet*, 2 June 1975. The original text is as follows: *Programcı olarak zaten tüm kadınların sorunlarını çözümlmek gibi bir iddiamız olamaz. Biz ancak sorunlara öneriler getirmek, bu sorunları çağdaş bilim ve görüşlerin ışığında inceleyerek kadınların bilinçlenmesinde... yardımcı olmak görevini aldık.*

We started the program on August 5. August 6 was my son's birthday.... They told us, "You are not different from your audience. You also have responsibilities at home; you have babies and children... That is, you are sharing similar problems with the audience. When necessary, one of you should arrive late in the program and say, 'The neighbor's child has measles; they called a doctor for him. I had to stay with him for a while,' or 'My child displayed bad temper when leaving for school; I had to take him to school myself;' then talk about the issue of children's adaptation to school." The second day of the program started with Günseli's question, "Why are you sad?" ... I said something like, "Today is my son's birthday. I am here for the program; I am wrapped up in him." Actually, we... exploited our children, so to speak, for it was the anniversary of the date of the atom bomb on Hiroshima, and we were inclined to talk on Hiroshima. Günseli started by saying, "Why do you feel sorry? [Your child] lives in an alive, healthy and peaceful country, but a few years ago Hiroshima..."⁵³³

In her research about women and radio in Britain, Carolin Mitchell argues that even today many female radio broadcast professionals still show hesitance for producing special programs only for a female audience and claim that gender is not an important factor in their approach to programming. According to Mitchell, they reject the stereotyping of women in a manner that tends to disconcert women both on and off the air.⁵³⁴

Similarly, in the interviews conducted for this study, S.Ü. and N.Ç., both of whom produced cultural or educational programs on radio not particularly addressing women in the 1970s, defined themselves as representatives not only of the womankind but of the whole of society. They claimed that if they produced programs only for women, this would constrain their professional identity.⁵³⁵

A single program for women does actually risk the compartmentalization of women's concerns and voice on the air. On the other hand, as Thumim argues,

⁵³³ Quoted in Nart, p. 199.

⁵³⁴ Caroline Mitchell, "Introduction: On a Woman's Wave Length?" in *Women & Radio: Airing Differences*, ed. C. Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 5.

⁵³⁵ S.Ü. and N.Ç.

women's programs might provide a "tentatively 'open' moment" which producers exploit to express cultural and political events and ideas in relation to women with the aim of "broadening" their experience.⁵³⁶ The producers of *Kadın Dünyası* apparently caught such an opportunity, amidst the novelties brought into radio broadcasting by the new administration, to address to their audience without positioning them in the domestic context alone. Although their program privileged a female audience, they tried not to confine women to an unequivocally patriarchal pattern. Besides, they did this not by veiling their gender identity but rather by highlighting it so as to establish an intimate contact with their audience.

Women and News: "Walking on a Tightrope"

As many feminist media scholars have pointed out, gender politics in different areas of broadcasting show divergences, particularly with the newsroom being a much more heavily male-dominated environment than any other desk. Actually, the interviewees employed at the newsroom shared the impression that both the proportion of female program makers in other departments was higher and those women had more power at their disposal⁵³⁷ than themselves:

I remember that a high number of women worked, particularly in the program section. Female producers were the kind of women with a lot of power in their hands since they happened to be peremptory. That is, the program section was freer than the newsroom, for she assumed responsibility only for a single program and directed it to the end.⁵³⁸

⁵³⁶ Thumim, *Inventing Television Culture*, p. 61.

⁵³⁷ Although the exact statistical figures about the female producers at TRT in the 1970s were not available, there was a prevailing belief shared both by the female producers themselves and by some intellectuals that their number was relatively higher in Turkey than in many other countries. See, for example, see *Cumhuriyet*, 27 October 1975.

⁵³⁸ İ.Ç.

Perhaps, these sentences exaggerate female producers' autonomy and control over their work since their professional experiences were not free of the dilemmas that the intertwining of public service broadcasting and the dominant gender ideology engendered either. In addition, there are differences in female producers' perceptions about patterns of gender relations in radio and TV. The interviewees who worked as radio producers in the 1970s claimed that they had not been unfairly treated at work simply because of their sex. In contrast, C.O., who was employed as an assistant TV producer at that time, compared television to "a wheel spinned by men" where women had to struggle hard to survive, as already quoted above. Still, it was the interviewees who worked at the newsroom in the 1970s who expressed their grievances about masculine domination at work much more openly.

As stated by one interviewee, the News Office at TRT was like a "stand-alone castle" which operated autonomously from the administration than the other departments did.⁵³⁹ As the only office authorized to produce programs that covered directly political issues according to the founding principles of the institution, the News Office was always in a much closer contact with the political authority. This closeness rendered the News Office more susceptible to direct interventions by the political authority, on the one hand, particularly into the contents of the news bulletins. On the other hand, it reinforced its prestige against the other desks at TRT. It was actually the News Office what was deemed the "speaking voice of the state," which further complicated women's existence in it as professionals.

⁵³⁹ H.T.

The Removal of Female News Speakers from the Screen

Practices and discourse of news making both required women to bracket aside their “feminine attributes” in order to attain the same degree of disembodiedness as men but justified their professional underrepresentation by the notion that women were inclined to insert themselves into news stories, thereby being incapable of rendering their bodies invisible. Linda Steiner writes that a number of women who worked for the mainstream British and US newspapers in the first half of the twentieth century consistently complained about this paradox in their autobiographies.

Still, those women at the press industries were not as coerced to “walk on a tightrope,” as Steiner describes, by doing their hair, make-up and clothing just right as their counterparts who appeared on television news were. Both groups of women were asked to speak to the audience from what Steiner describes as “a carefully constructed position, with the mythical neutrality of the universal voice,” and yet considered outside the public masculine structures of language.⁵⁴⁰ Nonetheless, women working as TV news speakers faced a further challenge engendered by their visibility on the screen. Their attempts at adjusting their appearance to the presumed task of speaking the voice of the objective truth dramatized clearly that the female body is a practical site of social control, as the following quotation from Gülizar about her first experience on the screen as a news speaker evidences:

What I will wear, how I will have my hair made-up, how I can overcome the problem of facial make-up, where I will look at while reading news... I did not know any of them at all. As I remember it today, that first night was... a nightmare for me. Nobody had said anything, and our male friends had not helped us. I thought it over and tried to find a solution by myself. “*Since I am going to read news, I should look serious.* I should have my hair made up. What about facial make-up? I can never manage it at all...” The response came from a

⁵⁴⁰ Steiner, p. 150.

friend at the newsroom. İnci Süer said, “I do it,” and she did. A make-up in extremely dark colors so as to look serious... and a black dress, which was the fashion of the day... Like the Princess of Darkness... I was not pleased with myself at all. I understood... that I had been right to feel discomfort when my friend, who took some photos of me from the screen that night, showed them to me. Like a woman in her 80s... Her facial expression is as if she were beating someone.⁵⁴¹

The term “serious,” which Gülizar used to define the task of news reading on the screen, was used a lot by intellectuals and politicians to denote the value to which TV news must aspire as “the representative voice of impartial reason.” Despite being apparently gender-blind adjective, female news speakers’ experiences at the newsroom made explicit the synonymy of this omnipresent term, “serious,” with the masculine, which will be discussed in detail below.



Fig. 17 Speaker Ülkü Giray (İmset) reading news on TRT TV⁵⁴²

As regards the appearance of female speakers on TV news, an interesting dialogue took place between Cem and Gülizar soon after he became the director-general. When he first met Gülizar, Cem told her “I feel as if I were watching a beautiful painting when you read news on TV,”⁵⁴³ which surprised Gülizar as she thought that she appeared “uglier and older” on the screen than she really was. Cem tried to eliminate Gülizar’s worry by saying, “I am not aware of how you appear at all. I see

⁵⁴¹ Gülizar, *TRT Meydan Savaşı*, pp. 56 – 7. (The italics are mine)

⁵⁴² Copied from “Ülkü Giray,” n.d., <http://www.biyografi.net/kisiyrinti.asp?kisiid=477> [July 11, 2003].

⁵⁴³ Gülizar, *TRT Meydan Savaşı*, p. 88. The original text is as follows: *Siz haber okurken, çok güzel bir tabloyu seyrederek gibi mutlu oluyorum.*

only an incredibly successful Turkish woman on TV. You may look ugly, but your success wipes out any disadvantages.”⁵⁴⁴

Ironically, the TRT’s female news speakers were excluded from the news bulletins and other news programs on TV during the term of the same director-general. Cem announced this decision in a meeting where he and Mehmet Barlas, his assistant in charge of TV broadcasts including news and current affairs, gathered together all the twelve TV news speakers, six of which were women. Upon this meeting, Jülide Gülizar and Ülkü Kuranel wrote a petition whereby they accused the administration of violating the very Republican principle of gender equality.⁵⁴⁵

The Republican ideology’s invitation for women to be actively involved in the public life on an equal footing with men constituted one of the main points of reference in the female news speakers’ opposition to this measure against their gender. The way they reacted to this measure shows that women do not adopt themselves to dominant political discourses as such. Instead, they invoke dominant political discourses by splitting them, and disclose their latent potential for empowering themselves, as these female news speakers selectively highlighted the egalitarian components of the Republican ideology in that particular case.

Initially, the female news speakers’ attempts did not yield results, and they disappeared from the screen right after the new broadcasting period started in September 1974. Whereas a man and a woman read the chief news bulletins on TV previously, audiences saw two male speakers thereafter since the female ones were relegated to the radio news. This measure against the female news speakers had also

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Ben sizin nasıl görüntü verdiğinizin hiç farkında değilim ki. Ben TV ekranında son derece başarılı bir Türk kadınına görüyorum yalnızca. Görüntünüz belki de çirkindir, ama başarınız bütün olumsuzlukları siliveriyor.*

⁵⁴⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 16 September 1974.

repercussions for TV's female announcers. In her autobiography, Gülizar wrote that they were not allowed to appear on the screen, as well, after this decision. The announcements on the screen were made in voice-over only, and "TV was turned into radio" for the female announcers.⁵⁴⁶

In one of his columns he wrote after he left TRT, Barlas explained that they decided to remove the female news speakers from TV for a number of reasons:

First, there was a news speakers' inflation in the TV news. News should be the most persuasive program. Its appearance should acquire stability, as well. Only one person presents news in the West. That presenter is almost like an editor in chief.⁵⁴⁷

Barlas also pretended that as women appear "stylish and dressy" on the screen, the audience finds it difficult to follow the news but rather focus on female speakers' bodies.⁵⁴⁸

Although the isolation of the female speakers from the TV news lasted for only 18 days, it suddenly attracted the public's interest. The press published various features and columns that criticized and even ridiculed this restraint on the female news speakers. For example, *Günaydın* covered a cartoon which portrayed Gülizar with a moustache she wore to pretend that she was a man. Beneath it, the following was written:

An interesting event occurred last night when the speaker with a fatherly attitude and rotund voice tried to send away a fly on his nose. Although the speaker, whose moustache ultimately fell on the desk because his hand banged it, continued to read the news after seizing the fake moustache immediately and putting it on his face again, his trick was recognized. When the watchful TV authorities who saw the situation controlled this speaker, they understood that he was one of the female speakers who were not allowed to read the news on TV, Jülide Gülizar, and they were puzzled. Gülizar, who had been caught with her pants down, said, "I do not know what exercised them, but they do not

⁵⁴⁶ Quoted in Gülizar, *TRT Meydan Savaşı*, p. 93.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 102.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 91.

want female speakers to read the news; and I was going to manage the situation by a man's trick, but I became the victim of a fly." TRT's Director-General İsmail Cem announced, "Hereafter, each speaker's moustache will be pulled down, and he will be checked by a circumciser before appearing on TV in order not to allow such eggy situations to reoccur."⁵⁴⁹

A columnist from the right-leaning daily *Tercüman* wrote the following:

TRT does not allow women to read the news on the screen hereafter. It was said to be a men's job to appear on TV as reading the news. It should be seclusion and washing clothes that has been left for the women's part, according to the mentality of... TRT, I suppose. This is a problem of cultivation and engagement; what does it have to do with masculinity or femininity?⁵⁵⁰

In *Cumhuriyet*, Oktay Akbal asked whether this measure against the female news speakers was plausible only because it was the same in the West:

It is said that on TV in the West, for example at the BBC, women do not read the news. However, those who have watched foreign TVs will recall that there are a lot of female news speakers both on radio and on TV. I saw it in one of my last visits to Skopje. The news speaker of the Turkish broadcasts is a Turkish woman. There are female newsspeakers in Italy. Besides, what if there are not?⁵⁵¹

Öngören dealt with the problem from a different angle. He criticized the TRT administration for deploying the same news speakers both on radio and on TV. He argued that reading the news on the two mediums of communication requires different skills. These skills are not associated with masculinity or femininity as such but acquired with proper training, which TRT did not offer, in his view.

Öngören also made an objection to the removal of the female news speakers from the screen merely on the grounds that their appearance damages the

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 101 – 2.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 101. The original text is as follows: *TRT'ciler bayanlara haber okutmuyorlarmış artık. TV'ye çıkıp haber okumak erkeklerin işiymiş. Kadınlara düşen... TRT kafasına göre, eve kapanmak, çamaşır yıkamak olmalı. Bu, yetiştirme ve uğraşma işi; ne ilgisi var erkeklikle kadınlıkla?*

⁵⁵¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 September 1974.

persuasiveness of the news bulletins, yet he asked the TRT authorities to discipline the news speakers about the proper rules for screen display:

Our TV news speakers have not been educated about... what kind of clothes they should wear in front of the camera yet... You happen to see that a woman in the fanciest clothes, who lets her bright hair hang down over her shoulders, presents the hardest news on the screen as if she were an artist... The speakers who appear on the screens of the Turkish television should avoid from extreme ornaments and from fancy hair styles and consider the points like simplicity, harmony and taste.⁵⁵²

Apart from the press organs, some women's associations protested the female speakers' exclusion from the screen. For example, Head of *Türk Anneler Birliği* (The Union of Turkish Mothers) Türkan Aksu organized a press meeting in which she declared the TRT authorities as "unwanted persons" (*istenmeyen kişiler*). She described the isolation of the female speakers from TV without any plausible excuse as a "heavy blow to the Turkish woman and her rights."⁵⁵³

Upon immediate reaction from the public opinion, President Fahri Korutürk took the initiative for the withdrawal of this decision, and the female news speakers were invited back to the screen, yet not on the same terms as before. According to the new schedule, the chief news bulletins on the screen would be read by three speakers, two men and one woman. The male speakers would take the first and the last order, whereas the female one would "be slid over in between them," as Gülizar writes. This schedule meant deploying the female news speakers as "decorative objects," according to her. As a result of some of the female speakers' objections,

⁵⁵² *Cumhuriyet*, 21 October 1974. Original text is as follows: *Bizim TV haber spikerlerimize... kamera önünde ne gibi giysiler giyilmesi gerektiği bile öğretilmemiştir... Bir bakıyorsunuz pırıl pırıl saçlarını omuzlarından sarkıtmış en süslü giysiler içindeki bir bayan ekranda artist pozlarıyla en ciddi haberleri veriyor... Türk televizyonunun ekranlarına çıkan spikerlerin... aşırı süsten ve saç biçiminden kaçınmaları ve sadelik, uyum ve zevk gibi noktaları da gözetmeleri gerekir.*

⁵⁵³ *Milliyet*, 23 September 1974.

however, the chief TV news started to be read by a male and a female speaker again.⁵⁵⁴

The main point of reference for Cem and Barlas' decision to send away the female news speakers from the screen was the BBC experiment. At the BBC, news had been presented on television in voiceover only in an "impersonal, sober and quiet manner" until 1955, as Thumim writes. The availability of a news speaker with any visual aids accompanying *him* was thought to threaten the authority and the impartiality of the spoken word as the representative voice of the nation.⁵⁵⁵ As the visual image was found somehow suspect in itself, the female voice was also thought to detract the audience from the spoken truth since sobriety and impartiality were considered masculine virtues.⁵⁵⁶

It was the commercially-oriented Independent Television News in Britain that appointed a woman to read the news on television for the first time, mainly due to the concern for securing the audience's loyalty in the competitive environment of broadcasting generated by the introduction of commercial broadcasting in the second half of the 1950s. The BBC waited until 1960 when Nan Winton read the *Nine O'clock News* on Sunday evenings, only for a short time. However, her appointment met immediate resistance from the male news chiefs and editors, as Stuart Hood, a senior member of the BBC's directorate then, recalled:

⁵⁵⁴ Gülizar, *TRT Meydan Savaşı*, pp. 97 – 8.

⁵⁵⁵ Thumim, *Inventing Television Culture*, p. 8.

⁵⁵⁶ In France, as well, a public dispute erupted concerning female speakers' appearance on TV in 1978. Some critics compared the female speakers on Channels 1 and 2 of the French public television to "the prostitutes in the red lights in Amsterdam." The female speakers took them to court. The critics defended themselves on the grounds that their aim was to emancipate those women from their resemblance to "prostitutes" on TV and to contribute to their struggle for acquiring a respectable public identity. Still, they were unsparing in accusing the female speakers of a lower intellectual level. For details, see *Milliyet*, 13 October 1978.

I thought it would be rather nice to have a woman newsreader on television. Now, this was greeted with alarm and dismay and resistance by my editors. The thought that a woman could be the conveyor of truth and authority on the television screen was something they just could not image, could not accept.⁵⁵⁷

After this short-lasting and failed experiment, the first female news speaker, Angela Rippon, was able to appear regularly on the BBC's screen as late as 1975, reading the *Nine O'clock News* bulletin.

The Newsroom as a Bastion of Masculinity

Women in Turkey caught the opportunity to perform as news speakers on TV earlier than many of their counterparts in the West. They appeared on the screen just two years after the debut of broadcast TV, first at the night news bulletins in 1970. Still, we should not be quick to accept their presence on the screen as a success in itself since the newsroom at TRT retained its character of being a men's bastion behind the scenes, as the following discussion will show.

İ.Ç. recalled that only three of the female candidates who passed the admission exam in 1970 were intended to work at the newsroom. Two of them, including herself, who knew English, were employed in the department of Foreign News while the third was recruited to the Domestic News. In her words, the Foreign News was an office of "kicking" since it operated with a staff most of whom were part-time employees.⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁷ Janet Thumim, "'Mrs. Night Must Be Balanced: Methodological Problems in Researching Early British Television,'" *News, Gender and Power*, eds. C. Carter, G. Branston and S. Allan (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 97 – 8.

⁵⁵⁸ In an interview, a unit chief from the Foreign News actually complained that his department had less prestige than the other news departments at TRT. He claimed that many saw the Foreign News merely as a Translation Office whereas they did much more than simple translation of the news, producing almost 50% of all the news stories presented by TRT. For details of the interview, see *Cumhuriyet*, 16 December 1974.

She added that before the 1970 admission exam, there was only one female reporter at the Domestic News. This woman was first employed as the secretary of the newsroom chief, Muammer Yaşar, and became a reporter afterwards. Since she was recruited to the office without passing an admission exam unlike many other workmates of hers, she received a lower wage and had less prestige than them.

İ.Ç. answered the question whether at that time she had any concerns about the professional underrepresentation of women at the newsroom as follows: “There were few women, but, considering Turkey’s contemporary environment and women’s level of consciousness, we were not much in the situation of recognizing and worrying about this.” She added that the newsroom was “not completely devoid of women” since the “gap was closed” by the women who composed half of all the newsspeakers.⁵⁵⁹

The already few women working for the newsroom as behind the scenes were also precluded from moving up the career ladder. According to the established rules of job promotion, it was deemed necessary to have work experiences outside the office for acquiring a senior office at the newsroom, but the dominant gender ideology implied to seclude women inside the workplace:

When I entered TRT, I was supposed to be a director in two years with such qualifications of mine. However, they would have never appointed me as a director... Actually, it is because I am a woman. Why? To begin with... he [the chief] considers you as follows: “If I deployed her in the domestic news, one day at the parliament, the other day at the Council of Ministers, and somewhere who knows the following day... How would this affair be possible? Should I ask her to lengthen her skirt before? Let her first sit at a desk at the Foreign News.”⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁹ İ.Ç. The original quotation is as follows: *Oldukça az sayıda kadın vardı; ama Türkiye’nin o günkü ortamında, kadınların da o günkü bilinç seviyesinde bunu çok da fark eden, dert eden bir durumumuz yoktu.*

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

Furthermore, occupational practices in the newsroom entailed an over-demanding and flexible working pattern with night shifts, thereby not being “friendly” especially for women married with children. This challenge made Ü.G. think about giving up her post at TRT after she completed her internship training at the BBC headquarters:

After I returned from Britain, I was thinking of continuing... neither at radio nor at TV... There was a vacancy at the [British Council], which is in Cankaya, similar to my post at the BBC. And with the references I received from the BBC, I was able to enter there without any examination. I asked for my resignation because in broadcasting... it is not certain what time you go to bed, eat and sleep... Besides, it is very difficult if you are married with children. And I was full of it... I certainly did not want it. However, Doğan Kasaroğlu, as a father but rather like a godfather, brainwashed my husband and me. Actually, I had applied there. They told them, “She will not come.” I still feel sorry. Its place was beautiful, too. It was a building which had even tennis courts. I would have arrived at work at 9:00 and back my home at 5:00. And I was coerced to start to work at the News Office.⁵⁶¹

In İ.Ç.’s words, women at the newsroom were “scared to death of having children” because of the nature of their work. Making the weather heavier, the TRT administration did not comply with its female staff’s demand for a nursery for their children in the 1970s. Actually, concerning the arrangements about childcare, TRT did not diverge from other public enterprises of the decade. Studies about this issue demonstrated that in the 1970s, the low number of kindergartens and nurseries led many female public officials to mobilize traditional ways of child care.⁵⁶²

Ü.G. described the indifference of the administration to women’s particular concerns such as responsibility for childcare as an “irony of equality.” At TRT, in her words, “women were so equal that they had neither advantages nor

⁵⁶¹ Ü.G.

⁵⁶² For example, a research conducted with the women who were employed in the public medicine and married with children showed that only 8% of them had their children looked after at nurseries. See Meral Aşkın, “Meslek Kadınının Çocuk Sorunu” (MA Thesis, Hacettepe University, 1978), p. 25.

disadvantages.”⁵⁶³ In practice, however, women were not an equal footing with men at all at the newsroom. They were looked down upon by their male colleagues merely on the basis of their gender identity. Ü.G. recalled that the men at the newsroom called them “the woman’s sect,” which they considered “unable to understand or do things better than men.” This misogynist premise was the justification for their male superiors’ suspicious attitude towards those women. Ü.G. told an illuminating story which took place right before Turkey’s military campaign in Cyprus in 1974:

There was the Makarios affair on Cyprus. I was on duty that night. A young woman and man read the eight o’clock news. However, the closure news was read in order by a single speaker. It was my turn... Even a war might have erupted that night... I came to the News Office. A man came out of darkness. I was afraid, to say the truth. It was Hıfzı Topuz... He told me, “Lady, I am here both to apologize to and to congratulate you. I said, ‘Tonight might be extraordinary, so let’s replace her with a male speaker.’ They refused, and you made me feel sorry for having said this. I want to apologize to you myself... You were very successful. I thank you.”⁵⁶⁴

Male newsroom chiefs also acted as patriarchal figures disciplining women about the proper rules of conduct at work in a patronizing manner. İ.Ç. defined the “paternal” role assumed by their chief Doğan Kasaroğlu as follows:

When he saw us, a few women, he started to wander around as if he were our father. He was such a father that he concerned himself even with skirts. He said, “Wear longer skirts... Do not sit there like that...” That is, a man which interfered with everything...⁵⁶⁵

She admitted that Kasaroğlu, as a fatherly figure, also oversaw and protected the young women at the newsroom. For example, when İ.Ç. was taken into custody at

⁵⁶³ Ü.G. The original quotation is as follows: *Kadınlar o kadar eşitti ki hiçbir avantajları da yoktu dezavantajları da yoktu.*

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁵ İ.Ç. The original quotation is as follows: *Biz birkaç kadını gördüğü anda bizim babamız gibi dolaşmaya başladı ortalıkta. Öyle bir baba ki, eteklere de karışıyor. “Daha uzun giyin... Orda öyle oturmayın.” Yani, her şeye karışan bir adam...*

the Police Department right after the March 12 military intervention, he personally attempted to rescue her from any possibility of arrest:

Doğan Kasaroğlu wanted to rescue me. There was a spectacled reporter at the Local News, coming from Erzurum. He sent him to the Police Department in order to protect and look after me... His name was Yılmaz, I think. He told me, “I will take you back” ... And I said, “All right, let’s go, but I cannot leave my books here.” Then, a negotiation over the books took place for one hour... Who knows what Doğan Kasaroğlu did for us at the Police Department? I was put into the car with my books... Then he took me home. He carried the books upstairs. I said, “I thank you a lot.” “No,” he said, “We are going... Mister Doğan is waiting for you at home with Mister Muammer Yaşar.” Yılmaz took me to Mister Doğan’s apartment. They had set up a very beautiful dinner table: *rakı*, fresh bean and like... He had been waiting for me. “Why did they take you; what did they ask you?” I was held subject to a second investigation. Then, he relieved. Thinking that there was probably nothing wrong with the girl, he sent me home at 11.00 at night.⁵⁶⁶

Her following memory also witnesses the role of guardianship Kasaroğlu assumed against the women at the newsroom:

15 days after I started the work, a cholera plague erupted in Istanbul. I said, “I want to go to Istanbul. Will you excuse me?” He glared at me... “You started working here so soon that you do not have the right for days off.” “Then, how will I go?” I said, “Will I go to Istanbul without the permission?” He pulled his face and left... After a short while, they brought some documents to me... He had appointed me to Istanbul on a temporary duty for one month. Then he told me, “Do not think of visiting the radio. Do not go to the News Office; go and sit at home!”⁵⁶⁷

What Kasaroğlu did for her was more than a “simple gesture of kindness.” She thought that his intention was to be the “patriarch” governing the “family-like” atmosphere of the newsroom, which he himself tried to establish. On the other hand, from Ü.G.’s point of view, Doğan Kasaroğlu was not like a “protective father” at all.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid.

Instead, she perceived him as a “mafia leader, a god-father, who demanded that his wishes be immediately realized regardless of whether you agreed with him or not.”⁵⁶⁸

A reason for the apparent divergence in their perceptions about their male chief might be that they represent two different generations of women at the newsroom. Whereas Ü.G. had started to work at Ankara Radio as an announcer-speaker in 1956, earlier than the establishment of TRT, İ.Ç. was recruited to the newsroom in 1970. Ü.G. must have acquired more power at her office in time than İ.Ç. had, thereby occasionally conflicting with her male chief about the share of authority at work. On the other hand, as a younger woman, İ.Ç. must have been considered by Kasaroğlu more in need of the protection he seemed ready to offer.

Women at the newsroom were not always “lucky” enough to be protected against the exigencies of the profession by their male chiefs. Especially those women who were thought to edit the kind of political news stories the governmental authority might find “undesirable” were relegated into such areas of news making as cultural or magazine affairs, which were considered “more suitable” for them by their male chiefs. Still, women attempted to turn this segregation into an opportunity for publicizing the problems of particular groups of women in society, as Ayşenur Arslan’s following story illustrates:

I went to watch the activity of a minister of forestry and scripted it after my return. Confessing the truth to my chief, “Actually, the minister did not say any of these words. Indeed, he did not say anything. Therefore, I made them up...,” I said. My chief took the news, read the minister’s “words”... and said, “It is all right...” Of course, neither my chief nor my directors were always pleased with... me. Therefore, I was removed from my post... I was not allowed to follow conflicts, social events thereafter. Its justification was that I was a “woman.” They declared me a culture-arts reporter because I was a “woman.” And one day I planted myself in front of them with a special news story from my new area. I made news about a research of a public enterprise. It was a research conducted among the women employed in the brothels in Ankara, and it

⁵⁶⁸ Ü.G. The original quotation is as follows: *Biraz mafya babası gibiydi. Yani o dediği olsun istiyordu... hiç istemediğin anda bile.*

came up with really interesting evidence. However, the news chief exploded: “Will you make the news about prostitutes be broadcast at TRT?” I protested calmly; I defended the news and ultimately had him surrender... As the news chief emphasized, for the first time in its history TRT had broadcast “the news about prostitutes” in the night bulletin, which was read by Can Akbel.⁵⁶⁹

Nevertheless, as she put it, this was a “temporary victory” for her. She found herself in exile in the transcription office due to her political affiliations during the second half of the 1970s.⁵⁷⁰ Indeed, this part of the decade was “hard times” for many female broadcast professionals not only in the newsroom but also in other programming desks at TRT, as will be discussed below.

Women at TRT in the Second Half of the 1970s

The strengthening and the increasing popularity of the political left in the second half of the 1970s highly influenced the discourse on the woman question in Turkey. From the 1960s until the mid-1970s, the rights women acquired after the foundation of the Republic as well as their indebtedness to Mustafa Kemal for these rights were the main topics this discourse revolved around, with the figure of the rural uneducated woman depicted as the profound symbol of women’s second-class status, assumed to depend on “backward traditions.” In the second half of the 1970s, the figure of laboring woman was introduced to this discourse as the symbol of women’s oppression under capitalism.⁵⁷¹

Although it emerged on the public political scene as an autonomous movement in the second half of the 1980s, as will be discussed in the following

⁵⁶⁹ *Radikal*, 2 May 2004.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷¹ See Keleşoğlu, “1970’lerin En Kitleli Kadın Örgütü.”

chapter, the beginning of the second wave feminism in Turkey, broadening the discourse on the woman question to a wider range issues of sexuality, family, workplace and reproductive rights other than legal gender equality, can be traced to the 1970s. Women already started to question the “illusion of women’s emancipation by the Republic” from a women’s rights perspective in the early 1970s.

Perhaps, this questioning was nowhere more explicit than in the novels by female authors like Sevgi Soysal, Adalet Ağaoğlu, Nezihe Meriç and Firüzan. Being the “self-narratives of the Republican girls,” as Atasü writes, their novels demonstrated that the Republican ideal of gender equality did not have much correspondence in reality even for urban educated women.⁵⁷² These novels, particularly Sevgi Soysal’s, also covered women’s meeting with socialism and introduced the figure of (typically middle class) revolutionary woman fighting side by side with her male comrade. This female figure was going to become much more visible in the latter part of the decade, when an increasing number of women engaged themselves with the rising leftist movement and established various leftist women’s organizations, such as the Association of Progressive Women (*İlerici Kadınlar Derneği*).

These women’s organizations spoke to women’s concerns and developed projects that aimed at women’s empowerment. Notwithstanding their progressive approach to the issue, they dealt with the woman question primarily from a class-based angle. For them, the ultimate solution to gendered inequities was nowhere

⁵⁷² For example, Adalet Ağaoğlu’s famous novel *Ölmeye Yatmak* (Lying to die), which was published in 1973, focused on the social transformation introduced by the Republican reforms and the thereby-generated tragedy of an intellectual woman who came from provincial origins but internalized the Republican ideology. For further details, see Erendiz Atasü, “Edebiyattaki Kadın İmgelerinde Cumhuriyet’in İzdüşümleri,” in *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, ed. A. Berkay Hacımiraçoğlu (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), p. 132; and also Füsün Altıok Akatlı, “The Image of Women in Turkish Literature,” in *Women in Turkish Society*, ed. N. Abadan Unat (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), p. 230.

other than the longed-for socialist revolution. That patriarchy is itself a relation of oppression against which it is necessary to wage an autonomous struggle was a far away idea for many leftist/socialist women's organizations of the period.⁵⁷³

Among the most influential activities of these women's organizations came forward the mass meetings for *Evlat Acısına Son* (end to grief for deceased children), attended by thousands of women in Ankara and Istanbul.⁵⁷⁴ These meetings did not only symbolize the growth in women's political participation but also highlighted the ever-violent climate of politics. From 1974 onwards, political violence in streets, primarily between the leftist youth and the "commandos" from the Nationalist Action Party (NAP) affiliated youth association Idealist Hearts, skyrocketed by murders, mass killings as well as assassinations of recognized leftist or rightist intellectual and political figures. Whereas the number of victims was around 230 in 1977, it increased to somewhere around 1500 two years later. Actually, violence became almost an everyday phenomenon of the time and laid the stone for the coup of 12 September 1980 by serving to the justification of the intervention of the military on behalf of "order and national security."

Many left-aligned women from TRT deployed the metaphor of "schizophrenia" to describe how they felt in response to this turbulent political

⁵⁷³ Özgül Erten, who worked as a speaker, a chief-speaker and as a program assistant at Ankara Radio House until the military intervention in 1971, conducted a study entitled "The Place of the Turkish Women in Our Contemporary World." Her research won the second-order degree in the Yunus Nadi Scientific Research Awards Contest in 1976. Erten's approach to the woman question illuminated the way many leftist women of the decade articulated their ideas on gender equality. Erten believed that it is impossible to talk about women as an autonomous sect since every class, such as the labor, the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy, has its own group of women with divergent characteristics. She rejected the male-female duality as an artificial one produced by the established structure of capitalism and declared the ultimate finding of her study as follows: "Women's actual emancipation will realize in a classless society." For further details about Erten's study, see *Cumhuriyet*, 3 June 1976.

⁵⁷⁴ The one in Ankara was on 31 October, 1976, where Sevgi Soysal also addressed the mass of attendants. The meeting in Istanbul was organized on February 16, 1977 by the cooperation of the RPP's Women's Branch and the Association of Progressive Women, and it was attended by around 10,000 women. For further details, see Akal, pp. 181 – 8.

climate. While they were meeting in streets for expressing their demands and grievances, many other women were sustaining “a different face of life,” as determined by their domestic roles. At times the women from TRT experienced both these facets of life simultaneously. They were also breathing in a schizophrenic atmosphere because of the very nature of their work. Whereas they were running away from the state’s violence one day, they were working for an institution deemed as the voice of the state the other day:

At the meeting [for deceased children]... we, the women of TRT, also shouted slogans. The meeting ended as a classic of those days. The Police stepped on and dispersed the meeting. We were side by side with Jülide Gülizar... We started to run away as the others did. While we were running, Jülide called out, “To that side...” I run after her to the direction she pointed at. We broke into a two-store building. The owner of the apartment... was an acquaintance of Jülide. And although she tried not to show it, she must not have been pleased with these uninvited guests, for she already had a group of guests. Kind women who were dressed in filmy clothing and were holding tea in their hands... Jülide and I dived into the “visiting day” like a bomb... with our messed up hair. Out of kindness, I guess, they did not ask why we were there and where we came from. Jülide and I shared this different part of life for a while. We drank our tea and ate our cookies. And, having come to the opinion that the danger had passed, we asked for their permission. *It was a schizophrenic life.* After the day we shouted slogans in a meeting and played run-and-catch with the police, we returned to the other part of life. Jülide was reading... the news, and I was pursuing... the news.⁵⁷⁵

Whereas the second half of the 1970s was the years of “schizophrenia” for these women, it was a time of “great expectations” for many families who had migrated to city at ever-increasing rates. The increase was so massive particularly in the cities of Istanbul and Ankara that 60 out of every 100 people in Istanbul were migrants, and 40% of the population in Ankara had been born outside the city borders by 1980.⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷⁵ *Radikal*, 2 May 2004. (The italics are mine)

⁵⁷⁶ Sevil Cerit, “Türkiye’de İller Arası Göçler,” *Turkish Journal of Population Studies* 8 (1986), p. 97.

The new-comers to cities settled in the *gecekondu* districts, where almost one fourth of the entire urban population was already living by 1975.⁵⁷⁷ Besides supplying cheap labor for the growing economy, *gecekondu* families constituted one of the main components of the enlarging domestic consumption, on which import substituting industrialization heavily depended.⁵⁷⁸ Most studies conducted in *gecekondu* areas during the 1970s showed a striking rate of increase in use of consumption durables despite their low income levels. For example, some families bought the largest TV sets on the market even though they had very small rooms.⁵⁷⁹ Indeed, the TV antennas spreading over roofs in *gecekondu* areas became one of the most profound symbols of these families' desire for integration with the urban life.

The *gecekondu* settlers developed their own popular cultural traditions which reflected both their disappointment with the poor living conditions at city and their hopes for incorporation into the urban life. These popular cultural forms and practices, called Arabesque, were largely isolated from the official cultural policy and rarely passed the supervision by TRT, but they challenged the frontiers of the urban cultural institutions primarily through the market. They reached large numbers of audiences either by tapes and concerts or gazinos (musical venues).⁵⁸⁰

Admittedly, TRT did not totally exclude the emerging popular cultural forms from its microphones and cameras at all. Instead, the necessity of meeting popular tastes and expectations, which became much more tangible in the second half of the 1970s as TRT earned a huge part of its income from TV ads from the private sector,

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

⁵⁷⁸ Boratav, p. 120.

⁵⁷⁹ Tansu Şenyapılı, "Economic Change and the Gecekondu Family," in *Sex Roles, Family and Community in Turkey*, ed. Ç. Kağıtçıbaşı (Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1982), pp. 242 – 3.

⁵⁸⁰ Özbek, p. 152.

which did not seem much concerned with any “lofty” ideals of public service broadcasting,⁵⁸¹ resulted in occasional displays of Arabesque on the screen, particularly in entertainment programs.

Women as the Symbol of Threat on the Screen

As the second half of the 1970s wore on, TV was not considered a luxury commodity of the well-off any more. Its place in society was taken-for-granted by many intellectuals. Melih Cevdet Anday wrote in 1977, “TV is not anymore an asset of the prosperous and is watched not only in coffeehouses but also at home.”⁵⁸²

The discourse on TV acquired new dimensions with its growing popularity. Considering the omnipresent meritocratic ideal of the time, it was not surprising that the disquiet about the cultural value of the post-1975 broadcast TV was often couched in terms that deplored the lack of educational and/or informative material on the screen as it had before. On the other hand, in the second half of the decade, what was really being expressed was a class-based resentment about the expansion of the audience to include the mass population, particularly *gecekond* settlers. For example, in his discussion on the implications of television watching for society, Ali Sirmen wrote, “It is impossible to say that television has been employed well,

⁵⁸¹ For example, in 1977 the total income of the institution was 1,311, 528.523 Turkish Liras, slightly more than 50% of which came from publicity and advertisement revenues. See TRT, *1977 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bün*ye Raporu, p. 249.

⁵⁸² *Cumhuriyet*, 5 August 1977. The original text is as follows: *Televizyon zengin*in malı olmaktan çıkmıştır; sadece kahvelerde değil, evlerde de izlenmektedir.

properly and beneficially since it became the beloved of the mass community of the people in Turkey.”⁵⁸³



Fig. 18. A cartoon titled “TRT Gazino”⁵⁸⁴

In the post-1975 period, TV was mostly condemned for provoking the temptation to overconsume and for being under the influence of the “gazino culture,” seen as the output of the “invasion” of the city by provincial social groups. These objections actually depended on the displacement of far broader social and cultural anxieties about television itself, and they were nowhere more vociferous in the vilification of light entertainment broadcast material.

A thinly veiled misogyny also surfaced in these objections. The female body visible on TV’s entertainment productions constituted the practical site on which the anxiety about the assumed threat of the invasion of the urban spaces by “non-desirables” was reflected on. For example, for Çetin Altan, what people watched was a “provincial television showing women with colored and messed-up hair, with gazino make-up, and in extremely fancy clothes.”⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸³ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 October 1980. The original text is as follows: *Türkiye’de televizyonun geniş halk topluluğun baştağı haline geldiğinden bu yana iyi, doğru ve yararlı olarak kullanıldığını söylemek olanaksızdır.*

⁵⁸⁴ Copied from *Cumhuriyet*, 17 December 1978.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Also, the figure of woman with covered hair, which appeared on screen from time to time in the second half of the 1970s, was made to carry the stigma. In his review about a TV entertainment program *Dolmuş* (stuffed),⁵⁸⁶ Öngören accused the female compère, who addressed the audience including covered women as “lady sisters,” for passing over the gains of the Republic for women:

By missing out on the exactly 53 years of the Republican era at one swoop and infringing upon the memory and the honor of so many respectable people... she jumps over all the eras and periods by doing all these with a single word. Then, she asks her *sıkmabaş* (wearing turban) lady sisters, *who has the most backward, the most insufficient, the most worthless and the most pathetic understanding*, to promise that they will not get fat.⁵⁸⁷

Apparently, TV entertainment programs occasionally hosted women with covered hair as part of their studio audience. Some domestic films like *Birleşen Yollar*⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁶ This program was produced in the second half of 1976 during the Nationalist Front government. It covered musical performances by popular singers and contests where the winners were awarded various household utensils and food products. The very title of the program, *Dolmuş*, highlighted the influence of the developing Arabesque culture on the screen. *Dolmuş* (a kind of shared taxi) was a means of public transportation primarily used by *gecekondu* settlers between their neighborhoods and central urban places in the 1970s. As its passengers mostly listened to popular Arabesque songs on their way, these musical forms were also sometimes called “*dolmuş* music.” See Nazlı Özdemir, n.d., “*Dolmuş* Nereden Doğdu,” <http://www.galatagazete.com/o/index.php/galatadan/hikayemiz/1792-dolmu-nereden-dodu.html> [3 March 2013].

⁵⁸⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 17 December 1978. The original text is as follows: *Tam 53 yıllık Cumhuriyet dönemini bir çırpıda atlayarak... nice saygıdeğer insanın anısını ve onurunu çiğneyerek, tüm bunları bir sözcükle yaparak devirleri ve dönemleri atlıyor... En geri, en yetersiz, en değersiz ve en acınacak çağ dışı anlayışa sahip “sıkmabaş” hanım kardeşlerinden... şişmanlamayacaklarına dair söz istiyor.* (The italics are mine)

⁵⁸⁸ The film *Birleşen Yollar* was produced in 1970 by a conservative director, Yücel Çakmaklı, who was also recruited to TRT as an advisor on films after Nevzat Yalçıntaş’s appointment as the director general of the institution in 1975. The film covered the love affair between a girl of prosperous and modern origins and a boy raised in a traditional family network. The plot of the film was adapted from a novel called *Huzur Sokağı* (Serenity Street) by a conservative/Islamist female journalist, Şule Yüksel Şenler. Şenler earned reputation for her Islamist conferences and column articles in many conservative/Islamist dailies in the 1960s. Despite coming from a modern family, she veiled herself in 1965 to adjust her appearance to her beliefs, as she put it. Her style of head-covering influenced and was imitated by a number of girls, thereby being recognized as *şulebaşı* (Şule’s head). Her novel *Huzur Sokağı* (Serenity Street) has been recently adapted to TV and broadcast by the private TV channel ATV, known for its support for the JDP government, in the broadcasting year 2012 – 2013. From her Islamist outlook, Şenler was highly critical of the way the screen portrayed the problem of gender equality. For example, in one of her column articles, she wrote the following about TV’s discourse on woman’s rights: “The thing called TRT has been operated like a machine of blubber which bores minds day and night all the time with chants about woman’s rights, absolute freedom, and female-male equality... If our people knew Islam not as wrongly as they do today but

(Joining routes) also gave place to lead female characters who covered their hair; however, their transmission engendered contestation in the public opinion and inside TRT itself.⁵⁸⁹ On the other hand, a TV forum on gender equality in which covered women participated as discussants was removed from the screen only one week after the transmission of *Birleşen Yollar* on 6 January 1976.

During the shooting of the forum, a conflict erupted at the studio between the attendants with Islamist inclinations and its moderator Turhan Erdemgil. Someone from the forum's staff explained that the attendants intentionally provoked a discussion on women's status in Islam so as to "distort the actual aim of the program." Erdemgil, on the other hand, "in order to silence those speaking against the Atatürk's revolutions had to violate the rules of good manners."⁵⁹⁰

with all its bases and lived in obedience for those lofty bases, you would see then what woman's rights were. What was women's liberation? And what was the thing called 'female-male equality?' Then, neither Hatçes nor *kokona* (a pejorative adjective used for overdressed and excessively made up women) comedy artists... would have the right to speak." For the rest of her column article on TV's discourse on sexual equality, see *Milli Gazete*, 22 April 1976.

⁵⁸⁹ Although *Birleşen Yollar* was proposed for broadcasting on the screen during Cem's period in 1974, it was rejected by the TRT's Film Committee. After Cem's removal, the film was introduced to the committee again for broadcasting during the Ramadan in 1975. Although it won the approval of the newly appointed committee members, its broadcast was delayed until Yalçıntaş's resignation. The day it was scheduled the TRT's TV directors held a meeting and agreed upon removing it. However, *Birleşen Yollar* appeared on the screen that evening. The Board of Directors decided to open an investigation about the film's broadcasting despite the TV directors' decision on the contrary. Right after its transmission, conflicting ideas about the film steamed inside TRT. Some condemned the film for "betraying the Republican ideals" whereas others praised it as the first example of "national cinema" on the screen. For further details about the dispute over the transmission of the film, see *Cumhuriyet*, 11 January 1976, and also *Cumhuriyet*, 12 January 1976.

⁵⁹⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 12 January 1976.



Fig. 19. A screenshot from the TV forum on gender equality⁵⁹¹

The availability of women with covered hair as part of the studio audience was the apparent pretext for the abandonment of the TV forum according to the press. What was being contested was beyond the perception of the covered female participants as a threat, though. The administration perceived the forum, which questioned whether gender equality was realized or not in Turkey, as disrupting the official ideology since it challenged the long-held assumption about women's emancipation by the Republic. The TRT authorities stated the following about their refusal of its transmission: "It is the Atatürk revolutions and the Constitution what has introduced equality between women and men, so any discussion on this issue corresponds to questioning them."⁵⁹²

⁵⁹¹ Copied from *ibid.*

⁵⁹² *Ibid.* The original text is as follows: *Kadın erkek eşitliğini getiren Atatürk devrimleri ve Anayasadır, bu yüzden bu konuyla ilgili herhangi bir tartışma onları sorgulamak anlamına gelir.* The board, with its newly appointed members after Cem's dismissal, issued a declaration about the principles to be followed in programs in January 1976 just before the scheduled transmission of this TV forum on gender equality. In this declaration, the following was also written about the previously broadcast forum in which the participants discussed whether women should or should not work: "Organizing a forum about whether women should or should not work is against the basis and the statement of the law... Subjective opinions like the claim that working women are despised should not be a problem to discuss anymore. Instead, women's working conditions can be handled; their improvement can be focused on, and reactions against women's employment can be criticized. In the forums covering social problems, attention should be paid to avoid from mistakes about the revolutions. See *Cumhuriyet*, 5 January 1976.

Women amidst the Mounting Political Tension within TRT

This contestation over the translation of the state ideology on the screen signified the mounting political tension inside TRT between the left and the right. Many contemporary members of the staff deployed the metaphor of “struggle” to define the working atmosphere at TRT in the second half of the 1970s.⁵⁹³ The fire for this “struggle” was set by the admission of right-leaning people to the high decision making offices by the initiative of the Nationalist Front coalition of the right.

The share of TRT was Nevzat Yalçıntaş, a conservative scholar who previously had worked as the Head of the Social Planning Department at the SPO and wrote for some rightist dailies. President Korutürk underwrote the government decree about Cem’s dismissal on 12 May 1975. Despite the Council of State’s decision that overrode Cem’s replacement by Yalçıntaş, the Nationalist Front government insisted on its measure, which created a long-lasting debate in the public opinion about the government’s assumed violation of the law.⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁹³ For example, while Jülide Gülizar named her autobiographical work on those years as *TRT Battle*, Şaban Karataş, appointed as the head of the institution by the Nationalist Front government in January 1976, called the edition in which he collected his memoirs about his term at TRT *TRT Fight*.

⁵⁹⁴ For further details about the reverberations of the Council of the State’s ruling about TRT in the public opinion, see Solak ed.

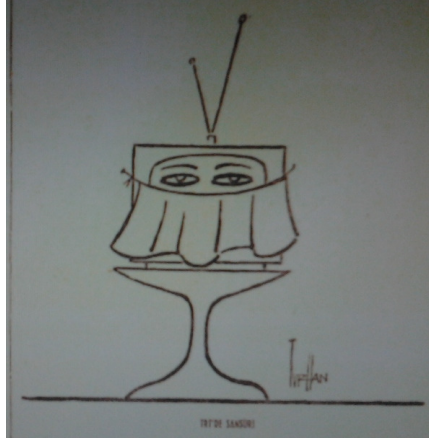


Fig. 20. A cartoon titled “Censorship at TRT” featuring TV as a veiled woman⁵⁹⁵

During Yalçıntaş’s short-lasting administration, censorship over TV broadcasts became a frequently reviewed issue in the press. Particularly censorship over “obscenity” in TV programs, such as the removal of women’s dance shows from entertainment programs, was high on the agenda, with the female body constituting a practical site for the political struggle between the left and the right.⁵⁹⁶

Still, some TV programs broadcast during Yalçıntaş’s term apparently went against the leftist intellectuals’ judgments.⁵⁹⁷ For example, the TV Cultural

⁵⁹⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 20 August 1978.

⁵⁹⁶ The TRT authorities were reported to remove dance shows from TV’s entertainment programs on the following grounds: “We have to take into account the large audience who gets irritated by the decollete girls dancing on the screen as far away from our traditions.” The interesting point here is that the left, which previously deplored the visibility of women as sexual beings on the screen for corrupting its educating role, as discussed above, was now attacking the TRT administration for “removing the dance shows which *added color* to the music and show programs.” See *Cumhuriyet*, 9 June 1975. The left also accused the Yalçıntaş administration of violating the constitutional principle of secularism in TV broadcasts. For example, during the Ramadan in 1975, TV produced a special iftar program for the first time by Yalçıntaş’s order. The coverage by the program of Q’uran recitations, calls to the prayer and prays in Arabic generated a debate both inside TRT and in the public opinion. For further details, see *Cumhuriyet*, 18 August 1975.

⁵⁹⁷ The documentary *The Ascent of Man*, produced by Jacob Bronowski to be broadcast by BBC2 first in 1973 as a thirteen part series, was incorporated into the TV schedule in Turkey in the last three months of 1975. By its title, the documentary alluded to *The Descent of Man*, Charles Darwin’s work on evolution, and covered the evolution of human knowledge from the earliest times to the present day. While the leftist press in Turkey praised this production as “gorgeous in a nutshell,” it criticized its scheduling early in the evening when the half of the TV audience, supposedly male breadwinners, was not at home. See *Cumhuriyet*, 5 November 1975. The documentary series was also placed as 65th in a list of the 100 Greatest World Television Programmes

Broadcasts Department produced a forum on TV which covered the issue of divorce. Surprisingly, a proposal for covering the issue of divorce in a TV forum had also been submitted to the Cem administration before by this department, but at that time the administration declined the proposal, finding it “too inconvenient,” and the TV forum covered the question of “whether women should or should not work outside home” instead.⁵⁹⁸

Although Yalçıntaş did make new appointments to some high administrative offices at TRT, the profile of the staff did not change much during his term. The annual rate of increase in the salaried staff remained around ten percent, whereas the number of the waged staff actually decreased from 595 to 497 in 1975.⁵⁹⁹ Particularly after the State of Council’ ruling in favor of İsmail Cem, the administration showed hesitance about admitting new people to the institution.

Yalçıntaş also requested from the government a legal guarantee justifying his status as the head of TRT. Nevertheless, both the disagreement among the coalition partners about Yalçıntaş, particularly with the NAP opposing him,⁶⁰⁰ and the internal

voted for by the sector’s professionals and drawn up by the British Film Institute in 2000. For further details on it, see “Best of British TV: An A-Z of Quality Television Dramas and Documentaries,” n.d., http://webpace.webring.com/people/th/hauntedtv/a_d.htm [8 February 2013].

⁵⁹⁸ Burhan Felek wrote a review about this forum dealing with the issue of working women broadcast on 23 January 1975. He said that the most crystallized opinion in the forum was that nursing women and women with small children should not work. See *Milliyet*, 24 October 1975.

⁵⁹⁹ The figures were achieved by the comparison of the TRT’s annual reports in 1975 and in 1976. Besides, the interviewees who worked at radio as producers then had a positive impression about Yalçıntaş. For example, S.Ü. said that Yalçıntaş was “the director-general they worked with the most comfortably.” N.Ç. added, “He was such a director that he could get the initiative to tell someone, for instance [brother of a minister], who called him to complain about a producer’s work, ‘I am sure, my producer has done the right thing.’” See S.Ü. The original quotation is as follows: *Mesela dışarıdan bizim çok yakın bir arkadaşımızın programı için bir şikayet telefonu geldiğinde “Benim programcım doğrusunu yapmıştır” diyebilecek kadar da inisiyatif kullanabilen birisiydi.*

⁶⁰⁰ Surprisingly, it was not mostly the left but the ultra-nationalist coalition partner, the NAP, who accused the Yalçıntaş administration of violating the principle of impartiality, particularly in the news bulletins. Leader of the NAP, Abdullah Türkeş, was reported to criticize Yalçıntaş in a rigorous manner in some of his press meetings. What was written about Yalçıntaş in the dailies known to support the NAP also evidenced this. For example, a columnist from the daily *Son Havadis* wrote the following about Yalçıntaş after his resignation: “There was a professor called Yalçıntaş. He used to

conflicts within the JP itself⁶⁰¹ resulted in the government's refrain from issuing a second decree legitimizing his office, and Yalçıntaş ultimately resigned on 3 December 1975 to be replaced by a recently-appointed member of the Board, Şaban Karataş.

After Karataş's appointment, the Turkish-Islamist discourse on the air was reinforced with domestic programs like *Din ve Ahlak Sohbeti* (Talk on religion and morality), *Doğu Türkistan Folklorundan Örnekler* (Examples from the eastern Turkestan folklore), *Kaf Dağından Gelenler* (Coming from the Cuff Mountain), *Kuran Okuma Yarışması* (Quran reading contest) and *Malazgirt*. Also, some programs were removed from the TV schedule immediately.

Among the abandoned programs was a domestic TV series, *Hanife Hala* (Aunt Hanife), which covered village life. The central female character of the series, Hanife, was a non-conformist village woman elected *muhtar* (head) of her village. The voice-over introduced her as “an Atatürkist muhtar who respects the Constitution and the law, who trusts on her state and who works for the rights and the well-being of her villagers.”⁶⁰²

give nationalist speeches in the Intellectuals' Heart (*Aydınlar Ocağı*) and ask to reduce the left to silence. He gave the impression that he struggled hard for the establishment of a nationalist government... The political authority made a great mistake. It was deceived by Yalçıntaş's appearance.” Abdullah Uraz, from the same daily, also said the following: “When he was appointed, he was said to carry the flag of the Nationalist Front. It happened to be the flag of the left after he gave up his post.” The original text is as follows: *Göreve gelirken, MC'nin bayrağı demişlerdi. Görevden ayrılırken solcuların bayrağı oluverdi*. See *Cumhuriyet*, 18 November 1975; *Son Havadis*, 5 December 1975; and also *Son Havadis*, 6 December 1975.

⁶⁰¹ At that time, opposition against Demirel developed inside the JP. The rumours that this dissident group was planning to propose Yalçıntaş as a candidate for leadership at the general congress of the party might have led Demirel to show hesitance about securing Yalçıntaş's position as the head of TRT. For further details, see Devran, pp. 100 – 4.

⁶⁰² Şaban Karataş, *TRT Kavgası* (Istanbul: n.p., 1978), p. 182. The original text is as follows: *Anayasa'ya, yasalara saygılı, devletine güvenen, köylüsünün hakkı hukuku için, mutluluğu için uğraşan Atatürkçü bir muhtar*.

In its 12th episode, Hanife mobilizes the village women to learn to read and write with the help of the village's teacher. During the literacy course, the teacher writes on the blackboard Atatürk's saying, "The peasant is the master of the nation" (*Köylü milletin efendisidir*). One of them, believing that this saying has no correspondence in reality, erases it from the blackboard, but she meets Hanife's resistance. This scene was found "insolent against Atatürk and the figure of the Turkish teacher" by the head of the TV Office Fahrettin Işıkcı, who had been appointed by Karataş. The producer of the series, Ekmel Hürol, refused to remove this particular scene from the plot and decided to abandon the entire series instead after discussing the issue with his production staff.⁶⁰³



Fig. 21. A feature of the TV series *Hanife Hala* (Aunt Hanife)⁶⁰⁴

Along with the growing political influence of the Nationalist Front coalition over the institution's top-decision making, there occurred a change in the style and the address of TV programs that spoke to women's concerns, as well. TV began to broadcast women's programs like *Kadın Magazin* again in 1976. Besides giving information about body care for women, it mostly dealt with clothing fashions,

⁶⁰³ *Milliyet*, 1 February 1976.

⁶⁰⁴ Copied from Anılarım.net, "Nostalji ve Mazi: Dizi Filmler: Hanife Hala," 2007, <http://nostalji.anilarim.net/forum/lofiversion/index.php/t6590.html> [25 February 2013].

recipes, child care, mother's health as well as household management, suggesting a merely domestic ideal for its female audience.

A similar change was also observed in the radio's woman program *Kadın Dünyası*. Its producer, Filiz Ercan, stated that they frequently came across censorship on their program's content during the reign of the Nationalist Front. However, they continued to produce the program until March 1980⁶⁰⁵ by "softening" the program's discourse:⁶⁰⁶

We continued to make the program. However, of course, we faced interventions we found completely inappropriate...For example, once Nahit Katlan, who was assigned as the assistant director general after Hıfzı Topuz, removed the words of female parliamentarian from the program by saying, "I am a village boy, so I know that women do not work in the village." We saw these examples a few times. However... for a moment we said, "Eventually we are making a woman's program. The important thing is not to lose our positions. Therefore, during this woman's program, we can continue with family relations, child-care, recipes etc. as long as we are able to maintain this work here."⁶⁰⁷

Evidently, the main accusation raised by the administration against the producers of programs like *Kadın Dünyası* or *Hanife Hala* was that they lived far away from the "essence of the Turkish culture: the Anatolian village," and developed "such notions of female peasant and worker that lacked any correspondence with the reality in their minds susceptible to ideological indoctrination in big cities."⁶⁰⁸ For example, the

⁶⁰⁵ In fact, *Kadın Dünyası* was one of the most long running live programs of the TRT Radio in its history. On 5 December 1977, radio put on the air its 500th episode. By that time, the producers received more than 30 thousand letters from the audience and made around 1300 interviews with women. They had also visited nearly 60 provinces and villages and hosted 320 specialists and artists in their program. See *Cumhuriyet*, 5 December 1977.

⁶⁰⁶ Ercan said, "If you know how to say what you are about to say, if you do not say it in an extreme manner, it is broadcast anyway." Her words were quoted from Nart, p. 204. This idea was shared by the interviews who worked as producers at Ankara Radio then. Similarly they argued that despite their frequent "struggles" with the supervision office chief, who "changed their texts word by word," the program text that eventually came out was never far outside their first draft. For details, see S.Ü. and N.Ç.

⁶⁰⁷ Quoted in Nart, p. 204.

⁶⁰⁸ Karataş, p. 133. The original text is as follows: *Büyük şehirlerde, ideolojik baskılarla yıkanmaya elverişli beyinlerinde, kendilerine mahsus bir işçi ve köylü kavramı vardı.*

series *Hanife Hala* was accused by Karataş of “being full of cheap, colorless and artificial expressions whose propaganda purpose grins openly.”⁶⁰⁹ He also criticized that its producers presumed beforehand that the village community was a backward one. Against this, he alleged, “The Turkish village is not deprived of civilization. It has been always open to any instruments of the civilization... In the Turkish village there are no Aunt Hanifes who arise spontaneously somehow or other, as well.”⁶¹⁰

Similarly, during Karataş’s term of office, a member of the board made the following complaint about *Kadın Dünyası* :

On 17 January 1975 the topic of the women’s hour was tea. It passed as follows: “The British drink tea with milk... Species of tea, like spicy in America, rosy in Sweden and etc., are delicious...” Is it for the Anatolian peasant who achieves event potable water with a heavy heart in many places?⁶¹¹

The charge against these radio and TV producers that they lacked proper knowledge about and experience with their presumed audience, particularly peasants, was the main justification for the deportation of some of them by the administration to offices away from the headquarters, whose implications for the women on the TRT’s professional staff will be discussed in the following section.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 179. The original text is as follows: *Ucuz, donuk, suni ve propaganda maksadı açıkça sırtan ifadeler.*

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., p. 186. The original text is as follows: *Türk köyü medeniyetsiz değildir. Medeniyetin her türlü vasıtasına da her zaman açık olmuştur... Türk köyünde, öyle nasılsa ortaya çıkıvermiş, hüdayınabıt Hanife Hala’lar da yoktur.*

⁶¹¹ Ibid., p. 134. The original text is as follows: *17 Ocak 1975’te kadınlar saatinin konusu çay idi. Şöyle geçti: İngilizler çayı sütle içerler... Çay neveleri, Amerika’nın baharlı, İsveç’in güllü, bilmem nerenin çayları nefis olur. İçecek suyunu dahi birçok yerlerde binbir güçlükte elde eden Anadolu köylüsüne mi?*

TRT: From a “Family Affair” to a “Battle of Struggle” for Women

In *Son Havadis*, columnist Yalçın Uraz contrasted Yalçıntaş and newly-appointed Karataş on the following grounds: “For Karataş to be successful on the way to nationalism, he will have to work as directly opposite to what Yalçıntaş did, and this is possible by creating a loyal staff.”⁶¹² Karataş apparently followed this advice and appointed rightist/conservative figures, particularly supporters of the NAP, to various offices at TRT from the top to the bottom. Faced with such a threat, many members of the staff closer to the left developed an organized struggle against the director-general.⁶¹³

On 23 May 1976 TRT shop committees of the TMMOB (The Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects), TÛTED (Telecommunications Industry Association), TÛM-DER (the union of the left-aligned state officials’ associations) and Yeni Haber-İş (DİSK-affiliated trade union of post, telephone, telegraph, radio and television workers),⁶¹⁴ organized a forum and decided to

⁶¹² *Son Havadis*, 1 February 1976. The original text is as follows: *Karataş’ın milliyetçi doğrultuda başarılı olabilmesi için, Yalçıntaş’ın tam aksi istikamette icraata geçmesi gerekmektedir. Bu da devlete sadık bir kadro kurmakla mümkündür.*

⁶¹³ Actually, trade unionization at TRT already started by the waged employees’ efforts, primarily in order to protect their employment security against any partisan measures by the administration, right after Yalçıntaş’s appointment. For example, the number of those who registered for the DİSK-affiliated *Yeni Haber-İş* increased in a rather short time period after Yalçıntaş’s arrival. They also attempted to organize a strike against any possible lay-offs. However, it was prevented by the Ministry of Labor since TRT was accepted as among the institutions of education where any labor strikes were banned by an amendment to the TRT Law enacted during the military period. Following Karataş’s arrival, the trade unionization efforts gained the momentum and embraced a higher mass of the employees. For further details, see *Cumhuriyet*, 11 August 1975; and *Cumhuriyet*, 12 August 1975.

⁶¹⁴ Besides these shop committees, the salaried staff at TRT established an organization called TRT-DER (Association of All Radio and Television Employees) in 1977. The main purpose of the association was building the staff’s consciousness about the profession of radio-TV broadcasting. It represented the staff against the administration in discussing their grievances about health and nutrition problems and daily working hours. It also defended the staff’s right to have a say in the management of the institution as well as to collective bargaining and strikes. In addition, it organized discussion forums about these issues. However, evidently, there were conflicts between TRT-DER and the leftist state officials’ association TÛM-DER (Association of Unity and Solidarity for All

establish the TRT Council of Labor as an umbrella organization whereby they would “act together against the fascist repression and slaughter,”⁶¹⁵ as did they define the administration’s employment policy.

The Karataş administration reacted to the forum by relocating or dismissing around one hundred members of TÛM-DER and Yeni Haber-İş.⁶¹⁶ To protest these lay offs, a boycott on lunch was organized by the TRT’s staff in Ankara.⁶¹⁷ Also, around seven hundred TRT employees signed petitions against the Karataş administration and submitted them to Ankara Public Prosecution Office and to the Republican Presidency.⁶¹⁸ Ultimately, the Prosecution Office opened up an investigation about Karataş just one month before his dismissal by the newly established minority government, lead by the RPP, on 21 June 1977.⁶¹⁹

Public Officials). TÛM-DER accused TRT-DER of serving the “careerist goals” of some TRT members, known for their support for the RPP, instead of the overall democratic struggle. See TÛM-DER, *Demokratik TRT Kavgamız* (Ankara: TÛM-DER Ankara Basın ve Propaganda Bürosu, 1978), p. 17.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid, p. 6. The representatives from *İlerici Kadınlar Derneği* and from Ankara Women’s Association also attended the forum.

⁶¹⁶ For the full list of those TÛM-DER members, see *ibid.*, p. 16. Jülide Gülizar was one of those women whose offices were changed by the administration. She was removed from the TV news once again and assigned as a speaker to Ankara Radio. Although she was invited back to her post on TV after a while, she declined it. Instead, she began to produce a popular TV discussion program, *Bir Konu Bir Konuk* (One issue one guest), for the TRT Education Broadcasts Office. See Gülizar, *TRT Meydan Savaşı*, p. 138; and also *Cumhuriyet*, 30 January 1977.

⁶¹⁷ Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumun Tarihi*, p. 143.

⁶¹⁸ See *Cumhuriyet*, 28 February 1977; and also *Cumhuriyet*, 8 March 1977. The Minister of Justice (from the NSP) also made an official complaint to the Prosecution Office about Karataş, claiming that he has occupied his office at TRT by illegal ways. Actually, the Islamist partner of the Nationalist Front coalition, the NSP, lead by Necmettin Erbakan, was the one who inveighed most against the Karataş administration, accusing it of violating the principle of impartiality and privileging the JP and the NAP in the TRT’s broadcasts. For example, prior to the parliamentary discussion on the national budget in 1977, the party’s assistant head Fehmi Cumalıoğlu openly accused the TRT administration of partizanship. The rumours also circulated that the Ministers from the NSP were planning to request from Prime Minister Demirel to implement the State of Court’s ruling against Karataş. For further details, see *Cumhuriyet*, 7 January 1977.

⁶¹⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 April 1977.

Also, the press covered claims of abuse about the admission exams held during the Karataş administration, particularly about the one on 29 May 1976.⁶²⁰ For example, it was reported that the male applicants were registered for the admission exam without being required to submit their military service postponement certificates despite the directives on the contrary.⁶²¹ The questions asked in the exam, such as those about the exact number of Dede Gorgut tales or the author of the Mawlid, also seemed to favor the candidates who passed through a Turkish-Islamist socialization process, as Gülizar also mentioned:⁶²²

A high number of employees, whose appointment was previously agreed upon, were admitted to the institution by weird examinations. According to the Exam Regulations of TRT, the exams were announced beforehand by radio, by TV and by the press. However, in that period, the exam announcements were not made in the popular press... but in the *Official Gazette*... The exam questions were deciphered, too. For example, those who replied to the question “What does 1917 remind you of” with “the Soviet October Revolution” lost, whereas those who replied with the birthday of a political party leader were found successful.⁶²³

Admittedly, appointments to high administrative posts by a new-comer director-general were not considered much unusual. Instead, it was the overall change in the staff profile what aroused opposition to the Karataş administration. The already existing staff felt uneasy with those admitted to the institution by the exams about which there were numerous claims of abuse. In turn, the staff immediately developed resistance to the new arrivals. Most particularly, they excluded them from their

⁶²⁰ After this exam attended by 8,288 people, 248 were found successful, yet only 139 of them happened to pass the post-exam training course and were recruited to the staff. See Karataş, pp. 120 – 1.

⁶²¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 27 May 1976.

⁶²² *Cumhuriyet*, 30 May 1976.

⁶²³ Jülide Gülizar, *İyi Akşamlar Sayın Seyirciler* (Ankara: Dayanışma Yayınları, 1982), pp. 13 - 4.

networks of relations. The newcomers also secluded themselves, which further reinforced the distance between the two groups.⁶²⁴

Those appointed by the admission exam in May 1976 were condemned for professional inadequacy and for not being equipped with proper skills for broadcasting, as well.⁶²⁵ The problem went beyond the assumed violation of the criterion of merit, though. As already discussed in the previous chapter, merit was apparently established as the basic condition for recruitment by the TRT's charter, but the admission procedures actually privileged those with the "desirable" cultural capital acquired within the Republican socialization process at family and at school. This ensured keeping TRT "a family affair among the elite" behind the scenes.

On the other hand, the mounting political competition over TRT, particularly in the latter part of the 1970s, put under threat this congenial atmosphere of the institution. Those "coming from the mountains" were challenging its gates to "dismiss the ones already settled in the vineyard," so to speak. To say the truth, this was the general perception shared by many employees of TRT who had been hired before the Karataş administration.⁶²⁶

⁶²⁴ Ibid., p. 14.

⁶²⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 30 January 1977.

⁶²⁶ Indeed, as a scholar from provincial origins, Şaban Karataş himself embodied the inter-elite struggle within TRT. He was born in a province in the central Anatolia to a middle class family. His father was a lower-order state official. He exploited the opportunity the Republican educational reforms provided particularly to men from middle and lower-class origins for social mobility. He obtained his graduate education in the USA, benefiting from a state scholarship, and was recruited to Erzurum University in 1961. On his first day at TRT, he compared the headquarters building in Ankara to the City Club in his province, which he found "modern yet weird" in his childhood since its attendants spoke "a language not resembling theirs." See Karataş, *TRT Kavgaı*, pp. 11, 18. The city clubs were first established in the late Ottoman period and acquired popularity during the single party era. Although they were expected to engage in activities assisting Turkey's scientific and social development, and to act as platforms for the development of a Habermasian kind of rational and emancipatory public opinion, they happened to serve as places for socialization of the elite groups, particularly state officials. For further details on the city clubs, see also Serdar Öztürk, "Bir Kurumun Tarihsel ve Sosyolojik İncelemesi: Şehir Kulüpleri (1923 – 1950)," *Galatasaray İletişim* (June 2006), pp. 89 – 115.

As the 1970s wore on, off-springs of non-elite social groups were asking for their share in the state institutions, and the coalition parties of the era were apt to admit them to the state circles within their public employment policy which they also used as a means to increase their electoral support. Accordingly, many studies demonstrate a remarkable quantitative growth in the public bureaucracy during that period. Whereas 15.72% of all the paid employees in Turkey were state officials in 1970, their proportion reached somewhere around 20% towards the end of the decade.⁶²⁷

Also, a process of feminization of the bureaucratic labor power took place simultaneously. Despite the slow rate of the growth of the female working class, women already entered into the ranks of the public sector at regularly increasing rates until the 1970s. In comparison to 12,716 female civil servants in 1938, there were 123,812 in 1970, which equaled 18.9% of the whole bureaucratic labor power. By 1978, their proportion became 26.7% in the entire public sector. Nonetheless, the proportion of women employed in the public sector declined in two years after 1978 to 23.3%. According to Çitçi, its reasons may be found in the economic and social depression that reached its peak point between 1978 and 1980.⁶²⁸

At TRT, the decrease in the proportion of its female staff started earlier and was higher, on the other hand. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, female employees constituted 24.5% of the institution's entire salaried staff in 1969.⁶²⁹ Their number increased by almost 70% from 483 to 822 in seven years. Despite this increase in their numbers, women did not constitute more than 21% of a total of 3919

⁶²⁷ Ömer Bozkurt, "Kamu Bürokrasisine Sosyolojik Yaklaşım ve Bazı Sonuçlar," *Amme İdaresi Dergisi* 14, no. 2 (1981), p. 8.

⁶²⁸ Çitçi, *Kadın Sorunu*, p. 100 – 2.

⁶²⁹ TRT, *1969 Yılı*, p. 74.

salaried staff in 1976.⁶³⁰ Their ratio was still around 21% in 1978 and in 1980, respectively.⁶³¹

According to the statistics drawn from the monthly issues of the TRT's own trade journal *Yayıncılık ve Haberleşme*, only around 14% of the 622 new appointments in 1976 were women. More than 50% of them were recruited as clerks. Those recruited as speakers and producers equaled 12% and 8%, respectively.⁶³² To give more specific numbers, only two of the 42 people recruited as producers and reporters after the admission exam on 29 May 1976 were women.⁶³³

Also, the press reported that there were a remarkably high number of women in the broadcasting staff "expelled" by the Karataş administration to "less-threatening offices" far away from the headquarters. His measures against those women was said to aim at "emptying seats" for the NAP's followers, most of whom were men.

⁶³⁰ Başbakanlık Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1976* (Ankara: DPB Matbaası, 1977), p. 14. Also, a table of the rate of female employment at TRT between 1969 and 1992 is given in the appendix.

⁶³¹ See Başbakanlık Devlet Personel Daire Başkanlığı, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1978* (Ankara: DPB Matbaası, 1979), p. 23; and also Başbakanlık Devlet Personel Daire Başkanlığı, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1980*, p. 8. To compare the development of the female employment at TRT with women's status in other public sectors in Turkey where a highly skilled workforce was employed, while the proportion of women employed as instructors in public universities was 25.4% in the academic year 1973 – 1974, it showed a slight increase to 26% in the academic year 1981 – 1982. For further details, see Er, p. 75.

⁶³² In terms of their educational background, the number of women who completed their secondary education was the highest by nearly 64%, followed by university and high school graduates by around 31%, whereas those who did not continue their education after primary school constituted a negligible minority by 3%. For further details, see TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 10 (1976), pp. 17 – 20; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 12 (1976), p.24; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 13 (1976), pp. 46 – 48; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 14 (1976), pp. 26 – 31; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 15 (1976), pp. 39 – 41; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 16 (1976), pp. 38 – 42; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 17 (1976), pp. 36 – 39; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 18 (1976), pp. 36 – 38; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 19 (1976), pp. 39 – 44; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 20 (1976), pp. 40 – 43; TRT, "TRT'de Yeni Atamalar," *Yayınçılık ve Haberleşme* 21 (1976), pp. 39 – 48.

⁶³³ *Cumhuriyet*, 28 June 1976.

In May 1976, the RPP submitted an official complaint about Karataş to the TRT Election Office whereby it charged him with misconduct and violation of the principle of impartiality.⁶³⁴ The Committee's ruling in Karataş's favor in March 1977 was followed by further deportations and lay-offs. In only one week after the ruling, eight TV producers were sent to exile in the offices in eastern or southeastern Anatolia.

Five of the exiled producers were women: Zülal Aytüre, the chief of the children's desk in the TV Cultural Productions Office, was appointed to Kars. She was said to be punished for hosting the Mayor of Ankara Metropolitan Municipality from the RPP, Vedat Dalokay, on a TV child's program. Neslihan Gence, producing educational programs on TV, was transferred to Gaziantep. The list went as follows: Hülya Gürkan to Erzurum, Şehriban Durgun to Van, Tülay Eratalay and Ayşe Kudret to Diyarbakır.⁶³⁵ Also, chief advisors Fatoş Sevensil and Filiz İlal, from the TV Films Office in Ankara, were sent away from the headquarters.⁶³⁶

Last, Nili Talibar, who was the chief of the Western Languages Office at Ankara then, was assigned as the deputy director of Hakkari Radio in April 1976. Since she was married with two children, she was expected to give up her job after this relocation to a city in the southeastern border of Turkey.⁶³⁷ However, after moving to Hakkari, Talibar took her case to the State of Council. The Court ruled on the suspension of the execution about her, and she was re-assigned as an expert to the general directory in Ankara.⁶³⁸

⁶³⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 July 1976.

⁶³⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 23 March 1977.

⁶³⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 28 March 1977.

⁶³⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 18 April 1976.

⁶³⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 11 July 1976.

By relegating these women to other cities than their families settled in, apparently, Karataş did not leave for them any alternatives but resignation. However, many of these women, like Talibar, acted openly against this conservative presumption that a woman's "natural" place was in the home. Their loyalty for their profession overrode their domestic responsibilities. Instead of resigning from TRT in order to be together with their families, they brought their cases to the court, and many of them ultimately had the TRT administration suspend its measures on them. Although they did not frame their resistance to the Karataş administration around a shared identity of womanhood, they individually challenged the taken-for-granted norms of behavior for women.

Discourse on the Woman Question on the Screen between 1978 and 1980

Between 1978 and 1980, Turkey observed a deepening economic bottleneck, which the domestic market-oriented populist economy policy did not help but reinforced. Imports showed stagnation due to the deadlock of foreign reserves, and the increase in national output was halted, resulting in the emergence of black markets in various consumer commodities. Accordingly, the redistributions relations between the capital and the labor got strained to the extent of devastating the established social and political equilibrium.⁶³⁹

TRT experienced frequent changes in its top-decision making offices in that time period. Cengiz Taşer, assigned as director-general by the RPP minority government, had worked for TRT as a lawyer, program specialist, program chief, legal consultant as well as an assistant director-general in charge of administrative

⁶³⁹ For further details on the economic crisis in this period, see Boratav, pp. 139 – 44.

affairs by then. In 1979, the Demirel government replaced him with Doğan Kasaroğlu, who had worked as the Chief of the News Office for long years until Cem's appointment.

Despite being filled with the figures not outside the institution, the upper administrative offices at TRT remained to be exclusively male preserves. On the other hand, television purveyed a substantial quantity of programming in various genres that recognized changes in women's social status as well as their rising political consciousness.

This was closely related to the contemporary developments in the overall societal discourse on the woman question. By that time, a women's movement had started to address the problem with various publications, conferences, seminars and like. Though still been limited to a class paradigm on the whole, this emerging discourse hinted at the development of an autonomous political consciousness of womanhood, which would be fully realized in the following decade.⁶⁴⁰

Between 1978 and 1980, there emerged many productions on the air, including magazines as well as popular dramas, which evidenced TV's progressive potential for women's empowerment. An early example was the coverage of the issue of divorce in a five-part TV magazine series *Benimle Evlenir misin?* (Would you marry me?). This program was broadcast in the prime evening hours in January

⁶⁴⁰ In the *International Seminar on Women in Turkish Society*, for example, which was organized by the Social Sciences Association in Istanbul in August 1978, Nermin Abadan – Unat made the following claim: "The path toward a freer, independent, responsible and politically aware type of woman is widening. Turkish women are becoming increasingly aware of their subservient role as an unpaid household labor force." Many of the presentations discussed the inadequacy of the approach that looked at the problem of sexual equality largely by focusing on the rights and freedoms the Republic brought to women. They dealt with the issue from a class-based paradigm, instead. The topics that were discussed in the seminar included the female labor power and its employment, the problems of women in *gecekondu* areas and provinces, the status of women employed as non-waged family labor in rural areas as well as women's relation with politics. Feminist authors and scholars from some other developing countries like Fatima Mernissi from India also attended the seminar and presented comparable data about the status of women in their countries. For further details on this seminar, see *Milliyet*, 25 May 1978.

1978. Although the program's general objective was to give instructions for a "healthy and constructive marriage," it allowed a mass focus on an issue of gender politics that had been considered almost a taboo during the first half of the decade.⁶⁴¹

Another contested issue, abortion, was also discussed on TV in the program *Bir Konu Bir Konuk* (One issue one guest), presented by Jülide Gülizar, on 5 September 1979. In the program, the state's prohibition on abortion was blamed for causing many deaths.⁶⁴²

Some women's TV programs further witnessed the developments in women's social and political status. One of them was *Kadınlarımız* produced by Istanbul TV as a 12-part series. The producer of the program was a woman, Sema Okay, who herself proposed this production to and got it accepted by the administration.⁶⁴³ The program's content included problems about women's education, female novelists in the Turkish literature and "women's social status since the ancient times till present."⁶⁴⁴ Okay also made several interviews with some pioneering female professionals who had become a role model for the coming generations of women, such as one of the first female lawyers, Süreyya Ağaoğlu, and the first female parliamentarian Faika Öymen.

Another woman's TV program was *Kadın ve Siyaset* (Woman and politics), produced by Emel Ebcioğlu and Necmettin Varlı, from the Educational Broadcasts Office in Ankara. The program was transmitted as a four-part documentary series in

⁶⁴¹ As already mentioned, this issue was condemned for "provoking family women to immoral ways" when echoed on the air in the early 1970s and found too "objectionable" to discuss in a forum on the screen during İsmail Cem's term at TRT.

⁶⁴² *Milliyet*, 5 September 1979.

⁶⁴³ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 March 1978.

⁶⁴⁴ See *Milliyet*, 24 March 1978; *Milliyet*, 2 June 1978; and also *Cumhuriyet*, 24 February 1978.

July 1978. The list of issues it covered included the female labor in industry, the problem of sexual equality, historical development of women's rights, problems of Anatolian women such as dowry payments, honor killings and abduction of girls as well as the influence of the contemporary economic crisis over the female workforce in agriculture.⁶⁴⁵

Some TV programs also gave Kurdish women the chance to express their views in their mother language about such issues as the agricultural reform, with the help of a simultaneous translator, and they outraged the right, not-surprisingly. A senator from the JP criticized the TRT's broadcasts in a session as follows:

Two days ago a program about the agricultural reform was broadcast. This is crime according to the third article of the Constitution. We saw that a woman whose language we do not know and who does not know Turkish was made to speak on TV... through a translator. TRT does not have the right to do this, which is a divisive behavior. How can a female peasant who does not know Turkish be allowed to speak on TV? ... TRT has lost its national character.⁶⁴⁶

In addition to these domestic programs, various foreign popular drama series continued to introduce strong female characters acting well beyond the stereotyped gender roles. To tell the truth, an attitude which condemned these drama series for "corrupting the national morality" and "provoking conspicuous consumption" continued to circulate in the public opinion in the last two years of the 1970s. On the other hand, different voices also started to be heard as regards TV's relation with women, particularly within the context of foreign popular drama series. For example, from *Milliyet*, Emel Ceylan Tamer pointed at the potential of these artefacts of popular culture for raising women's consciousness about the inequities they were subject to:

⁶⁴⁵ See *Milliyet*, 3 July 1978; *Milliyet*, 5 July 1978; *Milliyet*, 19 July 1978; and also *Milliyet*, 26 July 1978.

⁶⁴⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 23 December 1978.

What did the women who were afraid of opening their mouths against men feel when they watched *Mc Millan and Wife*?⁶⁴⁷ Sally continually put her nose in her husband's affairs. Davinia from *The Foundation*⁶⁴⁸ started to live very happily after her husband died. Davinia, who had lived under her husband's influence since then, became a successful business woman who looked at the world more confidently. Have *The Charlie's Angel's* influenced women merely by their hair styles? I do not think so. These women, who took care of issues men could hardly overcome, destroyed a further legend. Probably because its director is man, he did want women to appear much intelligent... However, Miss Peel from *The Avengers* had already outpaced the Charlie's Angels in this job. She managed everything together with her male colleague. You did not ever think about which one was more powerful.⁶⁴⁹

A positive review about another series broadcast in 1979, *Helen: A Woman of Today*, was published in the leftist daily *Cumhuriyet*, which had been usually skeptical about such productions by then. It gave high credits to *Helen* for "being a brave and modern series" demonstrating the "dilemmas of the modern woman," "the operation of the institution of marriage in Western societies and its connection with relations of property," and "the struggle of a questioning young woman who searches for her identity against many institutions which urge her to preserve the status-quo by disregarding herself." Against the possible accusation that "Helen's life is far away from our women," the critic defended the idea that the problem of economic and sexual independence was universally experienced by the entire women's folk.⁶⁵⁰

In the plot, after the lead female character, Helen, discovers that her husband is cheating on her with another woman, her family and friends try hard to persuade

⁶⁴⁷ It was an American crime drama series that aired on NBC from 17 September 1971 to 24 April 1977. Its transmission started in Turkey in 1976. The plot revolved around a San Francisco police commissioner and his attractive and brilliant wife.

⁶⁴⁸ It was a British drama series aired on ATV between 1971 and 1977. It was broadcast in Turkey in 1978. The plot took place in the world of high finance and big business. The main character was a woman (Davinia), who runs her husband's company herself after his husband's death of a heart attack.

⁶⁴⁹ *Milliyet*, 1 September 1978.

⁶⁵⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 16 April 1979.

her to forget the affair and remain loyal to her husband. However, she bravely decides to leave her husband and go it alone with her two children. Produced by ITV in Britain in 1973, *Helen* was said to be “one of the first to actually explore the woman’s point of view and make her the centre of the drama” by many critics.⁶⁵¹

Throughout the 1970s, along with the rise of second-wave feminism in Europe and the US, there was an emerging sense that TV productions should be alert to the social change as well as the concerns of their time. Although the popular television dramas did not generally tend to challenge the status-quo of gender relations, many sporadic examples, such as *Helen* or *Sara*,⁶⁵² marked television’s participation in this change, at least by reflection, by representing working women, single mothers and divorcees.⁶⁵³

In addition to these foreign drama series, domestic TV productions like the film by Ünal Küpeli, *Bir Kadının Penceresinden* (From a woman’s window), adapted from Oktay Rıfat’s novel where he narrated the “forbidden” love affair between a woman married with children and a revolutionary young man within the socio-political atmosphere of the early 1970s, and the series *Paranın Kiri* (The filth of money), whose main character was a single woman venturing into the male domain of journalism, witnessed the television’s engagement with the change in the discourse on the woman question in the late 1970s.

⁶⁵¹ For further details on this series, see “Helen: A Woman of Today,” n.d., <http://www.televisionheaven.co.uk/overview5.htm> [1 March 2013].

⁶⁵² The series, produced in 1976 in the USA, was set in Independence, Colorado, in 1870. The plot covers the life story of Sarah Yarnell, a school teacher who leaves what she considers a “dull existence” in Philadelphia to teach school out west. The episodes narrate her difficulties as she struggles to educate her townspeople. It was broadcast in summer 1980 in the Turkish television and was acclaimed by the critics as “the story of a woman beyond her age, who struggles like men.” For further details, see *Milliyet*, 3 July 1980.

⁶⁵³ Thumim, *Inventing Television Culture*, p.15.

Admittedly, TV did not act as a simply emancipatory force for women. Instead, throughout the decade, television tended to reflect, instead of intervening in, the conventional gender roles in society, despite some examples of a progressive approach to gender politics. Apart from the areas of women's and children's programming, women mostly appeared as entertainers on the air or as "light relief" in various discussion programs, quiz shows and current affair magazines.

Despite not being totally absent from it, women's relation with the prestigious genre of news was further complicated; their appearance as speaking news on the screen was deemed a threat to the "seriousness" of the affair. Still, there were arenas on screen where this schema of masculine domination broke down. By their assertion of a remarkable feminine experience, popular drama series, which caught the audience's attention a lot, were certainly one of them.

Women's TV programs also suggested a progressive potential for challenging the status quo of gender relations by bringing issues related to "women's liberation" to the air and by addressing women other than as housewives and mothers. Most of these women's programs were produced by individual efforts of the female broadcast professionals who were closer to the left if not actively participating in the leftist movement and who concerned themselves with women's attainment of civil, political, social and economic rights, however much they might deny the label "feminist." And they occasionally faced the risk of being stigmatized for violating the general morality through their productions.

Highly influenced by the rising leftist ideology throughout the decade, these programs usually dealt with the woman question from more or less a class-based angle within a concern for the overall socio-economic inequality. They did not question the patriarchal power relations within the family structure. Also, these

productions were frequently informed by an educating imperative whereby the female audience was perceived as ignorant and located as passive victims to social problems.

Despite these shortcomings, these women's programs that circulated on air in the 1970s challenged the social consensus on women's emancipation by the Republican modernization reforms, as they brought to the public eye the gender inequalities in the public life not much spelled before. Of course, this did not imply by itself a feminine, leave alone feminist, sensibility informing the production decisions. However, the female broadcast professionals' efforts for participation as equals with men in the new working roles made available, particularly with the introduction of TV technology, the challenges they came across in this process, and their efforts for introducing the woman question to air should be understood as an important contribution to the struggles in the field of gender politics that would culminate in the women's movement in the 1980s.

CHAPTER 5

WOMEN AT TRT IN THE NEOLIBERAL 1980s

Happy women... New women created by our age. How modest, how easy, how compatible... A handful of detergent suffices for some of them to be “really happy,” or a laundry drier... Sometimes chocolates bring home our family’s happiness... Today if someone happens to say, “I do not believe in advertisements,” everybody will rightfully consider it insane. I do not show such a sign of insanity. However, I really want to warn some producers. Even abundant happiness is too much, especially in these days when real happiness is experienced drop by drop... That is to say, I am not one of those happy women; I cannot be one.⁶⁵⁴

The 1980s in Turkey started with a military coup that sparked a fundamental transformation in the overall economic, political and cultural orientation of the country. It was not simply a restoration of the state order but a radical restructuring of the economic and political fields upon a neo-liberal paradigm.

Even though the liberal approach to the economy entailed reduction in the state power on behalf of removing obstacles to the growth of the private sector, what emerged was not a merely weakened state. Instead, the state itself was about to turn, albeit by ebbs and flows, into a “business enterprise,” as Kozanoğlu writes, which prioritized profitability and productivity over other social goals.⁶⁵⁵ Accordingly, the market imperatives of forward planning, streamlining, cost cutting and such entered the managerial discourse about state enterprises at the expense of the ideal of public service.

⁶⁵⁴ Quoted from Nezihe Araz, *Milliyet*, 25 January 1986.

⁶⁵⁵ Can Kozanoğlu, *Cıvalı İmaj Devri: 1980’lerden 90’lara Türkiye ve Starları* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2004), p. 33.

What was at stake in the 1980s was well beyond a change of direction in the economic policy. Along with the introduction of the free market economy, a “great social engineering campaign” was launched, with the true-hearted support of the media, for creating “the new Turk who has adopted the idea of enjoying life and consuming for pleasure,” as Bali writes.⁶⁵⁶ To this end, the life styles of wealthier classes were made into an object of display and desire in the expanding and diversifying mass media.

The Cross brand pen Turgut Özal used in his regular public speeches on the colored screen in the second half of the 1980s was one striking symbol not only of the liberalization of the trade regime but also of this pretentious consumption propagated by the hegemonic discourse of the decade.⁶⁵⁷ Even if adopting these consumption patterns went beyond the already decreasing purchasing power of the middle and lower classes, at least they were able to watch this “colorful atmosphere” on showcases and on screen, thereby enriching their dreams.⁶⁵⁸

The 1980s was also an era in which repressed individuality came back to the public political arena. In particular, the second half of the 1980s was marked by the emergence of new political movements whose objective was to self-affirm previously silenced identities in the public sphere. Women, for example, started to “rediscover their womanhood,” as Tekeli writes, along with the foundation of an

⁶⁵⁶ Rıfat Bali, *Tarz-ı Hayat'tan Life Style'a: Yeni Seçkinler, Yeni Mekanlar, Yeni Yaşamlar* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2009), p. 308.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 28.

⁶⁵⁸ Rıfat Bali argues that the members of the capital class cared for keeping their private lives remote from the public eye as much as possible in the 1970s, when the relations between the capital and the labor followed a strained and frequently conflicting pattern. In contrast, they got rid of their “shyness” in an environment when the leftist politics were suppressed down by a military coup. Through influential public relations campaigns, they gained respect and recognition in the public opinion. See *ibid.*, p. 325.

autonomous feminist movement during that period.⁶⁵⁹ Accordingly, many issues related to women such as abortion, physical violence and misogynist premises of the Civil Law entered the agenda of the political life and the popular culture and generated a lively negotiation on gender politics in the public opinion.

Members of the emergent feminist movement bore striking differences from the previous generation of women, who had concerned themselves with the woman question. The latter adhered to the yields of the Republican modernization in their striving for their public existence, whereas the former had been born into an era when the Kemalist female identity as an urban educated woman active in the public sphere had been taken for granted by larger numbers of people. Thus, they were able to hold themselves critically aloof from the ideals of Kemalist modernization, to which they did not feel as much indebted as the older female generation had. They questioned the Republican/modernist perspective on womanhood which conditioned women's public existence by the denial of sexuality and by the self-sacrifice for the higher public good. They also attacked the social consensus on women's emancipation by the Kemalist modernization reforms.⁶⁶⁰

In addition to the crisis of the Kemalist ideology, suppression of the socialist/leftist movement by the coup paved the way for the emergence of an autonomous women's movement in the 1980s. According to Keleşoğlu, while all the dissident voices had been silenced after the coup, feminism was not regarded as dangerous; on the contrary, it was encouraged by the political authority. Since

⁶⁵⁹ For further details about the composition and distinguished political stance of emergent feminist movement in the second half of the 1980s, see Tekeli, pp. 15 – 50; and also Sirman, "Feminism in Turkey," pp. 15 – 30.

⁶⁶⁰ Yeşim Arat, "Türkiye'de Modernleşme Projesi ve Kadınlar," in *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*, eds. Sibel Bozdoğan & Reşat Kasaba (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2005), pp. 92 – 4.

women's emancipation as individuals was the primary objective of the feminist movement, it was considered not contradictory to the rising liberal ideology.⁶⁶¹

While almost no one was allowed to participate in politics, the women's movement was able to flourish; therefore, various themes raised by the feminist movement reverberated in the state TV's discourse on womanhood in the second half of the decade, as will be discussed below. On the other hand, family was praised within the dominant cultural discourse of the decade as the main building block of a conservative society. The growth in women's participation in economic life was discussed in the public opinion, for example, within the context of what one newspaper described as the "problems rapid social change creates in family."⁶⁶²

In fact, the 1980s was an era of conflict in any sense of the term. On the one hand, it was the scene to repression, taboos and violations against various democratic rights and freedoms. In a process continuing up after the elections in 1983, thousands of people were arrested, tortured, put on trial or removed from their jobs.⁶⁶³ The procedural democracy of the 1980s, the framework of which was established by the 1982 Constitution, glorified "authority and hierarchy, tradition and order, stability

⁶⁶¹ Birsen Talay Keleşoğlu, "The Socialist Women Organizations in Turkey: 1975 – 1980" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 2007), p. 362.

⁶⁶² Many public and civil society organizations assumed responsibility for instructing society about how to tame the implications of development of women's participation in economic life for family. For example, in 1982, *Türkiye Çocuk Evleri Vakfı* (The Association of Turkey Children's Hearts) organized seminars whereby the participants were informed about how to "conserve family," whose established role patterns were "under threat" due to the increase in women's participation in the active labor force, by reorganizing the domestic duties of partners along "modern" lines. For further details, see *Milliyet*, 4 April 1982.

⁶⁶³ For the exact numbers, see "12 Eylül'ün Bilançosu," 12 September 2007, <http://arsiv.ntvmsnbc.com/news/419690.asp?cp1=1>, para. 4 [1 May 2013].

and the national interest,” as Keyder writes,⁶⁶⁴ and offered few opportunities for the political participation of citizens even after the end of the military period.⁶⁶⁵

Still, particularly the second half of the 1980s gave birth to a “speaking Turkey” where people expressed and affirmed themselves through newly developing means. Gürbilek argues that the 1980s became the setting for two different politics of discourse. On one hand, it was a period of repression and restraints; on the other hand, a cultural strategy which aimed at incorporating instead of restraining and provoking instead of suppressing also came into being in that decade. That is, it was a period both of denial and suppression and of opportunities and promises whereby people’s desires were provoked. That is, in her view, two notions might define the cultural atmosphere of the 1980s: repression of speech and explosion of speech.⁶⁶⁶

The development of public broadcasting in the 1980s was shaped by this coexistence of a “speaking Turkey” with a Turkey whose right to speak was circumscribed. Another conflict was also at issue. With consumption being intensely celebrated and promoted, television became more of a commercial medium employed for generating the disposition to consume and transforming the population into an active consumer market. Notwithstanding this commercialization tendency, TRT did not abandon its public service ideology altogether. Instead, its charter was still informed by the imperative to educate the public. In addition, many broadcast professionals retained their loyalty to the idea of television as an “enlightening force” for the “ignorant masses.” The antagonism between the commercialization of the field of broadcasting and the efforts to pursue the public service ideology found its expression in the dissemination of mixed messages by TV.

⁶⁶⁴ Keyder, pp. 262 – 3.

⁶⁶⁵ Üstel, p. 307.

⁶⁶⁶ Gürbilek, pp. 11 – 5.

Particularly speaking, the images of women as promoted by TRT TV sent conflicting messages to the audience. On one hand, it frequently addressed women as housewives/mothers whose role in household consumption was provoked and appreciated. On the other hand, TV influenced and, in turn, helped to shape the emergent societal debate on womanhood and occasionally covered issues related to women from a perspective that challenged the dominant gender ideology. How the female broadcast professionals employed by TRT achieved and/or failed to deal with these conflicting cultural discourses and how their relative position in the field was influenced by them will be discussed in this chapter.

The 1980 Coup: Days of “Fun” and “Darkness”

On 12 September 1980, the military seized the high administration of TRT. Major General Servet Bilgi was appointed to supervise the institution for twelve days after the coup. Then he transferred his authority back to Director-General Kasaroğlu. The National Security Council did not replace Kasaroğlu until 20 January 1981, when retired General Macit Akman was assigned as the head of TRT.⁶⁶⁷ And until a new law reorganizing TRT was issued, the institution was governed according to the principles and objectives designated by the military regime.

In the General Broadcasting Plan that covered the year after the coup, TRT was directed to perform the following roles:

⁶⁶⁷ At the same time, the chairs of the Directorate General of Press and of the Anatolian Agency were replaced by military officers. The leader of the coup, General Evren, said the following about these changes: “We believed that these three institutions of ours should be under a very impartial administration, particularly in this period. Therefore, we saw it highly useful to appoint our fellow military men to them. I think this will be always in favor of us. Could not they be found from the civil sector? Perhaps, they could, but we saw it highly useful for now.” For further details, see *Cumhuriyet*, 1 February 1981.

TRT will take a stand in favor of the state and produce programs for not allowing the foci of terror and violence to realize their objectives. Against this desperate situation, TRT will reinforce attachment between citizens, keep alive the ideal of national unity and solidarity, and work for the reestablishment of social peace and will give precedence to programs that will make society adopt Ataturkism and Ataturk's principles.⁶⁶⁸

Much like after the 1971 military intervention, upon the coup in 1980 TRT underwent an almost "technological revolution," one of the main objectives of which was to transmit Kenan Evren's speeches, particularly those whereby he presented the new constitution to the people, more quickly and to a greater audience.⁶⁶⁹

Television's coverage capacity also showed a decisive development after the coup. TV broadcasts had already reached 74.2 % of the population by 1980.⁶⁷⁰ At the end of 1980, this had increased to 86%.⁶⁷¹ That year TRT put into service transmitter stations at Yayladağı, Güzelsu, and Hakkari TV as well as main transmitter stations in Bağışlı and Erzincan.⁶⁷² By the end of 1982, three main and 52 intermediary transmitter stations had been established in addition to the already existing ones.⁶⁷³

⁶⁶⁸ TRT, *1981 Yılı Genel Yayın Planı* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1980, p. 78). The original text is as follows: *TRT yayınlarında devlette yana tavrını alacak, şiddet ve terör odaklarının emellerine ait olmasına imkan verilmemesi konusunda programlar hazırlayacaktır. Bu vahih durum karşısında TRT... yurttaşların arasında sevgi bağlarını pekiştirecek, milli birlik ve beraberlik ülküsünü canlı tutacak, toplumsal barışın tekrar kurulmasını sağlayacak... Atatürk ve Atatürkçülüğü, Atatürk ilkelerini topluma benimsetici programlara ağırlık verecektir.* The roles assigned to TRT by the military regime complied with the objectives of national education redefined after the coup. As put forward in the program of the military government led by Bülent Ulusu in the last three months of 1980, national education was expected to make Ataturk's nationalism and national consciousness dominant against "the foreign ideologies that turned young people into anarchists." For further details, see Üstel, p. 278.

⁶⁶⁹ İyigüngör, pp. 18 – 9.

⁶⁷⁰ Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, p. 191.

⁶⁷¹ TRT, *1981 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bünye Raporu*, p. 40.

⁶⁷² Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1980 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bünye Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1981), p. 15.

⁶⁷³ Particularly, the installation of a transmitter station in Hakkari was considered to symbolize the access of the state authority to the farthest areas in the national territory. Nevertheless, the problems in its functioning revealed the lack of concern on the part of the state for gaining knowledge about objects of its power. The press reported that the transmitter did not offer any clear voices or images for a long time period after its opening ceremony. After a technical investigation, it

TV ownership increased during the coup period as well, from 3,450,000 to 5,185,000 in 1983.⁶⁷⁴ Moreover, the number of registered TV receiver owners surpassed the number of those who owned a radio receiver for the first time in 1981. Still, television mostly remained an urban phenomenon, and the registered TV receiver owners in rural areas did not exceed one million until 1984.⁶⁷⁵

Removal of “Irregular” Feminine Images from the Air

On the occasion of the opening of the main TV transmitter in Hakkari in 1980, Kasaroğlu announced,

The members of TRT, performing their job under the command of the Turkish state and at the service of the great Turkish nation, will continue their work with the inspiration they take from that and with strength, and we will allow none of the stainless antennas we have put into service today to be contaminated with any irregular voices or images.⁶⁷⁶

Just a short while after the coup, Kasaroğlu also warned the TRT’s employees uncompromisingly about their public images:

It should never be forgotten that TRT should set an example to society in its services. The voice and the image on the TRT’s screens and microphones are the main components of those exemplary behaviors. Those who are required to set an example to society must deliver the best service to their audiences by their speech, clothes and behaviors.⁶⁷⁷

became clear that the construction site for the transmitter had been selected without any detailed examination of the area. For further details, see *Milliyet*, 12 December 1980.

⁶⁷⁴ State Institute of Statistics, *Statistical Yearbook of Turkey 1984* (Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü Matbaası, 1985), p. 181.

⁶⁷⁵ State Institute of Statistics, *Statistical Yearbook of Turkey 1985*, p. 324.

⁶⁷⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 9 November 1980. The original text is as follows: *Türk devletinin emrinde, büyük Türk milletinin hizmetinde görev yapan TRT mensupları buradan aldıkları ilham ile ve güçle çalışmalarına devam edecek, bugün hizmete sunduğumuz tertemiz antenlerin hiçbir çarpık ses ve görüntü ile kirlenmesine imkan vermeyeceğiz.*

⁶⁷⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 26 September 1980. The original text is as follows: *TRT’nin hizmetlerinde bugüne kadar olduğu gibi topluma örnek olmak gereği hiçbir zaman unutulmamalıdır. TRT’nin ekran ve mikrofonlarındaki görüntü ve ses, bu örnek davranışların temel unsurlarıdır. Topluma örnek olmak*

One of the “irregular” images to be removed from screen was any female figure that distorted the established gender roles. For example, the TRT administration inflicted a punishment on a female TV speaker who wore pants on screen for “acting against morals and manners.” In his column, Atilla İlhan covered the issue by highlighting the apparent conflicts in the economic and cultural policies of the regime:

Fashion firms produce pants, each one more beautiful than the other, supply them to the market and advertise them. How does it make sense that the authority which promotes the same firms through credit opportunities, tax rebates and export subsidies prohibits wearing those pants? If Turkey wants to “achieve the level of modern civilization,” it should get used to women wearing pants and miniskirts. On one hand, we are incessantly trying to establish a liberal economic order... On the other hand ... we allow directors and director-generals to poke their noses into everybody’s wardrobe. Liberal democracy means a society in which everybody is independent and free in her behavior unless she harms anybody; we have not been able to appreciate this in one way or another!⁶⁷⁸

The space to be “purified” was not only the screen, but also the TRT’s offices. The military administration attached great importance to hygiene and to order inside the institution. Working hours were rigorously controlled, and a strict dress code was imposed on the employees. Some, however, used their creative energy to distort this atmosphere:

The coup period was a lot of fun... There was military discipline. Military discipline meant that everywhere was clean. Also, you had to be there at 9 o’clock. For example, if you came at one past nine, an investigation would come... It was fun. For example...in summer ... women were required to wear socks. And I went wearing green socks with clogs. I walked with a banging noise. When they said, “What is this?” I replied, “Wearing socks is the rule.” Let’s say, I was making fun of this period...⁶⁷⁹

durumunda bulunan kişiler, konuşmalarıyla, kıyafetleriyle, davranışlarıyla kendilerini dinleyen ve seyredenlere en iyi hizmeti götürmek durumundadır.

⁶⁷⁸ *Milliyet*, 20 July 1982.

⁶⁷⁹ S.K.A.

In a working environment where they were deprived of the means for organized resistance, the employees dealt with the regulations imposed by the military administration by “making fun of them,” as quoted from interviewee S.K.A. Similarly, another interviewee, D.A., used the adjectives “dark” and “fun” simultaneously to describe the working atmosphere created by the coup:

They were really very dark days. You see, military officers, colonels and generals were our directors. Let me tell an anecdote: We threw neckties to our friends from the window. A necktie was available in the office stock. We used to throw it from the window because they did not allow men without neckties in at that time. Women with sleeveless shirts were not allowed, too; sandals were not admitted and so on. We had such fun in that period.⁶⁸⁰

Director-General Macit Akman defended the creation of a disciplinary working atmosphere at TRT as a requirement of being a state official and said, “We are state officials. Being a state official needs discipline... Wherever discipline lacks, nothing works.”⁶⁸¹ On the other hand, he claimed that he tried to implement a persuasive strategy against the employees since TRT is “a family above all.”⁶⁸² Apparently, what he meant was a “family” whose privacy was thoroughly preserved. To this end, the administration took measures to limit the staff’s interaction with other media organs. For example, it did not allow dailies into the TRT News Office for a while.

A stereotypical feminine image as secluded from the outer world accompanied the reactions in the press against this restriction, and the criticism about it was translated into a concern for the emasculation of the news office. For example, *Cumhuriyet* complained that a TRT reporter had not been able to get proper information about current events and developments owing to this restriction, and

⁶⁸⁰ D.A.

⁶⁸¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 1 February 1982. The original text is as follows: *Biz devlet memuruyuz. Devlet memurluğu disiplin ister... Disiplin olmadığı yerde hiçbir şey olmaz.*

⁶⁸² *Cumhuriyet*, 13 December 1982.

represented the News Office staff by a female figure sitting in front of her typewriter with her long and colored finger nails and telling the future by reading the grounds remaining in her coffee, as shown below.⁶⁸³



Fig. 22. Female cartoon figure representing a TRT News Office reporter⁶⁸⁴

The military administration also attempted to remove from the screen any images thought to contradict the institution of family. Ö.C., charged with supervising programs on behalf of the director-general at that time, offered a striking example of the conservative approach that the coup introduced against the appearance of sexuality on the screen:

One day one of the military officers came in anger; we, the three inspectors, were sitting in the Supervision Office. He said, “Who controlled the film broadcast last evening?” It was a film about the American civil war... There was an American lieutenant... and his lover or fiancée, who had beautiful, curled hair and wore a riding skirt... They meet somewhere like a hay-barn for the last time before going to the war... The woman says she is very sorry; she will miss him very much... And he says, “One day I will come back; wait for me.” Then they join their hands and sit on the hay on the ground... They sat close to each other, but the woman’s skirt was up to the floor, and she had a formal dress covered up to her neck, which was worn in that century.

⁶⁸³ It should be noted that an experienced female TV news speaker known for her affiliation with the NAP in the 1970s, Ülkü Kuranel, was promoted to the chair of the Parliament News at around the same time. This might have also been a factor for the translation of the criticism against this measure into a concern for the emasculation of the news office by the leftist daily *Cumhuriyet*.

⁶⁸⁴ Copied from *Cumhuriyet*, 3 March 1982.

Then, it passes to the war scene... He said, "Stop it." I said, "Why?" ...He asked, "What have they done?" I said, "They joined their hands. The man wanted to kiss the girl, and the girl leaned towards him." "You see," he said, "this is watched by a family; it is clear what will happen next. By giving consent to the broadcasting of that image, you mean to give consent to an image that is contradictory with the institution of family. However, principles like the preservation of the institution of family are included in the broadcasting principles of TRT." I was not able to give any answers; I was paralyzed. "Next time, be careful; I do not want such stuff," he said. I felt so bad that... my mind stopped working.⁶⁸⁵

Demonstrating that the broadcasting policy continued to be informed by a paternalist understanding, scenes thought to carry sexual references were shortened by the TRT authorities.⁶⁸⁶ Director General Macit Akman himself stated, "I reduce a sex film of 40 seconds to three because our people are not accustomed to watching sex films."⁶⁸⁷ The administration also put limitations on the screen images of female performers of music, pretending that their "fancy" clothes created an urge in the audience for overconsumption.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁵ Quoted in İyigüngör, pp. 275 – 6.

⁶⁸⁶ When such scenes escaped the TRT authorities' notice, some column writers readily undertook the job of informing them. For example, journalist Burhan Felek warned the TRT administration about an American TV series as follows: "... After seeing... in a series broadcast on TV some time ago, which we watched with my eight year old granddaughter, that the prostitutes in a brothel readily did that job to earn their lives, I found it unavoidable to submit this clear complaint to our fellow Macit Pasha. Each woman and man immediately... kisses each other whenever they meet. And our children see that. ... How could you show that film to the Turkish youth, the Turkish women, and particularly to our girls?" For the rest of his column article, see *Milliyet*, 25 August 1982.

⁶⁸⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 February 1984. The original text is as follows: *40 saniyelik seks filmini üç saniyeye indiriyorum. Çünkü halkımız seks filmi izlemeye alışık değil.*

⁶⁸⁸ Against the criticism about the TRT administration's interference with the female singers' appearance on the screen, Macit Akman was reported to say, "In reality, I intervene in nobody's slit or dress, but everything has a limit. They must not change four or five dresses for four or five songs. It leads to wannabe." The original text is as follows: *Gerçekte sanatçının yırtmacına, elbisesine karışmıyorum. Ama her şeyin bir sınırı var. Dört beş şarkı için dört beş elbise değiştirilmesin; özentilere yol açıyor.* See *Cumhuriyet*, 24 December 1982.

TRT: “Merchant” or a “School?”

This paternalist understanding about TV broadcasts was accompanied by a cultural discourse which provoked audiences’ desires, including sexual ones, in order to turn them into consuming subjects, particularly in TV ads. In their letters to the press, some audience members highlighted this contradiction involved in the display of female sexuality on air:

What is it if it were not a reference to “sex” that her husband immediately appears when Nazife’s friend, her neighbor with an Arçelik brand household appliance, says, “Mine has not stopped working for 15 years?” ... Do not [some TV ads] employ the female body as a stimulator and present women as sexual objects? ... Should it be attributed to the commercial side of the work that those who blue pencil “artistic eroticism” (!) give green light to “advertising eroticism?”⁶⁸⁹

Actually, the TRT authorities occasionally, if not frequently, refrained from the paternalist understanding of broadcasting in the case of TV ads, the revenues from which had started to show a decisive increase.⁶⁹⁰ The Board of TRT decided to establish a separate office for the Advertisement Broadcasts in 1980 and focused its energy more on increasing advertisement revenues. To give a more specific example, the TRT administration changed its attitude against use of children’s imagery in TV

⁶⁸⁹ The original text is as follows: *Nazife’nin Arçelik sahibi komşusu, arkadaşı “Benimkisi 15 yıldır tık demedi” derken kocasının hemen görüntüye gelmesi “seks”e gönderme değil de nedir? [Bazı televizyon reklamları] dişi bir vücudun özendirici bir öğe olarak kullanılması, kadının cinsel bir nesne olarak sunulması değil mi? ... “Sanatsal erotizm”e makas sallayanların “reklamslal erotizm”e (!) yeşil ıyık yakmalarını işin tecimsel yönüne mi bağlamak gerek?* For the rest of the reader’s letter, see *Cumhuriyet*, 7 February 1984.

⁶⁹⁰ To give illustrative figures, the TRT’s revenues from radio and TV ads already constituted around 50% of the total income of the institution in 1977. Five years later, the share of the advertisement revenues increased to nearly 70%. Despite a striking increase in its revenues from radio and TV ads, the space TRT allocated to ads on the screen actually decreased from 1977 to 1982. Whereas ads equaled around 7.5% of the annual length of TV broadcasts in 1977, their share decreased to 6.3 % in 1982. For further details about the income components of the institution in those years, see TRT, *1977 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bünye Raporu*, p. 253; and also Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu, *1982 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bünye Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1983), p. 73 – 4.

ads that year. Chewing gum ads, the broadcasting of which had been previously forbidden on behalf of “protecting children against harmful consumption habits,” began to be broadcast on air again after the coup, as well.⁶⁹¹

These measures taken by the administration led many cultural elites to condemn TRT for acting like a “merchant” and betraying the public service ideal. Nonetheless, this criticism missed a certain point. As Abu Lughod demonstrates, for the Egyptian case, when public services were considered a commercial exchange along with the drive for economic liberalization, the state ideology began to address people as consumers rather than citizens, and public television constituted one of the main cultural forms by which this address was articulated. Still, she admits that the state TV in Egypt did not totally abandon its public service ideology during that process.⁶⁹²

Similarly, TRT did not leave behind the ideal of uplifting society after the coup completely.⁶⁹³ To give some figures, the share of education and culture broadcasts on air increased from 11.3% in 1977 to 18% in 1981 and to 23.6% in

⁶⁹¹ Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, p. 171.

⁶⁹² In understanding the way television changed in the neo-liberal period, the utility of the dichotomy between national citizens and consuming subjects should be questioned, according to Abu-Lughod. Instead, she believes that capitalist marketing and mass commodity consumption are not necessarily antithetical to national identity formation. See Abu-Lughod, *Dramas of Nationhood*, p. 194. Similarly in Turkey, there were programs on the screen which both circulated the ideals of the neoliberal ideology and urged the audience to fulfill their liabilities as citizens. For example, in *Tele-Piyango* broadcast on TV in 1981, a lottery was performed by a celebrity before a public annotator, and those TV viewers whose TV sets’ license numbers corresponded to those drawn were awarded 2500 Turkish Liras. The apparent objective of that program was to encourage the TV audience to pay their license fees while entertaining them at the same time. For a TV critic about the program, see *Cumhuriyet*, 8 October 1981.

⁶⁹³ About the relation between development of consumer culture and TV broadcasts, Sevilay Celenk claimed that TRT TV did not position its audience as customers or consumers until the mid and even late 1990s, when competition in the field of broadcasting toughened with the establishment of numerous commercial TV channels. See Sevilay Çelenk, *Televizyon Temsil Kültür* (İstanbul: Ütopya, 2005), p. 18.

1982.⁶⁹⁴ The informal education program *Televizyon Okulu* (Television school) broadcast right after the coup is one of the most concrete examples of the perpetuation of this ideal. The main objective of that program was to improve the rate of literacy in society and particularly to teach Turkish to uneducated Kurdish women in the eastern and southeastern regions so as to integrate them to the national identity.



Fig. 23. A screenshot from *Televizyon Okulu*⁶⁹⁵

The regime benefitted not only from educational programs to discipline people's behaviors and thoughts. Entertainment programs were considered an efficient way to depoliticize society, one of the primary objectives of the coup. Interviewee Ö.C. said the following about the broadcasting policy of incorporating the audience to the regime through entertainment:

The producers of entertainment and music programs started to be held in high esteem. Those who invited popular artists and produced sports programs were in demand and supported in that period. However, those who made programs about social problems were considered

⁶⁹⁴ For details about share of genres on air in those years, see TRT, *1977 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bütçe Raporu*, pp. 48 - 50; TRT, *1981 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bütçe Raporu*, p. 21; and also TRT, *1982 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bütçe Raporu*, p. 20. Also a table of the relative proportion of the different programming genres on TV between 1968 and 1988, deduced from the annual reports of TRT, is given in the appendix.

⁶⁹⁵ Copied from *Milliyet*, 1 February 1982.

communists. Cabaret like programs, programs which did not interfere with any social problems became more popular. The more you touched upon unproblematic issues, the more comfortable you felt inside TRT and the more prestige and support you received.⁶⁹⁶

The TRT authorities might have preferred that people spend time with their family members at home watching TV in the evenings under the curfew. This was only possible if television was rendered more charming and attractive to them. To this end, they even considered introducing Arabesque to air just after the coup, as quoted from Kasaroğlu below, albeit by coding and disciplining it:

Turning a blind eye on the people's tastes cannot be a realistic approach in the public interest. As a result of this conservatism, which had lasted for years, TRT had been largely separated from the people in terms of music. The Anatolian audience had started to listen to foreign radio stations more than their own. Overcoming this is a national duty before all else. Second, it was also observed that there was no use of prohibiting the music the people demanded for entertaining themselves. Therefore, what should be done is to take... these musical styles under supervision and control.⁶⁹⁷

Nevertheless, the Special Advisory Committee for Turkish Folk Music, set up within TRT's directorate-general in October 1980, came to the conclusion, "Arabesque does not suit any musical genres." Thus, it decided on maintaining the prohibition on Arabesque despite the expectations otherwise.⁶⁹⁸ That is, Arabesque was still considered a musical style that could run riot and resisted being an object of the disciplining cultural discourse of the state.

This prohibition on Arabesque was circumscribed for the first New Year's Eve TV program after the coup, which welcomed Arabesque performers Gülden

⁶⁹⁶ Quoted from İyigüngör, p. 72. The original text is as follows: *Eğlence ve müzik yayınlarının prodüktörleri el üstünde tutulmaya başlandı, popüler sanatçıları çağıranlar, spor kuşakları yapanlar o dönemde rağbet gördü ve desteklendi. Toplumsal sorunlara ait programlar yapanlar da komünistlik yapanlar olarak değerlendirildiler... Ne kadar sorunsuz konulara değinirsen, TRT içinde rahat edip itibar görüyorsun, destek sağlanıyordu.*

⁶⁹⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 October 1980.

⁶⁹⁸ *Milliyet*, 17 October 1980.

Karaböcek, Ercan Turgut, and Kibariye.⁶⁹⁹ In addition, the long-lasting debate about whether a belly dancer would appear on the screen at the New Year's Eve ultimately ended with the famous belly dancer Nesrin Topkapı's performance on TV that night,⁷⁰⁰ and TV belly dance performances at the New Year's Eve became almost a "tradition" after then, but the TRT administration closed the screen to belly dancing for the rest of the year.

Like in the previous decade, TV entertainment programs continued to be a target of cultural elites' objections. Atilla Dorsay wrote, "Particularly in the last one or two years ... *gazino* culture has... settled down in the seat of honor."⁷⁰¹ Similarly, Mümtaz Soysal claimed that the social duty of television cannot be "brushed over" by stereotypical entertainment programs."⁷⁰²

On the other hand, some entertainment programs received praise for their narrative, montage, and artistic design. İzzet Öz's *Teleskop* (Telescope) was one of them. Öngören said the following about that production: "*Teleskop*... has an extraordinary 'imaginary strength' that we have certainly never seen in the entire history of our television... This is of course a great success."⁷⁰³

Despite the praise it received, *Teleskop* was condemned for not serving any social good. TV producer Çetin Öner, who was dismissed from TRT after the coup, asked these questions about its producer:

⁶⁹⁹ *Milliyet*, 30 December 1980.

⁷⁰⁰ *Milliyet*, 31 December 1980.

⁷⁰¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 December 1980. The original text is as follows: *Özellikle son bir iki yılda... bir gazino kültürü gelip başköşeye yerleşmiştir.*

⁷⁰² *Milliyet*, 5 December 1980.

⁷⁰³ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 December 1982. The original text is as follows: *Teleskop'ta televizyonumuzun tüm geçmişinde kesinlikle hiç rastlamadığımız türden olağanüstü bir "görüntüsel güç" de var. Bu da elbette çok üstün bir başarıdır.*

What contributions has İzzet made to our national music by such productions? Has he used his talent helpfully? ... When a person turns back after a while and considers what he has done, what conclusion does he reach if he thinks that “I produced many things for myself as a producer; however, how and for whom did my products serve?”⁷⁰⁴

This kind of objections about TV content failed to appreciate the changing socio-cultural atmosphere in which the gate was now wide open for broadcast professionals who exhibited their individual talents on screen. Particularly the advertising sector, which demonstrated a decisive growth as a result of economic liberalization, was in urgent need of qualified broadcasting staff and ready to pay them much more than they already received from TRT. After the coup, the attractive employment opportunities it offered encouraged many famous screen figures, including TV news speakers, to give up working for TRT and continue their career in the private sector.⁷⁰⁵

In order to prevent this loss of qualified broadcasting staff, the administration forbade those who abandoned their posts at TRT to act in TV ads for one year after their departure. It also took measures to make the profession of broadcasting more attractive. By an amendment to the existing body of law, the rate of the TRT’s employees’ compensation payments increased.⁷⁰⁶ At the same time, a proposal for accepting news speakership as an exceptional office was brought to and approved by the National Security Council. It provided that news speakers, in addition to

⁷⁰⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 10 January 1983. The original text is as follows: *Ulusal müziğimize ne gibi katkılarda bulunmuştur bu izlencelerle İzzet? Yeteneğini yararlı bir biçimde kullanmış mıdır? ... Kişi bir süre sonra dönüp yaptıklarına baktığında “Ben kendi adıma birçok şey ürettim yayıncı olarak. Ama bu tür ürettiklerimin kime ne yararı oldu?” diye düşününce varlığı sonucu ne olur?*

⁷⁰⁵ Some broadcast professionals rejected to work for the advertising sector after leaving TRT since they could not reconcile their professional identity with acting in advertisements. One of them was Jülide Gülizar. In an interview she replied whether she was planning to take role in TV ads after her retirement as follows: “Absolutely no... I do not condemn my friends who go into advertising, but I do not think such a job for myself. I read news for years as the ‘voice of the state’ and then as its ‘face.’ Therefore, I cannot reconcile those two jobs. I do not want to change my past for a few millions.” For the rest of the interview, see *Cumhuriyet*, 28 April 1981.

⁷⁰⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 14 February 1982.

translator speakers who worked for foreign language broadcasts, would be employed without being dependent on the provisions of the Act of State Officials about assignments, examinations, promotions and degree increases. Therefore, they could be appointed to the first degree official posts with the highest salary rates.⁷⁰⁷

Simultaneously, in Öngören's wording, "the same TRT... close[d] its eyes to appointment of its qualified professionals to places where they cannot function."⁷⁰⁸

On 9 November 1981, 101 senior broadcast professionals, the majority of whom were known for having participated in the leftist employee association, TRT-DER, in the second half of the 1970s, were relegated to offices in other state institutions which were not connected to their area of expertise.

To give some examples from the fourteen professionals included in that list, Melek Dener, who had been hired by TRT in 1965 and had worked as a speaker at Istanbul Radio and as a music and news producer at Çukurova Radio, was assigned to the Istanbul Directorate of Public Works as a clerk. Oya Fişek, who had directed children's programs at Ankara Radio for 15 years and was known as the founder of the tradition of children's broadcasts, was assigned to the Ministry of Social Security. Interviewee İ.Ç., who had started to work at the News Office as a reporter in 1970 and had been relegated to Istanbul Television as a producer during the Karataş administration, was appointed as an senior planning specialist at the Niğde Directorate of Public Works.⁷⁰⁹ Sevim Babayiğit, who worked as a producer at Ankara Radio, was assigned as a clerk to the Directorate of Forestry in Ordu.⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 22 May 1981.

⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 13 November 1981.

⁷¹⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 10 November 1981.

The means for the discharged TRT employees to express their protest did not exist at all due to strict censorship over the press.⁷¹¹ Only some left-aligned intellectuals opened their columns to them. For example, Hıfzı Veldet Velidedeoğlu covered the letter sent to him by interviewee Ö.C., some part of which was quoted below, hoping that it might help President Evren “review and change his mind on this slaughter:”

With me, totally 101 people employed at TRT were called to our directors’ offices in the morning on 9 November 1981 and were appointed to other institutions by a yellow envelope. Without being showed any reason, any legal excuses... The TRT’s Director-General says the event goes beyond him, and Prime Minister says this is an “act of state” which cannot be commented on... I worked at TRT as a radio producer... and as a... supervisor for 11 years... I and my friends tried to raise and develop the profession with care as if it were a flower. We slept the most happily when we were able to transmit the problems of our regions that lacked roads, electricity, schools and health centers through microphone and screen.

The following is considered the excuse for our appointment to other institutions: Being a member of TRT-DER. However, why were we [chosen] from among the members of an association whose number is around 2000? We have not been prosecuted due to the association’s activities... I have not gone through any administrative or legal investigation for any of the programs I wrote and produced during those 11 years... I have not written a single line that contradicted the TRT’s principles. Only during the last months of my office... at Ankara Television, they pressured me to substitute the words *ulus* and *ulusal* with *milli* and *millet* in the program texts I read.

They were not able to dismiss us by legal means... Who knows how terrible and unreal acts we were charged with under the conditions of this extraordinary period? The most terrible is that we are not able to know what we are charged with and to defend ourselves. Since our appointment decrees were signed by the State President, the Prime

⁷¹¹ One of the most prominent differences of the 1980 coup from the previous military interventions was observed in the relations of the regime with the press. To give some numbers, 303 cases were opened against 13 national dailies. 39 tone newspaper and magazine paper were destroyed. Newspapers and magazines were conscripted for 41 times during the coup period, and the Council of Ministers prohibited 927 publications. Besides acts of repression, censorship, conscription and liquidation against the press, journalists who criticized the regime’s measures were tried in martial law courts and committed to prison. Around 400 journalists received prison sentences that totaled 3,315 years and six months. For further details, see Media Watch, 27 September 2010, “12 Eylül Darbesi Nedir?” <http://www.turkishnews.com/tr/content/2010/09/27/12-eylul-darbesi-nedir/> [29 March 2013].

Minister and the related minister, the way to the State Council is also closed.⁷¹²

The political authority claimed that TRT had become over- staffed in the previous ten years, obstructing work efficiency.⁷¹³ This purge was justified as a measure for creating a more comfortable and productive working environment at the institution, with no mentioning of political affiliations of the discharged staff. The act was also discussed in the press without almost any references to politics.

Not surprisingly, in an authoritarian climate in which depoliticization reigned supreme, intellectuals who opposed this measure seemingly articulated their objections within an economic rationality. Journalist Uğur Mumcu from *Cumhuriyet* wrote the following about the “staff erosion at TRT,” as he named it:

Let’s put up politics, ideologies and this and that. TRT is experiencing “the worst era ever in its history” in Macit Akman’s hands. Those employees, who were the apple of this institution’s eye, are being scattered around like expensive beads. The only institution which will not make a benefit out of this is TRT...⁷¹⁴

⁷¹² Quoted from *Cumhuriyet*, 16 May 1982. Approving the Law no 2324 on the Constitutional Order on 7 October 1980, the National Security Council, as the leaders of the coup named themselves, transferred the duties and authorities entrusted to the Parliament by the 1961 Constitution to the Head of the Council. This law, which stood until the issuing of a new constitution, entitled the executive with absolute supremacy over the legislative. It also hindered appealing to the State Council for suspension of execution of or for annulment of triad government decrees undersigned by the president, the prime minister and the related minister. The decree about the appointment of the 101 TRT employees to other state offices was also one of them. For further information, see High Military Administrative Court, n.d., “2324 Sayılı Anayasa Düzeni Hakkında Kanunla Getirilen Kısıtlamalar” http://www.msb.gov.tr/ayim/Ayim_karar_detay.asp?IDNO=2675&ctg=000002000031000003 [24 April 2013].

⁷¹³ TRT had a 100% increase in its staff in the last 10 years. As of 31 May 1980, 2522 out of its active staff that equaled 5434 were employed in the program and news services, but not all of those worked directly for production. At that time there were 145 broadcasting employees at TV, composed of 116 producers and 19 assistant producers. For further details, see Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, p. 175.

⁷¹⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 December 1981. The original text is as follows: *Siyaseti, ideolojiyi, şunu bunu bir yana bırakalım. TRT Macit Akman’ın elinde “tarihinin en kötü dönemi”ni yaşamaktadır. Bu kurumun gözbebeği elemanlar, pahalı bir tesbihin taneleri gibi sağa sola savrulup durmaktadır. Bundan kazançlı çıkmayacak tek kurum TRT...*

Similarly, the Progressive Journalists' Association objected to the measure, claiming that it wasted the time and energy spent for years in order to raise those broadcast professionals.⁷¹⁵

TRT did not have such a large number of staff discharged before, even upon the military intervention on 12 March 1971. Indeed, the replacement of qualified broadcast professionals to other state offices seemed an unprofitable economic measure that would not provide returns on the investments TRT made for raising them. However, its intended outcome was something else: threatening “cute guys” by punishing “bad ones.” Broadcast professionals who remained in their posts continuously worked under a threat of losing their job, thereby censoring themselves more thoroughly in their productions without a permanent need for a strict control mechanism.⁷¹⁶

Female Broadcast Professionals at TRT during the Özal Period

Turkey's return to democracy in 1983 occurred in an environment where the cheerful laughter of families watching TV at home together in the evening accompanied the bitter cries of those tortured in custody or in prison. The Constitution, adopted the year before, had brought serious limitations and reservations to basic human rights and reinforced the authority of the central executive organs of the state at the expense of the legislative and judiciary. Indeed, in 1983 the political authority introduced various anti-democratic measures. Among them were the Press Law; the Law about the establishment of State Security Courts, which were entitled to rule on crimes

⁷¹⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 11 November 1981.

⁷¹⁶ Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, p. 184.

against “the integrity of state and nation, the democratic order, the Republic and the foreign and domestic security of the state;” the purge of university scholars from their offices according to the martial law; and the conviction of many left-aligned intellectuals by the trials on *Barış Derneği* (The Association for Peace).⁷¹⁷

Having been drawn up and voted for under “extraordinary circumstances,” the Constitution provided that the National Security Council's operations between 19 September 1980 and the establishment of the Parliament Presidency after the elections were outside the constitutional governance. This provision also encompassed the laws enacted by the council during that term. Besides the law on radio and television broadcasting, which was implemented just one day after the ultimate results of the general elections in 1983 were received, the following were covered by this corpus of law which almost acted as a secondary constitution: state officials, judges and prosecutors, political parties, trade unions, elections, associations, mass meetings and demonstrations and so on.

Almost one year before the enactment of the law on radio and television broadcasting, there had been press reports that the government was working on a proposal to allow the private sector to TV broadcasting and that some private corporations considering this opportunity were developing business projects.⁷¹⁸ The report on “Public Bureaucracy” drawn up by TUSİAD (Turkish Industrialists and

⁷¹⁷ Founded by retired ambassador Mahmut Dikerdem in 1972, this association defined itself as a civil society organization that aimed to create public opinion addressing masses. Its statute listed advocating the principle of universal peace, détente in international relations and general disarmament among its objectives. The executives of the association, closed after the coup, were jailed pending trial by martial law courts according to the 141 and 142nd articles of the Turkish Penal Code. Despite being released, they were able to be acquitted only after a trial process that lasted as long as until 1991. Among them were intellectuals like Behice Boran, Sadun Aren, Erdal Atabek and Ali Sirmen. Gülizar was also tried for being a member of the association. For further details, see Feyziye Özberk, 16 March 2011, “Jülide Gülizar,” <http://www.suvaridergi.org/content/view/1699/> [1 May 2013].

⁷¹⁸ Among those business projects were the cooperation of private firms to assist the state in the establishment of technical infrastructure for a second TV channel which would perform colored broadcasting and whose broadcasting hours would be distributed among those firms in order to enable them to transmit their advertisement programs. For further details, see *Cumhuriyet*, 5 January 1982; and also *Cumhuriyet*, 8 March 1982.

Businessmen Association) in 1983, which discussed ways to reconfigure the public administration in accordance with the liberal economy, also listed TV broadcasting among those public services the transfer to the private sector of which was desired.⁷¹⁹

Nonetheless, while the Consultative Assembly was still discussing the law proposal, the Ministry of Transportation made it public that the removal of the state monopoly on the overall communication network was off of their agenda.⁷²⁰

Ultimately, the emergent law granted TRT monopoly over “installing and operating TV and radio stations and regulating broadcasts on behalf of the state.”⁷²¹

This law was informed by the authoritarian spirit of the 1982 Constitution. Its most distinctive feature was that it reinforced the authority of the executive over TRT, as demonstrated by the changes it introduced to the composition of the Board. According to the previous law, the Board’s members were nominated by various public and civil society organizations and then appointed by the executive. In contrast, the current law provided that the Board was composed of six members appointed by the Council of Ministers from the nominees designated by the Radio and Television Supreme Commission (RTSC), a completely new institution of broadcasting introduced by the law as outside TRT.⁷²²

⁷¹⁹ Oya Çitçi, “Kamu Bürokrasisi Üzerine,” *Amme İdaresi Dergisi* 32, no.4 (4 December 1983), p. 32.

⁷²⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 29 March 1982.

⁷²¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 11 November 1983.

⁷²² Actually, the law covered not only TRT but the whole field of broadcasting in order to preempt any problem of control that the potential debut of cable TV broadcasts was expected to create. To this end, it gave birth to a new institution of broadcasting outside TRT, called the Radio and Television Supreme Commission. The founding objective of this commission was to determine principles of radio and TV broadcasts as complying with “the national politics,” and to observe, control and assess whether they were followed. It was also entitled to designate candidates for TRT’s Board and for the office of its director-general, to supervise broadcasts post-transmission, and to examine and deliver opinions about regulations, annual broadcast plans and special broadcasting principles issued by the Board. In spite of being literally defined as an autonomous body, the commission was highly liable to political influence of the central executive particularly due to the composition of its seats. It had twelve members. Three of them were directly appointed by the

Ruptured Working Habitus of TRT

Despite the National Security Council's expectations and Evren's political propaganda otherwise,⁷²³ the Motherland Party (MP) led by Turgut Özal won the general elections in 1983. Tunca Toskay, appointed head of TRT by the Özal government, was a representative of the conservative/nationalist faction in the MP, and during his term a Turkish-Islamist discourse gained weight on air.

To give a concrete example about the Toskay administration's broadcasting policy, by a language directive it issued on 10 January 1985, the Directorate General prohibited the use of 205 pure Turkish words not only on air, but also in administrative correspondences. It declared that those words "contradicted the structure and operation of Turkish and did not achieve the standard levels of Turkish."⁷²⁴ When some offices did not comply with these restrictions, the Directorate General issued a second directive on 1 February 1985, whereby it

President. Four seats were reserved for government representatives. The rest were elected by the President from those nominated by the Higher Education Council and Atatürk High Institution of Culture Language and History. During the first voting the commission held, one of its members representing the government, Tunca Toskay, earned 11 votes out of 12 and was nominated as the TRT's director-general, which undermined the commission's claim for political autonomy. For further details on the RTSC, see Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, pp. 198 – 9.

⁷²³ The Council openly declared its support for the Nationalist Democracy Party (NDP) led by retired full general Turgut Sunalp. The party defined its main objective as "establishing a style of administration which will sustain the current understanding in Turkey and keep alive the spirit and philosophy of September 12," as its secretary general Doğan Kasaroğlu, head of TRT before Macit Akman, stated in one of his election speeches. Despite transmitting an image as "the governing party of the new era," it managed to obtain only 23.7% of the votes in 1983. In the local elections held one year later, it won municipalities only in three city centres, and it decided to dissolve itself in its extraordinary congress in 1986. For the rest of Kasaroğlu's election speech, see *Cumhuriyet*, 20 May 1983.

⁷²⁴ See Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, pp. 235 – 5. Toskay defended these restrictions on use of language on air by referring to the Prime Ministry's decree requiring all state institutions and corporations to adopt the Constitution Dictionary drawn up by the Turkish Language Association as the norm in all their correspondances and publications and claimed, "It is not acceptable for any radio TV institution to act as a pioneer of extremities in language and to follow a radical language policy." The original text is as follows: *Hiçbir radyo TV kurumunun dilde öncülük yapması, radikal bir dil politikası izlemesi düşünülemez*. For his further statements about the issue, see *Cumhuriyet*, 15 June 1986.

demanded that care be taken not to employ the prohibited words.⁷²⁵ Two years later, in another directive, it threatened that those who continued to use those words were to be punished decisively by their senior unit chiefs according to the discipline provisions.⁷²⁶

Technical developments in broadcasting were also put into the service of this prohibitive language policy. The administration managed to have anyone who appeared on air speak in accordance with its language regulations by use of a one-inch video recorder, which made it possible to cut pictures and voices during filming. For example, upon seeing *Kadınca*'s editor-in-chief Duygu Asena, appearing on the evening zone program *Birlikte Yaşadıklarımız* (Those we live together with), but not hearing her on air despite her mouth moving, some viewers thought that this was a technical mistake. It later emerged that pure Turkish words like *örneğin* (for example) and *yadsımak* (denying) had been extracted from her speech by that machine during the recording of the program.⁷²⁷

Of immediate reactions against this prohibition, the one covered most by the press was raised by stage actress Gülriz Sururi, who produced a 10-minute speech for woman's TV program *Hanımlar Sizin İçin* (Ladies, for you). She canceled her contract with TRT after facing the blue-pencil on the program texts she had written, as quoted from her below:

The restrictions imposed from above on words shocked me... Initially, I produced two programs by changing my words as they wished, and then I suddenly woke up... I decided that to say *asri* woman instead of *çağdaş* woman (Arabic and Turkish equivalents of modern) should not

⁷²⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 26 February 1985.

⁷²⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 12 January 1987.

⁷²⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 13 December 1984.

be easy for me. I now say no to this meaningless (and may be meaningful) prohibition and end my program at TRT regrettably.⁷²⁸

It seems that women took the first rank among those who openly objected to the prohibitive language policy of TRT and expressed their grievances in the press against it. For example, Filiz Ali, who had started to work at Ankara Radio as a producer of music programs in 1962 and decided to resign from TRT as of January 1988, explained the reason for her decision to leave TRT as follows:

For so many years, we experienced unreasonable periods of censorship for some time. However, we had never faced such an example as the process we currently lived through, which promoted corruption and ignorance. Recently I recognized that the program texts I formerly had written full of pages had been reduced to a single sheet of typed paper. The problem of not being able to write as you think, which results from the requirement of translating words on the tip of my tongue to the language of TRT by self-censoring them, also made it impossible to contemplate and to express my ideas... Instead of congratulating the silver year of my career in radio broadcasting, which had lasted for 25 years, I decided to end it by January 1988.⁷²⁹

The increase in the share of a conservative nationalist cultural discourse on air was also exemplified by the contents of the programs produced by TRT during Toskay's term. For example, in the broadcasting plan for 1986, which allocated a large space to historical documentaries and drama series, proposals by the Repertoire Commission for Television Programs included productions like *Tarihte 16 Türk Devleti* (16 Turkish states in history); the drama series *Bayrak Böyle Yükseldi* (Here is how the national flag rose); a documentary on the history of Turkish maritime testifying that Mediterranean is a Turkish lake; *Avrupa'da Bir Sultan* (A sultan in Europe); a documentary about political aspects of Ottoman Sultan Abdulaziz's travel to Europe in addition to documentaries *Türbelerimiz* (Our mausoleums);

⁷²⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 16 January 1985.

⁷²⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 27 September 1987.

Bestekarlarımız (Our composers); and *Izmir'e Doğru* (Towards Izmir), which narrated the recovery of the city from the Greeks during the War of Independence.⁷³⁰

As demonstrated by the documentary on Muslim philosopher Avicenna or the drama series on Genghis Khan broadcast during that term, the Toskay administration also opted to import the kind of foreign productions which could be translated easily into the Turkish-Islamist ideology.⁷³¹

Both foreign and domestic productions were censored according to the precepts of the Turkish-Islamist ideology. A concrete example was blue-penciled scenes of the Japanese documentary *Silk Way*, about Turkey, which was broadcast in 1986. A supervisor condemned the Japanese production team for distorting Turkey's image in those scenes. His arguments against this documentary reveal the scope of and the motives behind the TRT's censorship performance. Particularly his last sentence reveals the official policy of denying the Kurdish identity amidst the rise of a Kurdish separatist movement in the east:

When they came to Turkey, as soon as they passed the border (with Syria), they screened our marching soldiers and said, "Here it is Turkey. How nervous and strict it is! Anxiety is observed." They did not do such a thing even in the shootings in the Soviet Russia. Then they emphasized it when they talked about eastern Anatolia. In parts about the Kurds, we changed the word Kurd with "Eastern Anatolian Turkmens." However, we had to blue pencil the thing introduced as Kurdish clothing. This is not only undesirable, but also contradictory to the clothing revolution.⁷³²

The process of supervising programs was not as smooth as expected, though. Some supervisors acted against the ideological motives propagated by the administration, thereby occasionally facing punishment. In that respect, Dinçmen, who was a TV

⁷³⁰ For further details about the program proposals covered, see Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu, *1986 Yılı Genel Yayın Planı* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1985).

⁷³¹ Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu, *1986 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bütçe Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1987), p. 32.

⁷³² *Cumhuriyet*, 19 February 1986.

program supervisor during Toskay's term, narrates the following case, which resulted in her transfer to a more inactive post in broadcasting. During Ramadan of 1987, Ankara Television produced a series of programs about how that religiously sacred month passes in culturally different areas of Anatolia. In her report covering the episode on Erzurum, a city in eastern Anatolia, Dinçmen wrote the following:

This program must have aimed to screen within its traditional features how Ramadan passes in Erzurum. However, it displays an Erzurum where women and men live in completely separate worlds... where five year old boys go to coffeehouses with their fathers at night, where women and men entertain themselves separately by sitting cross-legged in places lacking tables and seats. People living like certainly exist in Erzurum. However, to pretend that everyone in Erzurum lives and spends the Ramadan in that way is a mistake. It departed from objectivity and did a one-dimensional broadcast by attributing such a backward life-style to all people in Erzurum.⁷³³

Dinçmen's report concluded that the program could not be broadcast unless those scenes were removed. After a short while, she was informed by the Director of Supervision and Reduction Office that the ad-hoc commission established by the Directorate of Television Office had decided on broadcasting the program without cutting any of its scenes. Besides, Dinçmen received a warning notice which stated, "Owing to your recent attitude, you are considered to be sabotaging broadcasts and to have committed a broadcasting crime."⁷³⁴

Then she was transferred to a rather passive desk at Ankara Radio, which she described as follows:

One morning I found myself in my new office, in a new room, which actually meant doing nothing. That was a large and beautiful room. There were two desks in front of the windows... The lady, the inhabitant of the room... had decorated it as she wished. When you went in, you felt like begging her pardon, as if you had gone into one of her apartment's rooms. That lady did not get along with the typewriter

⁷³³ Dinçmen, p. 170.

⁷³⁴ Ibid., p. 172. The original text is as follows: *Son zamanlardaki tutumunuzla programları sabote ettiğiniz ve yayın suçu işlediğiniz kanaatine varıldığından...*

she sat nose to nose each morning.... She said that everybody already had a typewriter of his own at the radio office; they had to write their letters themselves. She knitted and sewed... I had nothing to do. I had to sign in when I arrived in the morning ... and when I left in the evening. I went to the room after signing out. I either read a book or solved a puzzle.⁷³⁵

She described the passivity of this office through a hegemonic masculine language which identified women with domesticity and trivialized their labor at work. On the other hand, her excuse for not submitting her case against the TRT administration to the State Council created a fracture in this masculine language as she herself considered her salary a mere contribution to the family budget:

Why did I put up with that life? If I had filed a law suit to the State Council, I would have been appointed to Kars or Van Radio, which was impossible for me to go to. I suppose, I tolerated it as I thought that the salary I received contributed to the family budget.⁷³⁶

Gülizar wrote that 62 broadcast employees had been displaced as of 6 August 1984 by “mini-operations” of appointments, transfers, and dismissals during the early days of the Toskay’s term at TRT.⁷³⁷ Those emptied posts were usually staffed with people from conservative-nationalist political inclinations, as illustrated by the questions asked in the TRT’s admission exams. Interviewee H.T. recalled that in the exam she took in 1984, the names of the third and the fifth Ottoman sultans were asked, which she replied to as “A good producer is someone who knows from whom

⁷³⁵ Ibid, pp. 176 – 7.

⁷³⁶ Ibid., p. 177. The original text is as follows: *Akla şu soru gelebilir: Bu hayata neden katlandım? Danıştay’a dava açsam Kars veya Van Radyosu’na tayinim çıkardı ki, gitmem imkansızdı. Sanırım aldığım maaşın aile bütçesine katkısı olduğunu düşünerek tahammül ettim.*

⁷³⁷ The Toskay administration delayed bringing the regulations on the conditions of appointment to the Board’s agenda for a while. Thus, it was able to perform its staffing operations arbitrarily. However, the issue was introduced to the Parliament by Barış Can from the Populist Party (PP) when the number of cases reached 99. Representatives from other opposition parties also criticized the TRT’s politically partial staffing policy and called the RTSC to take measures against it. However, the head of the RTSC announced that the commission was not authorized to control the TRT’s employee appointments. On the other hand, against mounting objections both from the Parliament and from the press, the TRT administration stepped back and declared in 1985, “Proposals about staff changes, implemented discretely till now, have been repealed.” For further details, see *Cumhuriyet*, 4 September 1985; *Cumhuriyet*, 5 September 1985; and also *Cumhuriyet*, 13 September 1985.

she can learn these names,”⁷³⁸ and added the following about the changing employee profile of the institution:

Some people from places we could not know were allowed into different positions of the institution. Then they were suddenly appointed to some strange offices. An archive employee immediately becomes a member of the supervision commission. These were positions the government kept as a reserve. And you suddenly come across them as your collocutors. Of course, you become an employee of an institution governed by them.⁷³⁹

Dinçmen stated that friendships born in “coffehouses” or “prayer rooms” became a point of reference for those who sought out appointments at TRT during that period.⁷⁴⁰ Her words brought to light the influence of masculine social networks on the TRT’s recruitment practices. For instance, she recalled that appointment of conservative nationalist figures to the TRT’s Supervision Commission actually generated a very male-dominated working atmosphere there:

The commission was composed of thirty to thirty-five people. It had an administrative unit and a secretariat. The commission was a directorate the members of which were all men as well as its secretary. It was on the sixth floor of a building in Ataturk Boulevard. The friends who sat in the rearmost room used it as a prayer room. Also, there were people who spread out newspapers over the floor and prayed on them on Fridays. Some of the fellow commission members considered it a sin to shake hands with a woman. There were also people disposed to the culture which required one to turn his head back in case of seeing a woman as if meeting an inappropriate image.

It was not easy either to work by sharing the same ambition with them... In reality, all of them were kind people. After a while, ladies also became involved in our staff. They could have preferred to be appointed to a post in the state, but working at that phase of broadcasting might not have occurred to them. Anyway, they had arrived there. They supervised the programs of thirty-year producers, not to say as having the last word. Some attempted to remove a ballet recital from air, considering ballet clothes obscene; some others

⁷³⁸ H.T. The original quotation is as follows: *İyi bir prodüktör bu isimleri kimin bildiğini bilen kişidir.*

⁷³⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁰ Dinçmen, p. 165.

deduced never intended meanings from song lyrics. We tried to strike a happy medium in one way or another.⁷⁴¹

Through their performative acts, some female broadcast professionals underlined the antagonism between the desirable gender codes in the conservative moral discourse and their own professional identities as woman. For example, interviewee S.K.A. recalled the following in that respect:

There were heavily religious men among them, the kind of men who did not even shake hands with women. I squeezed and told them, “Let me kiss you.” They shouted, “Help!” I said, “Shame on you! I kiss all my friends. Is it only you who get aroused by that stuff?” ... For example, at that time we were not allowed to make programs, and I kept knitting like a civil servant. Since they had turned me into a civil servant, I knit in order to make fun of that situation of mine. Then I said, “Don’t you know any men suitable for me? I am talented and pure; why do not you find me a husband?” and so on. I entertained myself in that way.⁷⁴²

The TRT administrations that come to power after the 1980 coup actually weakened the hold of the leftist groupings inside by firing or pacifying them. Still, the institution employed a considerable number of broadcasting staff with leftist tendencies who put their signatures on many productions. They worked in the offices adjacent to those where employees with conservative political inclinations sat.

To the question about how that apparently conflicting atmosphere of work was domesticated, interviewee H.T. gave the answer that the Toskay administration was “wise” enough not to step on those leftist producers and journalists, whose professional capital was still needed: “In that respect, the period of Tunca Toskay was close to the NAP... but did not conflict much with the 68 generation and knew what kind of men they were. They acted without... crossing each other’s path.”⁷⁴³

⁷⁴¹ Ibid, p. 179.

⁷⁴² S.K.A.

⁷⁴³ H.T. The original text is as follows: *O anlamda Tunca Toskay dönemi MHP’ye yakın... Ama 68 kuşağıyla çok fazla çatışmaya girmeyen, onların ne tür adamlar olduğunun farkında olan bir dönemdi... Birbirinin yolunu kesmeden hareket ederlerdi.*

According to Dinçmen, the main outcome of the partisan staffing measures by the administration was the TRT's loss of a "common language" of work. She said, "The settlement away from homogeneity... acquired such a scope that supervision, implemented as three-layered through over-crowded staffs in the 1980s, did not even suffice to correct the inconsistencies in broadcasts."⁷⁴⁴

The coexistence of broadcast professionals from different socio-cultural and political backgrounds seems to have been a main factor for the transmission of mixed and occasionally conflicting messages by TV throughout the decade. Interviewee H.T. gave the following example of this:

For instance, Yücel Çakmaklı was from a faction closer to the NAP. He produced the serial *Osmancık* (Little Ottoman).⁷⁴⁵ Our fellow Ziya Öztan was a member of the 1968 generation... It was an era in the School of Public Service when Mahir [Çayan], Abdullah Öcalan and so on were classmates. We edited the following with Ziya Öztan, who was from such a generation, in the next room: Ziya Öztan has a trilogy which traced the history of the national struggle, the War of Independence: *Ateşten Günler* (Days of fire) was his first production. There they edit *Osmancık* (Little Ottoman); here we edit the film of the War of Independence... in the same hall, in adjacent editing offices.⁷⁴⁶

Besides that, apparent inconsistencies in the dominant cultural discourse of the 1980s reverberated on air in the form of conflicting messages. The governing party led by Özal was said to have created a new hegemonic center by combining nationalist/conservatist views with liberalism, yet the path to that synthesis was not smooth. Instead, it contained many fractures. The TV screen was one of the main

⁷⁴⁴ Dinçmen, pp. 165, 168. The original text is as follows: *...Homojenlikten uzak yapılanma öylesi boyutlara varmıştır ki, 1980'li yıllarda üç kademe halinde ve şişirilmiş kadrolarla yapılan denetim bile yayınlardaki aykırılıkları ayıklamaya yetmeyecektir.*

⁷⁴⁵ It was a historical series produced by TRT in 1987, relating the foundation of the Otoman state.

⁷⁴⁶ H.T.

public spaces where those fractures became visible throughout the decade.⁷⁴⁷

Particularly the imagery of womanhood on the screen was constructed around the apparent conflicts entailed by that difficult synthesis of the liberal ideology with a conservatist moralist discourse, as will be discussed below.

Conflicting Messages about Womanhood on Air

While sexuality became an object of a popular discourse about emancipation and individualization by media throughout the 1980s, particularly the nationalist-conservatist faction in the governing coalition attempted to restrict its visibility and affirmation in the public sphere. As a representative of this grouping, the MP's vice head, Mehmet Keçeciler, declared the following on 9 January 1986 against the promotion of sexual desires by the print media:

Some... magazines exploit sexuality as if they had received orders from certain centers... Such publications, which disregard our community's beliefs and value judgments, destroy the family structure and fundamentals of morality, reduce woman to an instrument of pleasure and embarrass the Turkish mother and sister, are a part of the game staged for demolishing us by the enemies of nation and country, whose financial resources are ambiguous and whose objective is superficial.⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴⁷ The heated debate about the moral effects of beer ads on air was only one example. A short while before the new TRT administration issued the Regulations for Advertisement Broadcasts, Ministry of Education submitted a report to the head of TRT whereby it demanded beer ads on TV be prohibited on the grounds that "they encouraged children to immorality." On the other hand, representatives from advertisement and beer production companies objected that the removal of beer ads from screen might create undue competition in favor of producers of other beverages, which would not be acceptable for a properly functioning liberal economy. At the end of the day, the conservative camp won the race, and the Regulations listed all alcoholic beverages including beer under the items whose advertisement on TV was forbidden. For further details about the "beer problem," see *Cumhuriyet*, 20 April 1984.

⁷⁴⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 14 June 1986. The original text is as follows: ...*Bazı dergiler belli merkezlerden emir almışçasına seks sömürüsü yapıyorlar... Cemiyetimizin inanç ve değer hükümlerini hiçe sayan, aile yapısını ve ahlaki esasları tahrip eden, kadını bir zevk vasıtası seviyesine düşüren, Türk anasını bacısını rencide eden bu gibi yayımlar, mali kaynakları bulanık, gayesi süflü memleket ve millet düşmanlarının bizi temelden çökertmek için sahneye koydukları oyunun bir bölümüdür.*

Although Keçeciler's statement received immediate reaction from the press, the Law for Protecting Children from Obscene Literature, drafted by representatives from the MP, was approved by the Parliament on 7 March 1986. After the law was issued in the *Official Gazette*, a commission of eleven members, set up within the Prime Ministry, started to censor the print media. Those publications declared "obscene" by the commission were required to be sold in black covers and not allowed to be advertised, and the press organs which did not obey these regulations were fined up to one billion Turkish Liras.⁷⁴⁹

The commission was not authorized to supervise TV and radio broadcasts, which were left to the TRT's prerogative. Still, the law on obscene literature actually gave momentum to cases of blue-pencil on air. For example, dance bands' shows on TV entertainment programs were removed on the account that the female dancers wore "nasty" clothes.⁷⁵⁰

On the other hand, the apparent autonomy of TRT from the commission was intensely criticized in the press. The press organs, which faced heavier repression and became highly concerned about reduction in their advertisement revenues after the law, started to attack assumedly pornographic images and content especially in TV ads and argued that "the conflict between considering the feminine gaze depicted in dailies obscene and the use of a woman's leg as an element of attraction even in oil ads" undermined the legitimacy of the commission's charter.⁷⁵¹

Actually, the phenomenon of advertising as a practice of signification started to expand and acquire a sound position in mass media and particularly on air throughout the decade. Advertising messages on television were frequently

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 2 September 1986.

⁷⁵¹ *Milliyet*, 9 June 1986.

constructed within available codes about women and woman's sexuality in the cultural repertoire, despite the TRT's advertisement regulations otherwise. Nevertheless, the imagery of womanhood on air was by no mean homogeneous. While it occasionally allowed advertising firms to evoke the urge for consuming the products of the private sector by reducing women's existence to their sexual beings in their TV ads, TRT opted for addressing women within their roles as restricted to the domestic sphere, especially in its domestic productions addressing the female audience.

TV's Direct Address to Women: *Hanımlar Sizin İçin* (Ladies, for you)

During the broadcasting period that followed the coup, magazine-formatted programs which included the word "woman" in their titles were removed from the TV schedule. Unlike television, radio had started to broadcast a program which particularly addressed women in 1983, *Kadın ve Çevresi* (Woman and her environment), produced by Müveddet Çetinok.

Its content touched not only upon domestic life, but also traced women's participation in the public sphere. This program resembled *Kadın Dünyası* broadcast on radio until 1980. Some of the issues it covered were as follows: the relatively low rate of female professionals, the difficulties facing women employed as industrial workers, women's political and civil rights, population planning, birth control methods, child rearing, infertility, healthy communication in marriage and home economics.⁷⁵²

⁷⁵² See *Cumhuriyet*, 30 May 1983; *Cumhuriyet*, 12 September 1983; *Cumhuriyet*, 7 May 1984; *Cumhuriyet*, 4 June 1984; *Cumhuriyet*, 3 September 1984; and also *Cumhuriyet*, 27 September 1984.

On the other hand, this program showed a striking difference in its style of address from that of *Kadın Dünyası*. Unlike *Kadın Dünyası*, whose producers attempted to establish a more intimate contact with the audience and allowed them to express their own voices on air, *Kadın ve Çevresi* mostly hosted male or female experts who transmitted “educating” messages to the audience in a unidirectional communication model.

As the decade wore on, it became widespread to talk about women through developing and diversified mass media forms. Not only the press but also the microphones and cameras of TRT allocated a space to the emergent discourse on womanhood. For the first time after the coup, TV broadcast a program particularly catered for women, *Hanımlar Sizin İçin*, from October 1984 onwards. This was also the first regular day-time TV program broadcast on weekdays.

As Thumim observes about the case of the BBC TV in Britain, as day time broadcasts started and became longer in Turkey in the 1980s, broadcasting practice entered a symbiotic relation with a normative conception of family whereby women were assumed to be available at home during the day.⁷⁵³ The main message disseminated by *Hanımlar Sizin İçin* was “Family is the nucleus of Turkish society” and “Women’s primary place in society is with their family.” The use of the word “lady” instead of “woman” in its title indicated that the targeted audience of the program was interpellated as “polite ladies,” “respectable housewives,” and “sacred moms.”⁷⁵⁴

⁷⁵³ Thumim, *Inventing Television Culture*, p. 34.

⁷⁵⁴ Saktanber, p. 216.



Fig. 24. A press release about *Hanımlar Sizin İçin*⁷⁵⁵

The program initially appeared on air two days a week on weekdays. Then, *Çalışan Hanımlar Sizin İçin* (Working ladies, for you) was introduced to the weekend TV schedule in order to incorporate employed women to the presumed audience of the program.⁷⁵⁶ Each episode of the program included a drama series of 30 to 25 minutes, a musical performance section for eight to twelve minutes, and some cartoons and ads. The rest was allocated to texts written by Nezihe Araz, who was a female author and journalist, and to some expert opinions.⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵⁵ Copied from *Milliyet*, 5 October 1984.

⁷⁵⁶ “TRT Binlerce Kadın İzleyicisinin Sesine Kulak Verdi: Çalışan Hanımlara Yaz Armağanı,” *Telemagazin* 32 (1 July 1985), p. 40.

⁷⁵⁷ The content of the second episode of the program was publicized in the press as follows: “Within the program written by Nezihe Araz and produced by Istanbul TV exciting sections that interest women sitting at home, music, films and a family composed of a mother, a daughter and a grandmother will be continuously visiting our screens. While the episode broadcast on Tuesday morning featured domestic issues ... a program with an emphasis on culture and arts will appear on our screens on Friday mornings... In the program’s section ‘It is our right to be beautiful,’ stage actress Gülriz Sururi explains what is necessary for a woman to look beautiful. And Defne Yalnız Sezer will talk to a female viewer, reading letters from the audience. In the program, including six songs of all genres, we will also watch the film called ‘Look, how she runs,’ which tells the story of a previous female athlete. In the section ‘My child’s problems,’ a female viewer will talk about her child’s problems and discuss them with an expert, and there will be a film for children in the program. The section including information about ladies’ qualified or unqualified occupations like knitting, daily tailoring and manicure is named as ‘My profession.’ In the section ‘Miss Lawyer,’ lawyer İnci Atılı will explain the parts of our laws that interest our women. In the section ‘Book of home,’ books that must be available at home will be talked and discussed. And a decorator will enlighten the female audience about issues like how to hang up a painting, where to place a flower pot and how to locate armchairs in the section ‘Our home.’ See *Milliyet*, 5 October 1984.



Fig. 25. A screenshot from the aerobic classes from *Hanımlar Sizin İçin*⁷⁵⁸

In terms of its structure and contents, the program was similar to women's magazines. It covered issues like home decoration, practical tips about housework, recipes, the fashion of the day, health problems, household economy, family relations and child rearing. It constructed and carried a certain definition of womanhood as confined to the domestic sphere, yet it also urged women to adopt a “modern” appearance by way of consumption and personal care.

Unlike magazines targeting women, *Hanımlar Sizin İçin* took care not to evoke women's sexuality except as regards “beauty, elegance and personal care,” however.⁷⁵⁹ Thus, the program introduced to air only those female singers or stage actresses whose public image was a “lady-like family woman.” For example, Nezihe Araz explained why they had contracted Hülya Koçyiğit to act in the mini-series in *Çalışan Hanımlar Sizin İçin*, which told stories of women from different professions, as follows: “She corresponds to the program's objective by her family life besides her beauty and power of performance.”⁷⁶⁰

⁷⁵⁸ Copied from *Milliyet*, 5 February 1985.

⁷⁵⁹ Saktanber, p. 219.

⁷⁶⁰ *Milliyet*, 10 August 1985. The original text is as follows: *Güzelliği ve oyun gücünün yanı sıra aile yaşantısıyla ile programın amacına denk düşüyor.*

Serap Öztürk, who has studied women's TV programs broadcast in Turkey in the 1980s, says that *Hanımlar Sizin İçin* constructed and transmitted occasionally conflicting images of womanhood. The figure of modern and independent woman conscious of her rights displayed in some sections of the program was in contradiction with the program's discourse that reinforced women's ties to the domestic life. Particularly Nezihe Araz's texts ascribed heavy domestic responsibilities to women like "Have babies if your marriage is failing," "Do not leave your husband's home until death," "If you are working, be planned so that nobody can talk badly about you," "There is no rose without a thorn," and "Do not frustrate your husband by serving the rice left from the day before."⁷⁶¹

A particular reason for the program's transmission of a restricted image of womanhood on air was the TRT's supervision of program texts. In 1986 a forum about *Hanımlar Sizin İçin* was published in *Telemagazin*. One of the questions asked to Araz was "Can the program reflect the problems of prostitutes?" Giving a negative reply, Araz mentioned that it would have contradicted with the "criteria of television." She explained their inability to address different groups of women as follows: "We have only one hour to obtain the consent of the Supervision Office to what we have written; if they stay in the Supervision Office for two hours, [the program] is delayed."⁷⁶²

⁷⁶¹ Serap Öztürk, "Televizyonda Kadınlara Yönelik Programlar" (M.A. thesis, Eskişehir Anadolu Üniversitesi, 1987). Similar contradictions were also available in Nezihe Araz's column articles about womanhood. In one titled "The Changing Women," for instance, Araz acknowledged the advance in women's participation in social life and the development of their consciousness about their rights. On the other side, she warned women about not basing their search for freedom on the belief that women are superior to men. See *Milliyet*, 9 November 1984.

⁷⁶² "Seyircinin Değil Basının İlgisi Azaldı," *Telemagazin* 9 (3 March 1986), pp. 8 – 9. The original text is as follows: *Biz yazdıklarımızı denetimde ancak bir saat tutabiliriz. İki saat tutarsak geç kalıyor.*

By its style of address whereby experts “enlightened” the female audience about being a “modern housewife woman,” *Hanımlar Sizin İçin* indicated the continuing loyalty of TRT to the ideal of uplifting society.⁷⁶³ Actually, in defining their professional identities and objectives, the interviewees who had worked as TV producers at TRT throughout the 1980s usually underlined their allegiance to this ideal. For example, D.A., who also produced TV entertainment programs for a private TV channel for a while in the following decade, stated that while she worked for the commercial television merely for earning her life, her productions for TRT were “career-oriented.” When she was asked what she meant by the adjective “career-oriented,” she replied as follows:

Works... produced according to the criteria of this place and creatively... and with a goal, with a message... That is, believing wholeheartedly in the use of public broadcasting... That is, within the belief, “If we were not available, society would remain ignorant...” We must absolutely give something...⁷⁶⁴

It should be noted that the public service ideal was not pursued for all audience groups. It was rather maintained in TV programs that addressed those segments considered in need of education, among which housewives came to the forefront. Öngören defined this situation with the metaphor of “twosome television,” implying that while television continued to educate its audience before the prime-time, it gave up this objective in the prime evening hours:

⁷⁶³ In fact, Araz herself believed in the TV’s role of educating the masses. For instance, against the criticism that the program ignored rural women’s concerns, she responded that rural women could have difficulty with understanding its content because of not passing through an equal education process with urban women. She argued that until after the differentiation between rural and urban women is removed by a comprehensive literacy campaign, *Hanımlar Sizin İçin* can achieve a point from where it could also address rural women. Also, discussing the phenomenon of “obscenity in the media,” she underlined that sexuality was not a problem of freedom but education and called on “intelligent women” to compensate for the lack of public education about that issue. See *Milliyet*, 28 March 1986; and also *Milliyet*, 8 February 1986.

⁷⁶⁴ D.A. The original quotation is as follows: *Buranın akaidesine uygun... ve yaratıcılıkla yapılmış şeyler. Ve bir amaçla, bir mesajla... Yani kamu yayıncılığın yararına yürekte inanmakla... Yani “biz olmazsak toplum cahil kalır” inancıyla... Biz mutlaka bir şeyler vermeliyiz...*

I do not know whether you watch TV programs and films broadcast before 20:30 on weekdays... All those programs have a common feature. Despite being full of numerous deficiencies and inadequacies, it is certain that TRT Television tries to teach something to children and adults according to certain doctrines... before 20:30. However, things change with domestic and foreign programs, films and series displayed after the 20:30 news bulletin. TRT television wraps itself up in an utterly different personality as “the ape-man” whose appearance breaks down when he sees the moon. It gets terrifying, brutal, tough and frightening.⁷⁶⁵

In his critique about *Hanımlar Sizin İçin*, Öngören underlined that the program attempted to educate its audience, however, only about domestic life, without encouraging them to have a say in matters of public concern, and he asked “Are clothes, cleaning and other kinds of housework the only important things for those women who do not work and enjoy the luxury of watching TV... at home?”⁷⁶⁶

It would not be true to claim that the content of the program was totally immune from the current socio-cultural and political developments, including the emergent feminist movement. For example, in one of its episodes catered for working women, Hülya Koçyiğit played a feminist character as constructed within the pejorative codes about feminism in the social repertoire. Some feminist women’s organizations immediately reacted to this particular episode. For instance, “a group of ladies who advocate women’s rights,” as they were defined by the press, submitted a letter of complaint to TRT about it. They wrote out, “An unreal type which has nothing to do with any feminist currents was introduced as a ‘feminist woman’ as depicted in the most primitive and unlikeable manner.”⁷⁶⁷

⁷⁶⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 4 December 1984.

⁷⁶⁶ Mahmut Tali Öngören, “Hanımlar Sizin İçin,” *Telemagazin* 35 (22 July 1985), p. 20. The original text is as follows: *Bir işte çalışmayan ...evinde otururken televizyon izleyebilme lüksüne sahip bu kadınların salt giyimi kuşamı, temizliği ve evinin içindeki diğer işleri nasıl yapacağı mı önemlidir?*

⁷⁶⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 16 June 1986. The original text is as follows: *Programda herhangi bir feminist akımla ilişkisi olmayan, gerçek dışı bir tip en ilkel ve en sevimsiz biçimde çizilerek ‘feminist bir kadın’ adı altında sunulmuştur.*

A 16 year old female reader, who described herself a “feminist,” also wrote the following objection in her letter she sent to daily *Cumhuriyet*:

I want to express how uncomfortable I felt with the feminist type acted by Hülya Koçyiğit on Saturday May 24 in the program *Çalışan Hanımlar*. I condemn on behalf of all feminists the author who does not know what feminism means, the artist who accepted to play it, TRT, which got it through supervision, and anybody who agreed to broadcast it in their program. This is not only disrespect but also misbehavior.⁷⁶⁸

Readers, indeed, wrote letters about *Hanımlar Sizin İçin* to the press whereby they criticized the content and format of the program for pacifying its female audience, as seen in the following example:

If the name of the program *Hanımlar Sizin İçin*, said to be produced for us, women, was changed to *Erkekler Sizin İçin* (Men, for you), this would be proper behavior. Let’s leave aside many irregularities in the program; we cannot ignore the parts in which deception of women by their husbands is taken for granted. What kind of a mentality is it that it pushes women to be so passive and fatalist?”⁷⁶⁹

Also, various women’s organizations and women’s rights advocates raised objections to the way TV talked about women’s concerns. For instance, in the delegates’ meeting of the Federation of Turkish Soroptimist Clubs, Sadun Katipoğlu, the head of the federation between 1985 and 1987, said that sexual inequality could be easily observed on air since the majority of those invited to panel discussions for receiving their opinions is composed of men.⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 9 June 1986. The original text is as follows: 24 Mayıs Cumartesi günü Çalışan Hanımlar programında Hülya Koçyiğit’in canlandırdığı feminist tipin çarpıtılmışlığından ne kadar rahatsız olduğumu belirtmek isterim. Feminizmin anlamını bilmeyen yazar, bunu oynamayı kabul eden sanatçıyı, denetimden geçiren TRT’yi ve bunu programlarında yayınlamayı kabul eden kişileri bütün feministler adına kınıyorum. Bu sadece saygısızlık değil, terbiyesizliktir.

⁷⁶⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 18 December 1987. Original text is as follows: Sözde biz kadınlar için hazırlanan Hanımlar Sizin İçin adlı kuşak programın ismi “Erkekler Sizin İçin” olarak değiştirilse sanırım yerinde bir hareket olur. Programdaki birçok çarpıklığı bir yana bırakalım, kadınların eşleri tarafından aldatılmalarının doğal karşılandığı bölümleri gözardı edemeyiz. Bu ne biçim bir zihniyettir ki kadını böylesine pasif ve kaderci olmaya itiyor?

⁷⁷⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 November 1988.

In addition, daily *Milliyet* organized a “forum on Turkish women” to which it invited some members of the Turkey Women’s Council (*Türk Kadınlar Konseyi*), Nedret Güvenç, acting in *Hanımlar Sizin İçin*, and Necla Arat, known for her research on the woman question. The participants requested that TRT broadcast a panel discussion for “condemning the differentiation between women and men, for mobilizing women’s achieved but not currently implemented rights and for allowing women to express their grievances.” They also argued that only panel discussions broadcast when men are available at home and can watch TV can help to alleviate women’s actual problems.⁷⁷¹

TV Drama Series Talking to Women’s Concerns

While such objections had a certain share of legitimacy, images of women displayed on air did not carry unified messages. Although the dominant cultural discourse praised family as the nucleus of a conservative society and invited women back to the domestic sphere, TV started to transmit the image of woman as an independent individual more frequently, particularly towards the end of the decade along with the rising of an autonomous women’s movement.

Öngören’s following criticism of an American drama series following the life story of a single female journalist brought to light the contradiction between this changing televisual imagery of womanhood and the conservative imperatives of the decade:

What about the female journalists of *Haber Peşinde* (originally named *Jessica Novak*), who is independent, open minded and lives as she wishes? While she is pursuing events within the most enthusiastic TV journalism on one hand, her love with her boyfriend she has brought

⁷⁷¹ *Milliyet*, 9 November 1988.

home with her, on the other hand, is cut only by an unexpected telephone call. How great a contradiction is it to display a modern woman living independently in sexual terms for a TV who offers children an artificial understanding of morality in the religious program on Thursday evenings?⁷⁷²

TV broadcast similar foreign drama series that told the stories of single women employed in male-dominated, professional fields, such as *Cagney and Lacey* from the USA.⁷⁷³ TRT TV promoted the image of “professional woman who earns her own living” also in its domestic drama series like *Sekiz Sütuna Manşet* (Eight-column headline), *Elif Ana Ayşe Kız* (Mother Elif Daughter Ayşe), *Gecenin Öteki Yüzü* (The other face of night) and *Saat Sabahın Dokuzu* (It is nine in the morning).

Sekiz Sütuna Manşet was about the difficulties a single and successful female journalist came across in her working life. *Elif Ana Ayşe Kız* was adapted to screen from female director Bilge Olgaç’s biography and told the story of the challenges facing women in the male dominated field of the print media around the story of a

⁷⁷² *Cumhuriyet*, 24 July 1984. The original text is as follows: *Ya Haber Peşinde’nin bağımsız, açık düşünceli ve kendi bildiği gibi yaşayan kadın muhabirine ne demeli? Bir yanda en hoşkulu TV haberciliği ile ilgili olayları izlerken, diğer yandan da kendi evine getirdiği erkek arkadaşlarıyla sevişmesi, tam doğru çıkmasa bile, ancak beklenmeyen bir telefonla kesiliveriyor. Perşembe akşamları din izlencesi içinde çocuklara göstermelik ahlak anlayışı veren bir TV için ne denli büyük bir çelişki, bu cinsel bakımdan özgür yaşayan çağdaş kadını sergilemek?*

⁷⁷³ As a TV series focusing on women’s work in a male-dominated job, police officership, *Cagney and Lacey* received considerable attention from the press when it was first broadcast by the CBS in October 1981. d’Acci’s study shows that its existence on air was hardly secure despite scoring above the average CBS programme rating. The original angle of the series focused on women fighting as police cops against sexism. However, the network had it modified by removing explicit references to feminism and by representing Cagney and Lacey as women who “combine competency with an element of sensuality.” Still, the CBS decided to cancel the series after only two episodes. It was particularly the Cagney character undermining any taken-for-granted conception of femininity as a single, career oriented and tough urban female police officer which the network was worried about. However, the women’s movement in the USA gave a start to a letter writing campaign to support the series; it also received various TV awards for the best series and was acclaimed in the press, which ensured its survival on air. For further details, see Julia d’Acci, “The Case of Cagney and Lacey,” in *Boxed in: Women and Television*, eds. H. Baehr & D. Gyer (London: Pandora, 1987), pp. 203 – 26. In Turkey, as well, the press introduced *Cagney and Lacey* within a moralist discourse that depicted the image of independent woman through pjerorative codes: “Chris Cagney, who is single, is a capricious woman who knows how to enjoy life outside work... On the other hand, Lacey is a responsible family woman, who is married, devoted to her home and keen on her children.” The original text is as follows: *Bekar olan Chris Cagney, çalışma alanı dışında yaşamasını bilen, erkek arkadaşlarıyla eğlen, hercai bir kadın. Lacey ise evli, evine son derece bağı, çocuklarına düşkün, sorumlu bir aile kadını.* See *Cumhuriyet*, 16 January 1985.

young woman who started to work as a reporter for a magazine after divorce.

Gecenin Öteki Yüzü, which was adapted from Firüzan's novel, related "the life struggle of a noble yet heartbroken and sad woman upon her husband's death," as the press reported.⁷⁷⁴

Among those domestic productions, *Saat Sabahın Dokuzu* was the most sensational due to the "epidemic of suicide" it was said to generate in society. The series followed the story of a woman who started to work after divorce, but decided to commit suicide in response to the sexual harassment at work. After the first episode which started with the scene displaying the main female character on the roof of a high apartment building before her suicide attempt, cases of suicide immediately took the first rank in the agenda of the press. A short while after the broadcast of that episode, two high school girls committed suicide in Izmir and Istanbul, and two others tried but failed to kill themselves in Adana.⁷⁷⁵



Fig. 26. A newspaper clipping about *Saat Sabahın Dokuzu*⁷⁷⁶

⁷⁷⁴ Firüzan stated in an interview that the main aim of her work was to challenge the popular imagery of single, working woman as an "abnormal case." She said, "A woman, particularly if she lives alone in Turkey, is frequently advised to get married by her environment. If she still insists on living alone, she faces two assessments: Either she is incompatible or she is unlucky. These assessments are made if the woman is beautiful. If she is ugly... they keep silence; they do not talk much. How biased a view on women is that? Defining a woman without a man as an incomplete person is the real difficulty of living alone... On the other hand, successful women surviving alone are considered an exception from the norm." For the rest of the interview, see *Milliyet*, 12 December 1987.

⁷⁷⁵ *Milliyet*, 17 February 1987.

⁷⁷⁶ Copied from *Milliyet*, 23 January 1987.

Against the condemnation of the series for provoking a temptation to commit suicide, stage actress Meral Oğuz, who played the main female character of the series Nejla, argued that the suicide attempt as displayed in the film was not a symbol of defeatism but of the uprising of a woman against derogatory social norms and values about single and working women:

In reality, Necla does not want to commit suicide... If she did want to commit suicide, she would not climb that roof and allow for 24 hours anyway; she would do something else. She would immediately perform it... Nejla uses the phenomenon of suicide as blackmail in order to defend her own rights... It was presented as if provoking suicide. Our film is not one which demands to transmit the phenomenon of suicide at all. At least, we wished to practice the philosophy of uprising. We wished to defend women's rights and to explain that women have equal rights to men in society and both of them are human beings. This side was not talked about [in the press]. Climbing a roof was actually an act of resistance, and the only reason for resistance is that.⁷⁷⁷

In a similar vein, the director of the series Orhan Aksoy explained the overall objective of the production as follows: “What we have done is to narrate the life struggle of modern woman around a story. It is the story of a woman struggling for her honor against challenges she faces in our society.”⁷⁷⁸

Changing Disciplinary Strategy against the Screen Images of Female Broadcast Professionals

After Tunca Toskay's term at TRT expired on 21 March 1988, the government appointed Prime Ministry Foreign Policy Advisor Cem Duna as head of the institution from the list of nominees submitted by the RTSC. Duna was recognized as “a director general with Western values” in the public opinion. In fact, his term at

⁷⁷⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 31 January 1987.

⁷⁷⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 1 February 1987. The original text is as follows: *Bizim yaptığımız çağdaş kadının verdiği özgürlük savaşımını, bir öykü çerçevesinde anlatmak. Toplumumuzda karşılaştığı güçlüklerle onur savaşımı veren çalışan bir kadının öyküsü...*

TRT corresponded to a period when the Turkish government was seeking to develop its relations with the European Community. The press evaluated Duna's appointment as a symbolic act by the political authority that aimed to disseminate an image of Turkey abroad as a modern/Western country:

Toskay's TRT proved its loyalty to the Turk-Islam synthesis by all accounts. Now it is not necessary to appear as following this path since Turkey appreciates the need to open itself to Europe. It has applied to the EC for membership. Changes in certain issues and institutions have become the primary condition. Dismissal of Toskay and his team was required by the same condition, too. It was impossible to avoid making TRT look more "Western" and more "modern" from then on... In short, they resort to "make-up" in order to look pleasant to Europe.⁷⁷⁹

The abandonment of the previously imposed restrictions on the use of pure Turkish words and idioms on air and alternate broadcasts of *Panel Discussion* and *Forum* programs twice a month, which allowed expressing different viewpoints on divergent issues of public concern on a common platform on air, were thought to reinforce this image about Duna's term at TRT.

Moreover, Cem Duna appointed broadcast professionals like Ali Kırca, Nuri Çolakoğlu, and Serpil Akıllıoğlu, known for their affiliation with the political left, to senior executive and advisory posts. In addition, he assigned Gülben Dinçmen, who had been removed from her office during Toskay's term, as head of the TRT's Supervision Commission.

These measures by the TRT administration met with immediate reaction particularly from figures from the conservatist-nationalist wing of the governing party known as the "sacred alliance." Members of this faction, whose spokesman was vice-head of the MP, Mustafa Taşar, visited Duna in his office a short while after his appointment and communicated their concerns about the language

⁷⁷⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 14 October 1988.

regulations and staffing practices at TRT. Then they frequently attacked Duna's broadcasting and staffing policy until his resignation under pressure in 1989.

One of their targets was Gülben Dinçmen. They assaulted Cem Duna for appointing her, who was said to have described the process of the Turkification of Anatolia after the Malazgirt Battle as "invasion" in one of her survey reports as a TV supervisor, to the chair of the supervision unit. A column article from daily *Tercüman*, described her promotion as "a scandalous affair," and asked, "What is the objective of TRT?"⁷⁸⁰

In fact, at that time many rightist dailies and political figures stigmatized Dinçmen as "the woman against Malazgirt," underlining her gender as one of the excuses for "her distorted view on the Turkish history."⁷⁸¹ In Dinçmen's own words, "It was like a curse to bring someone who had called Malazgirt an invasion, particularly if she was a woman, to an important office at TRT. How could our men, who had acquired fame for their courage, endure it?"⁷⁸²

As TRT became the locus of an emergent struggle for power between different political factions of the MP in the late 1980s, the opposition mounted against it by the "sacred alliance" was usually translated into the condemnation of TV's discourse on womanhood. For instance, a representative from the governing party quarreled directly with Prime Minister Özal from the tribune in one of the group meetings at the Parliament in 1988. This affair was described in the press as "the first open uprising" in the Motherland Party. The representative read some parts from Duygu Asena's famous novel *Kadının Adı Yok* (Woman has no name) in his

⁷⁸⁰ *Tercüman*, 6 August 1988.

⁷⁸¹ *Tercüman*, 13 August 1988. For further examples, also see Dinçmen, p. 177 – 200.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 198. The original text is as follows: *Malazgirt'e işgal diyen birinin, üstelik de bir kadının TRT'de önemli sayılacak bir göreve getirilmesi bir küfür gibidir. Babayiğitlikleriyle ün salmış erkeklerimiz buna nasıl dayansın?*

speech, which he condemned as “deceit and insolent.” He accused TRT of making Asena famous by frequently hosting her in its programs and said, “I feel badly about the simultaneous appearance of a haji minister⁷⁸³ with an author who says chastity is not important... in the same place and on the same screen at TRT.”⁷⁸⁴

Along with the changing discourse on womanhood on air, disciplinary practices as regards the image of the TRT’s own employees on the screen also exhibited a turn throughout the second half of the decade. As already mentioned above, during the coup period, female speakers or singers were not allowed to display an appearance which was considered to distort the taken-for-granted gender roles or to provoke overconsumption. Similarly in 1984, a short while after the MP’s coming to power, the female presenter of a TV entertainment program was removed from screen on account of the fact that “she got ahead of the performers of music hosted by the program by wearing extremely ostentatious clothes.”⁷⁸⁵

As the Özal period wore on, this prohibitive policy against the female broadcast professionals’ on air imagery was removed and replaced by a different disciplinary strategy that operated not through restricting, but actively reconfiguring it as a symbol of the redefined cultural identity of Turkey. In June 1988, the Duna administration contracted a fashion firm in order to give a “modern appearance” to

⁷⁸³ The press reports did not mention the name of the minister MP parliamentarian this parliamentarian referred to in his speech.

⁷⁸⁴ For further details, see *Cumhuriyet*, 9 November 1988; and also *Cumhuriyet*, 11 November 1988. The original text is as follows: *TRT’de hacı bakanla bekaretin önemli olmadığını söyleyen... bir yazarın aynı mekanda aynı ekranda görünmesinden... bir milletvekili olarak üzüntü duyuyorum.*

⁷⁸⁵ Nezihe Araz mentioned this case in one of her column articles without disclosing the name of the female TV presenter involved in it. The original text is as follows: *Sanatçılara hak tanınan abartmalı kıyafetleri gölgede bırakacak uçlarda giyinmek, sunucuların kari değildir.* See *Milliyet*, 22 September 1984.

TV news speakers. Columnists criticized the agreement for allowing the surreptitious advertising of products by the private textile sector:

The previous TV executives did not guide [TV news] speakers about their clothing and hair styles... The new TRT administration got its hand on this issue as the summer term broadcasts started. You must have sensed the change in the TV news speakers. Female speakers' clothes thoroughly suit them, and men are slicking themselves up... Who has done this? ... A big firm tasked to introduce the "recognized" fashion to Turkey... will not only dress TV speakers free of charge but also decide which clothes suit them... What will [that] firm gain from this business? Free advertisement that otherwise costs millions and even billions of liras...

TV news speakers appear on screen many times every day... in news bulletins regarded as the most significant for TRT Television. Then that big firm will be able and have indeed started to introduce its clothes and their accessories and the fashion style it wishes to establish to Turkey as a whole each day, each hour and ... each season by exploiting the state's TRT to the full extent and without paying TRT a single penny in return.⁷⁸⁶

Despite the objections raised by intellectuals, the aim of reshaping TV news speakers' appearance on air was beyond simply promoting the private sector. As put by Bali, towards the end of the 1980s, "elegance," as the reflection of a "refined taste of consumption" particularly in woman's clothes, was made into a constitutive component of the longed for Western image.⁷⁸⁷ The TRT administration's attempt to redesign the clothes worn by TV news speakers, considered the speaking image of the state, was an implication of the change in the cultural policy of the political authority, which sought to reconstruct Turkey's imagery abroad as "a part of Europe."

As already discussed in the previous chapter, in the 1970s, TV news bulletins were expected to represent the masculine nature of the state authority on air. Thus, on occasion, male speakers were preferred to read the news so as to preserve the

⁷⁸⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 June 1988.

⁷⁸⁷ Bali, p. 321.

“seriousness” of news bulletins. In contrast, by changing the format of TV news bulletins after September 1986, the administration tried to establish more intimate contact with its audience. Most particularly, use of tele-prompters allowed news speakers to “relate news to audience as if directly speaking to them rather than read aloud texts on paper.”⁷⁸⁸ It appears that in the second half of the 1980s, the image of news speakers as the representative of the “cold impartial reason” was mitigated, and TV news adopted a more “feminine” style of address, so to speak, in order to obtain the consent of the audience to the cultural hegemony of the state.

Furthermore, particularly in the late 1980s, it seems that the political authority’s strategy of disciplining the objects of its will to power by repression was substituted with the incorporation of the popular cultural forms previously left outside the discursive arena to the state’s hegemonic discourse, as observed in the introduction of Arabesque musical forms to air during that time by TRT. In that respect, as the prospects for commercialization in broadcasting rose up towards the end of the decade, television was on the verge of becoming like a “colorful supermarket” where audiences could find what they wanted, or they were made to demand, instead of a teacher who dressed in dark colors and imposed “desirable” cultural codes on its audience with a stick in its hands, so to speak.

Female TV Producers behind the Scene in the 1980s

Although the transfer of state economic enterprises to the private sector was high on its agenda, the government adopted a rather paternalist attitude against

⁷⁸⁸ “Kağıttan Haber Okumaya Paydos,” *Telemagazin* 8 (24 January 1986), p. 11.

commercialization in broadcasting, claiming that the audience had not arrived in the required moral/cultural level yet. Özal said the following about the issue:

I regard competition early for now... Whomever you hand over television and entitle to make broadcasts, you give him too much power. That is a matter of understanding. There is something like broadcasting ethics. Have we achieved that level? Let's not make a mistake there. However, after Turkey attains that level, we can pass to private television without fear.⁷⁸⁹

On the other side, TRT TV started to allocate a large amount of air-time to private productions. The notion of broadcast produced outside the institution made its debut in the TRT Law adopted after the coup, and the program *İcraatın İçinden* (From inside the activities), which introduced the government's activities to audience and was produced by private advertising agencies, as provided by that law, paved the way for independent TV production companies.⁷⁹⁰ Famous current affairs program *32.Gün* (Day thirty two), which started to be broadcast in October 1985, was also among those produced outside. Then, TRT accepted programs from nine and eighteen private production companies in 1986 and 1987, respectively.⁷⁹¹

Thus, as stated by vice-head of the MP, İlker Tuncay, in 1988, "TRT has the monopoly over broadcasts but not over production from now on."⁷⁹² This "privatization of air space," as worded by Minister Adnan Kahveci, who was in

⁷⁸⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 26 July 1984.

⁷⁹⁰ One of the most contested provisions of the new TRT Law was about publicity of the government's activities. Its 19th article allowed TV broadcasts for maximum thirty minutes a month to introduce the government's activities whose success was thought to depend on popular participation, but the article provided that these programs were produced outside TRT and not covered in news bulletins. These monthly TV broadcasts, which were called *İcraatın İçinden*, were employed as a means for political propaganda by the Özal government and met tough reactions from the public opinion and opposition parties. For further details, see Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi*, pp. 203 – 5.

⁷⁹¹ Korkmaz Alemdar and Raşit Kaya, *Kitle İletişimde Temel Yaklaşımlar* (Ankara: Savaş Yayınları, 1983), p. 43.

⁷⁹² Quoted from Beybin Kejanlıoğlu, *Türkiye'de Medyanın Dönüşümü* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2004), p. 259. The original text is as follows: *TRT yayın tekeline sahiptir. Ama yapım tekeline sahip değildir.*

charge of TRT, was actually considered what Kejanlıoğlu terms as “a middle formula” for promoting the private sector until it attained the financial strength required for investing in TV broadcasting.⁷⁹³ At the same time, recognizing the profitability of private production, the broadcasting staff of TRT, including producers, either resigned from their posts and established their own production companies, or started to work for the private sector for high salaries during the Özal period.

Many current studies demonstrated a general decline in reputation of being employed in civil service and in work satisfaction levels of civil servants in the 1980s, whereas the private sector flourished and offered higher rates of income.⁷⁹⁴ According to Özbay, the transfer of qualified labor power from the public to the private sector occurred within a gendered pattern. Since cultural values about social morality went through a transformation with money replacing education as the main means for moving up the status ladder, qualified young males entered business life, leaving seats in civil service to young educated women. The decline in the number of male professors in public universities in comparison to their female counterparts during the decade illustrated this trend.⁷⁹⁵

The relatively high ratio of women in “uncommon” professions like law and medicine also continued throughout the 1980s, particularly in the public sector. For instance, women constituted 42.7% and 62% of all lawyers employed in civil service

⁷⁹³ Ibid., p. 260.

⁷⁹⁴ Çitçi, “Kamu Bürokrasisi,” p. 22.

⁷⁹⁵ Ferhunde Özbay, “Kadınların Ev İçi ve Ev Dışı Uğraşlarındaki Değişme,” *1980’ler Türkiye’sinde Kadın Bakış Açısından Kadınlar*, ed. Ş. Tekeli (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1993), pp. 148 – 9. Actually, the statistics demonstrated that whereas the rate of women employed as instructors in public universities did not change much in the 1970s, it exhibited a striking growth in the following decade, from 26% in the academic year 1981 – 1982 to 31% ten years later. For further discussion, see Er, p. 75.

in 1980 and 1986, respectively. Again in 1986, women's ratio in the field of public medicine was 68%.⁷⁹⁶ Admittedly, as the ratio of women who received higher education was still very low,⁷⁹⁷ they did not constitute a significant threat to the existing male-dominated structure of public employment.⁷⁹⁸ Still, the ratio of female employment in the public sector increased from 23% to 30% from 1980 to 1990.⁷⁹⁹ A much more striking increase was observed in the ratio of women with higher education degrees employed in the public sector. Of all female civil servants, around 45% had a higher education degree in 1990, whereas they had equaled around 12% at the beginning of the decade.⁸⁰⁰

Contrary to this trend, at TRT, a decline was observed in the ratio of its female workforce until the late 1980s. Women constituted around 21% of its permanent staff between 1980 and 1984. The statistics about public employment demonstrated that the ratio of female employment at TRT decreased to 18% in 1986. Literally, the

⁷⁹⁶ Başbakanlık Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1980* (Ankara: DPB, 1980), p. 47; and also Başbakanlık Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1986* (Ankara: DPB, 1986), p. 49.

⁷⁹⁷ According to the state statistics, the ratio of women among the population with a higher education degree increased from 20% to 25% between 1975 and 1980. Moreover, while the number of the entire population with a higher education degree increased by around one and a half, the number of women who completed higher education doubled from 1975 and 1980. Still, the ratio of women with a higher education degree among the entire female population aged six and over was less than one per cent in 1975 and it slightly exceeded one per cent in 1980. Furthermore, women with a higher education degree constituted less than one per cent of the entire literate population aged over six during those years. In 1985, women with a higher education degree did not reach two per cent of the entire female population, and their ratio was still less than one per cent of the entire literate population six years old and over. Among the population with a higher education degree their ratio remained around 25%, as well. By 1990, prospects for women's attainment of higher education had not improved much either. Although the number of women with a higher education degree doubled and their ratio among the population who completed higher education reached 30%, they constituted only around two per cent of the entire female population aged six and over and 1.1% of the entire literate population aged six and over. For further figures about rates of higher education by sex, see State Institute of Statistics, *Statistical Yearbook of Turkey 1995* (Ankara: DİE Matbaası, 1996), pp. 76 – 7.

⁷⁹⁸ Özbay, "Kadınların Ev İçi ve Ev Dışı Uğraşlarındaki Değişme," pp. 148 – 149.

⁷⁹⁹ See Başbakanlık Devlet Personel Daire Başkanlığı, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1992* (Ankara: DPB, 1993), p. 11.

⁸⁰⁰ See Başbakanlık DPB, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1980*, p. 24.

number of women employed by TRT as civil servants remained the same between 1984 and 1986, whereas a 5% increase was observed in its permanent staff. In 1987, their ratio was nearly 18%, as well.⁸⁰¹ Yet, five years later it demonstrated a striking rise to nearly 24%. 662 out of 2833 employees at TRT were women in 1992.⁸⁰²

The statistical figures revealed that whereas the ratio of female employment at TRT decreased towards late the 1980s, it went up after then. It seems that decline in reputation of a being a civil servant, a generally observed trend in the 1980s, did not prevail much at TRT, which still had monopoly over radio and TV broadcasts and offered its employees generous income opportunities as compared to many other state economic enterprises. Therefore, a seat at TRT remained a sought-after position for many young, educated males at that time. Besides, the Toskay administration, between 1984 and 1988, apparently discriminated in favor of men, particularly those with a nationalist-conservative political allegiance, in its employment policy. Nonetheless, as the 1990s came closer, and particularly after commercialization in broadcasting, male broadcast professionals turned their seats at TRT over to young and educated women at increasing rates.

The commercial radio and TV channels that mushroomed in Turkey after 1990 initially had an urgent need for qualified broadcast professionals to compete in the market successfully. Having acted as a school of broadcasting for years with its training facilities in-house and abroad, TRT satisfied this demand. When commercial

⁸⁰¹ For further statistics about female employment in other state economic enterprises, see DPB, *Kamu Personeli 1980*, p. 8; Başbakanlık Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1982* (Ankara: DPB, 1983), p. 8; Başbakanlık Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1984* (Ankara: DPB, 1985), p. 8; and also Başbakanlık DPB, Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, *Kamu Personeli Anket Sonuçları 1986*, p.8. The statistics about women's employment at TRT for the following years in the late 1980s were not covered by these civil service survey reports. The statistics for year 1987 were obtained from The TRT's Department of Human Resources. See Ş. G., personal interview by the author, note taking, Ankara, Turkey, May 16, 2013.

⁸⁰² See Başbakanlık DPB, *Kamu Personeli Anket 1992*, p. 36.

broadcast channels started to offer more attractive employment opportunities than TRT to incorporate qualified labor power into its ranks, it was usually males who left their less “prestigious” seats in public broadcasting and exploited those opportunities in the first instance.

To illustrate, a female TV producer interviewed for the study openly expressed her grievance that after the debut of commercialization in TV broadcasting, the broadcast staff whose professional development she had mentored immediately started to leave TRT for private TV channels and production companies in return for higher rates of income. As she recalled, feeling that she had trained qualified labor power for the private sector, she got highly disappointed with her profession. She also mentioned that most of those who were transferred into the private broadcasting sector in the first place belonged to the technical staff, among which men were in the majority.⁸⁰³

Interviewee N.A., who was admitted to TRT as an assistant producer in 1987, confirmed the continuing prestige of working as a broadcast professional for TRT until the debut of commercial television as follows: “I was occasionally greeted on foot by ministers. I was a [young woman] yet... I was around 23 or 25... Can you think of it? ... We had great prestige...”⁸⁰⁴ However, as she put it out, with the establishment of private TV channels, their prestige as members of TRT started to decline in the public opinion. As TRT did not have a monopoly over the means of media broadcasting since then, influential public figures like politicians, intellectuals

⁸⁰³ H .T.

⁸⁰⁴ N.A., personal interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, 27 May 2011. This interviewee is currently aged 49. The original quotation is as follows: *Bakanlar tarafından ayakta karşılandığım oluyordu. Daha küçük genç kıyım. Düşünün yani. 23 – 25 yaşındaydım... Çok büyük saygınlığımız vardı.*

or artists were able to reach their target audiences through newly developing channels. N.A. explained this change as follows:

I went to Britain in 1991 and returned in 1994, three years later. Something had started to change little by little. I started to feel it then. For example, we could have been refused by those to whom we applied for an interview... However, it was really a great credit to be a producer, to be an assistant producer at TRT before. It was great honor.⁸⁰⁵

On the other hand, particularly for women, besides its glamour and prestige, being a member of TRT was a legitimate position for passing over sexist norms and values in the public sphere, as quoted from her:

I considered myself very lucky in that respect. I considered myself privileged. We did not experience any difficulties as women. Everywhere, municipalities, mayors, officer's clubs opened their doors to us. They tried to help us when we went to a place, to a village. For example, a shoot was to be performed in Diyarbakır, which I will never forget, in 1988. I was very young and very idealist those days. That GAP Channel had just been established. Our current program chief said, "From now on, you will find all your interviews, doctors, specialists from the southeast. You will do shooting there." How could we do it there? The battles were going on intensively. How could we go there? It is not possible and so on... When such objections were raised, he said, "No, you will go." And I was one of those who went there... We shot in the country, in Lice, in the places where the most intense battles occurred. I did not have any trouble there because I was a woman. That is, "You, why have you come here as a single woman?" and so on... I never saw such stuff. Instead, everybody tried to help.⁸⁰⁶

Unfortunately, exact statistical figures about the rates of female employment in the TRT's administrative and broadcasting offices are not available for the time period between 1987 and 1992.⁸⁰⁷ Still, N.A.'s impression about the recruitment exam held

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁷ As the current head of its human resources department confirmed in the interview, TRT did not keep statistics about employment by gender in its particular offices. The only statistics available showed the overall ratio of female employment at the institution. It apparently did not archive even those statistics properly. For example, the labor force statistics for the 1970s were not archived at all. During the interview, it also turned out that the statistics for the period between 1980 and 1985 had been lost somewhere in the archives. See Ş.G.

in 1987 demonstrated an upward movement particularly in women's participation in TV production from the late 1980s onwards:

It was really a great elimination. People who had done internships or worked voluntarily at television for a long time were there. A lot of famous people were there. Even they were eliminated... I am trying to calculate how many women and how many men were... Perhaps, they had an equal rate. That is, men were not in the majority. Indeed, after I started, I happened to see that women were more [than men].⁸⁰⁸ Particularly the production team was dominated by women.

A woman with a higher education degree and working as a professional was no longer considered an unusual phenomenon in the 1980s, particularly by those who had grown up in cities. For TRT, the number of women available on air served to legitimize the image of women as TV broadcast professionals and encouraged women to participate in this professional field, as witnessed by N.A.'s reply to the question of whether she found women's current prevalence in TV production unexpected at that time:

It did not [amaze me] at all. Maybe it was because I was born in and grew up in Ankara. Maybe it was because the majority of speakers and producers we saw on TV were ladies. I went to high school after 1980. I finished it in 1982. Then, ladies were always present in universities. There was nothing bizarre in it. It was very normal. Therefore, I did not find it strange. Indeed, my brother attended those exams with me. For example, he failed.⁸⁰⁹

It should still be admitted that a rise in the ratio of female employment in civil service as professionals does not necessarily mean women's empowerment. Historically, transition to a neo-liberal path of economic growth both reconfigured the existing patriarchal patterns of work in the public sector and introduced new gendered power imbalances to it. Among the implications of economic liberalization, especially the expansion of contractual employment in civil service condemned

⁸⁰⁸ N.A.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid.

women employed in the public sector to precarious working conditions and hindered their career development.

With a government decree law issued on 8 January 1988, contractual employment became the norm for state economic enterprises, including TRT, except for their administrative services.⁸¹⁰ Actually, by that time it had already started to recruit people to news and production services primarily as contracted employees. To give some examples, the total number of the TRT's staff, both contracted and permanent, rose from 5830 to 6831 between 1985 and 1986. 80% of this increase was observed in the permanent staff in administration, technical, health and advocacy services, whereas all the new admittances to news and production departments were contractually employed.⁸¹¹ And after September 1988, TRT started to transfer the permanent staff, including those in the broadcasting units, to the contracted status.⁸¹²

The practice of contractual employment had been introduced by the political authority as a means to the prevent loss of qualified human capital to the private sector. It was said to enable the state enterprises to recruit a qualified labor force at higher rates of income than they would otherwise receive as permanent civil servants. However, contracted employees both lacked employment security and were deprived of various social security rights and benefits, such as equal pay increases

⁸¹⁰ Contractual employment in civil service was widely implemented throughout the 1980s, as provided by amendments to the existing law and regulations. Particularly, the decree law issued on 8 June 1984 introduced a different understanding about employment of contracted personnel. The previous law had accepted this employment form as an "exception," while the decree law defined it as one of the main employment forms in state economic enterprises. For further legal regulations about the issue until and after 1988, see "Sözleşmeli Personelin Tanımı ve Hakları," n.d., http://www.tarihportali.net/tarih/sozlesmeli_personelin_tanimi_ve_haklari-t5961.0.html;wap2= [26 May 2013].

⁸¹¹ See Başbakanlık Yüksek Denetleme Kurulu, *Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu 1986 Yılı Raporu* (Ankara: Ege Matbaası, 1987), p. 15.

⁸¹² Between September and December 1988, 1667 from its permanent staff, which equaled 4917, was transferred to the contracted status. See TRT, *1988 Yılı Faaliyet ve Mali Bünye Raporu* (Ankara: TRT Basılı Yayınlar Müdürlüğü, 1989), p. 145.

and collective bargaining, since they were accepted neither as permanent civil servants nor as waged workers.⁸¹³

Interviewee H.T., who started to work for TRT TV as a contracted production assistant in 1984, said the following in that respect:

Since the threat that their contracts might not be renewed hung over the heads of those working in that position each year ... we were not able to raise our voices, unlike the permanent staff... The working agreement called contract was something that hog tied people pretty well. You know that when the following year came, all of the deeds and sins you had performed that year were calculated there. Therefore, the employer had the right to say, “I am not renewing your contract this year,” without showing a plausible reason, but certainly by alleging an excuse on the surface.⁸¹⁴

She recalled that a high number of young women who had just received their higher education degrees were included in the staff recruited on a contractual basis:

Actually, those working within that position... thinking quickly, faces appeared in front of my eyes one by one... were usually women. In terms of age group, those aged between 22 and 30, who recently ventured to working life, who just came from university, who did not but could do internship.⁸¹⁵

In her wording, these young women in the contracted staff were “pack donkeys made to perform the heaviest work under the rock bottom conditions.”⁸¹⁶ Most particularly, indefinite working hours in TV production, as the taken-for-granted work pattern of this professional field, imposed a heavy burden on them, who were deprived of overtime pays:

⁸¹³ Arzu Arslan, “Kamu Kuruluşlarında Sözleşmeli Personel Uygulaması ve İşçi Statüsü ile Karşılaştırılması” (M.A. thesis, Gazi University, 2006), pp. 5 – 7.

⁸¹⁴ H.T.

⁸¹⁵ Ibid. The original quotation is as follows: *Aslında bu kadroda çalışanlar... hızla düşününce pat pat yüzler geldi gözümün önüne... genellikle kadınlardı. Yaş grubu olarak da daha çok 22-30 yaş arası yaş grubu olan, çalışma hayatına yeni atılmış, üniversiteden yeni gelmiş, stajyer değil ama olabilecek en ucuz koşullarda en ağır işlere koşturulan...*

⁸¹⁶ Ibid.

At each phase of programs, these people were, let me say... not set to work but... exploited since no notion of overwork was available. You know that you are employed within daily working hours. However, it stands facing you: An ethical imposition like, "This is what broadcasting is; there is no night and day in it," a so-called ethical imposition... "You cannot be a broadcast professional looking at your watch like that." You stay for editing at night... Or, as I was working in programs... starting and ending times of films sets could never be predicted.⁸¹⁷

Young women within the contracted staff were occasionally made to feel that they could be replaced at any time. This treatment they faced from their male seniors was also informed by an attitude which looked down on their labor merely on the basis of their gender:

... I came across members of that supervision committee very frequently. When I went in those offices, I sensed that discomfort. They were men who were fairly ready to treat the female staff working at our position as "small newbie girls," yet twisting their moustaches on the other side... When you go in that office, a glance from top to bottom... "Here we go! You have fallen into my hands. Say whatever you wish. First, sit there for a minute, and let me order a tea for you." An attitude that attempts to establish a close relationship and worms stuff out of you about your producer or the program ... Therefore, they made the female staff feel that they could be replaced by somebody else at any time... It was a mind that considered [us] available for charging with the heaviest work without giving much authority and that thought about [us] as "Let them wander around as the fair sex."⁸¹⁸

A striking difference was observed in the way she and the other interviewees who worked within the permanent staff perceived TRT. H.T. defined her relation with TRT as a commercial exchange whereby she sold her labor to an employer on a contractual basis, as quoted from her above. Unlike her, the others continued to regard TRT as a school not only where they learned their profession by practice, but also which shaped both their views on society and their life styles.

⁸¹⁷ Ibid.

⁸¹⁸ Ibid.

For example, interviewee N.A., who had started to work for TRT as a permanent employee, claimed that the existing working environment and understanding of broadcasting necessarily developed the sensitivity of female producers to social affairs at TRT in the 1980s as if they were in a school.⁸¹⁹

Similarly, D.A., who had started work as an assistant producer on the permanent staff only one year before the coup, said that TRT was the focus of their life: “We made TRT our life philosophy. TRT was a style of life for us. That is ... TRT came before anything else. We loved it a lot.”⁸²⁰

In the 1980s, women attained those offices at the institution considered almost unthinkable for them previously. Most particularly, Tunca Toskay appointed TV news speaker Ülkü Kuranel as the News Office Chair, which had been known as a male bastion for years. Also, there was a female member of the Board during that term, Professor Zeynep Korkmaz, nominated by the Higher Education Council. In addition, there were still a considerable number of female chairs mostly in educational, cultural and children’s broadcasts at radio and TV as in the previous decade. Nevertheless, senior offices continued to be a male reserve more often than not in the 1980s, which discouraged women to continue their professional careers in broadcasting. H.T. explained the main reason for quitting TRT after 10 years of work with the sentence, “At TRT, they were trying to replace the big seats with male employees whose turn had come.”⁸²¹

Against this male-dominated structure of work, there were power imbalances among the women on the TRT’s professional staff themselves, which mainly

⁸¹⁹ N.A.

⁸²⁰ D.A. The original quotation is as follows: *Hayat felsefesi yaptık TRT’yi biz. TRT bizim bir için bir hayat, yaşam biçimiydi. Yani... her şeyden önce TRT vardı. Çok sevdik.*

⁸²¹ H.T. The original quotation is as follows: *TRT’de büyük masalar rütbe sırası gelen erkek elemanlarla değiştirilmeye çalışılıyordu.*

depended on working experience and seniority. H.T. said that the older generation of female producers had serious weight at TRT in the 1980s, unlike the recently recruited ones. She argued that those experienced female producers mostly dealt with cultural programs that did not require what she calls “déplacement” to other cities than Istanbul since they tried to maintain a double life, being married with children and working for TRT simultaneously. She gave the example that they produced such documentaries as the story of Turkish coffee or coffee cup, which could be completely shot in Istanbul.⁸²²

Strikingly enough, both the female broadcast professionals who started to work on a contractual basis for TRT in the 1980s and those recruited in the earlier period and achieved seniority in time seem to have appropriated the masculine language, condemning women for failing to fulfill their professional responsibilities due to their assumed loyalty to domestic life. Like H.T., interviewee S.K.A., who started to work as a production assistant for TRT only one year before the 1980 coup, used a seemingly contemptuous language about those women who “prioritized family over profession:”

A good film editor... but becomes a secretary after getting married since they made film editors work till late at night. Let me not say “second-class employee,” but some “ladies” in the producer’s team could give up their profession. I know and saw people who did this.⁸²³

Similarly, D.A. used the adjective “second class” to classify the female staff according to the level of their professional ambition and said that those women who gave priority to domestic life over their work turned their backs on the opportunity to

⁸²² Ibid.

⁸²³ S.K.A. The original quotation is as follows: *İyi bir montajcı... Ama evlendikten sonra sekreter oluyor. Çünkü montajcılar gece geç vakte kadar çalışıyorlar. “İkinci derece çalışan” demeyeceğim, ama yönetmen ekibinde olan bazı “hanımlar” mesleklerinden vazgeçebildiler. Bunu yapan gördüğüm bildiğim kişiler var.*

move up the career ladder. The stigmatization of those women as “second-class” within the habitus of TRT made her ambitious as she did not want to become “one of them:”

My husband wanted that stuff. Since he is my ex-husband, I can talk about him comfortably. He wanted hand-made food. He wanted to eat dinner at seven o'clock. However, this profession included working until midnight. There was no notion of time. They did not consider whether that was a man or a woman... since we were “birds” anyway. We were not able to say, “No, we cannot stay.” And then... there were “second class” people, and we knew what it was. I mean the following by “second class people:” There were people who prioritized their family values and performed their profession without paying much importance... And we saw their situation, too...⁸²⁴

As implied by the quotes above, these women usually prioritized their profession over domestic life as a constitutive part of their identities, but they did not simply adopt this choice willingly. The established work patterns in broadcasting required them to downplay their domestic roles in order not to be condemned to “second class” position at work.

Nevertheless, at each step they took to challenge the perception of women as a primarily domestic being, they were treated with suspicion by their male superiors acting within taken-for-granted norms and values about womanhood. For instance, S.K.A. said,

I was in love with my profession. I did it very proudly. It was my life style. For example, 15 days after I got married, I traveled around the whole eastern Anatolia. I had traveled to 16 citizens in the first three months of my marriage.⁸²⁵

Despite her loyalty to her profession, as she recalled, her male superior had doubts whether she had a failing marriage since she went on shoots out of town a lot right after she got married:

⁸²⁴ D.A.

⁸²⁵ S.K.A. The original quotation is as follows: ... *Mesleğime aşıktım. Çok severek yapıyordum. Yaşam biçimimdi. Mesela evlendikten on beş gün sonra bütün Doğu Anadolu'yu gezdim. Evliliğimin ilk üç ayında altı il gezmişim.*

The head of Television called me. He said, “Is there a problem in your marriage?” “No,” I said, “I love my profession very much. Since I love my profession very much, my husband respects me a lot, and I respect him a lot, too.” Then he said, “It is okay, you can go.” Normally an executive had the reasoning, “You sit at home when you get married.”⁸²⁶

In a similar manner, H.T said that when she proposed her production projects entailing shooting out of town, she was asked by her male chief, “You are married; can you go?” When she made it explicit that it did not matter, she got the following reply: “Women are not often seen proposing such stuff, but it is alright.”⁸²⁷

Besides the male-dominated employment patterns at TRT, sexist norms and codes involved in the habitus of film production itself continuously reminded female producers of their gendered differences, however much they tried to prove that their work was equal to that of men. As stated by H.T., “It has nothing to do with being a member of TRT or TRT itself.” She said that it was rather related to “the general masculine-dominated structure of the film and cinema industry.”⁸²⁸

As TRT started to create more TV projects in collaboration with the private sector in the second half of the 1980s, its female TV producers more frequently had to team up with grips outside TRT, whose codes of conduct at work were informed by an aggressive style, despising “feminine” virtues. S.K.A. offered a particular example in that respect:

I once shot a cinema film for TRT, but a 35 mm film also displayed in cinema... You work directly with grips and like outside TRT. And everybody has a unique way of demanding work. The language of Yeşilçam is harder, more offensive. For example, when I said the chief

⁸²⁶ Ibid.

⁸²⁷ H.T. The original quotation is as follows: *Ben prodüktör olarak kendi projelerimi yapmaya, sunmaya başladığımda “Evlisin, gidebilecek misin” diye soruldu. “Gidebileceğim, sorun değil,” dedim. “Kadınların bu tür şeyler önerdikleri pek görülmuş bir şey değildir ama tamam,” dendi.*

⁸²⁸ Ibid. The original quotation is as follows: *TRT’cilik ya da TRT’yle ilgisi yok bunun. Film ve sinema sektörünün genellikle erkek egemen bir yapıda olmasıyla ilgili bir durumdu.*

grip, “Could you please take that from here to there or install the camera car?” and so on ... One day someone came to me... He said, “My mentor, we are not used to this, to behaving like this.” He begged me not to ask something from him in that way. I thought that this was something generated because I was a woman.⁸²⁹

To “win a seat” in their professional field, whose habitus was dominated by masculine codes of behavior, female producers bracketed aside their sexuality and adopted a man-like posture:

Even if you are a polite woman, for instance, you prefer to be like “a street child” willingly or unwillingly, since in a male-dominated system... you are trying to survive as a woman in some way or other. For example, you go to a cocktail. There are some women at the cocktail. Wife of this or that... I lived within the system “I will not be anybody’s wife; I will stand on my foot alone.” Of course, I have a husband I love a lot; however, I do not live as his shadow. Both of us are always individuals. Therefore, in order to take part in that community, you need to say “Hey, you! Get out of there,” to beat out people’s brains, to swear and so on. For example, my mother was a ladylike woman. I have never been able to be a ladylike woman. This was for winning a seat in that profession... Also I liked that style of life. That is, I liked going to tavern for drinking in the evening, too. However ... an elegant woman cannot go to tavern alone... I took part in the life style I demanded by wearing that. Therefore, I did not have any problems as an individual... At the same time, I had an attractive a physique. Despite that, I felt comfortable.⁸³⁰

Notwithstanding their assumption of a man-like appearance at work willingly or unwillingly, female TV producers still continued to experience a not easily borne split between the worlds of work and home. Interviewee A.N. said that she did not give birth to a baby seven years after her marriage in order to deal with the double burden on her. She gave up working for a while without pay after having children, which made her feel unrest as she worried about delaying her professional career.

⁸²⁹ S.K.A.

⁸³⁰ Ibid.

She added, “On my return... it became difficult with the children, of course. I left them to a nursery. Thanks God, fortunately, I had also a housemaid later.”⁸³¹

The Toskay administration established a nursery for the staff’s children in Ankara in 1984. At that time, it was able to look after maximum 180 children, aged between two and six. The main motive behind its establishment was to “let the staff have a sound and stable family life,” as worded by the administration within a conservative discourse glorifying family.⁸³²

H.T., who worked for Istanbul Television at that time, recalled the following about how she felt when she visited the headquarters complex in Oran, Ankara, established during the Toskay’s term:

Dozens and dozens of buses entered from the gate. I was standing beside the security guard there and said, “Are there so many employees here? We are a handful people working in Istanbul.” ...“Sister,” he said, “four thousand people are available here only in clerical services.” Then those people got off the buses with their children. The children were made to get on shuttles and were taken to the TRT’s own nursery.⁸³³

The administration’s investment to the welfare of the staff by providing various social facilities like a nursery for their children created new inequalities within the institution, however, since the employees of TRT who worked outside Ankara were deprived of them. Particularly for the women on its professional staff, the meaning of working in Ankara and in other cities like Istanbul, where a great part of the programs on TV were produced, showed a great divergence. Because of the lack of a nursery for children in Istanbul, many of women working as producers for Istanbul

⁸³¹ N.A. The original quotation is as follows: *Dönüşte... çocuklarla çok zor oldu, tabii. Kreşe bırakıyordum. Yine Allahtan evde bir daha sonra yardımcım oldu.*

⁸³² Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu, *TRT 1984 – 1988* (Ankara: TRT Genel Sekreterlik Basınla İlişkiler Protokol Müdürlüğü, 1988), p. 130.

⁸³³ H.T.

Television Directorate found it necessary to postpone their dream of having children, as interviewee H.T. put it out below:

As a female employee, I recognized how unaware and devoid we were in Istanbul of all those services... It was almost as if we, the employees in Istanbul, were looking after the four thousand people in Ankara... While we were rushing to keep broadcasts on, they had established a comfortable life for themselves there... Those... who enjoy all the advantages of being a civil servant... Therefore, for those women, having children was not a problem. However, for the female producers who worked day and night... in Istanbul, or for those women who worked in production, having children was a dream beyond any dreams. When would you give birth to a baby, and where would you have it looked after? We were working there in face of such a problem, and many of us did not have children. I did not either.⁸³⁴

In a period whose dominant cultural discourse glorified family, invited women to the private sphere to assume their responsibilities as modern housewives and mothers, and expected them to achieve a modern life style primarily by way of consumption, the female producers who worked for the state television downplayed their domestic roles and adopted a man-like way of conduct in order to gain and keep a seat in the professional field of broadcasting. Although this seemed like a contradiction, it did not conflict at all with the disciplinary strategies women were faced with throughout the decade, as entailed by the synthesis of liberalism with conservatism as the emerging hegemonic ideology of the state.

The substitution of developmentalism with neoliberalism as the official economic policy condemned women employed in the public sector, which was turned into a business enterprise governed more by the imperatives of the economic mentality than by the ideal of public service, to much more precarious working conditions, lacking employment security and various labor's rights. In addition, along with the rising competition in the labor market, women, whose level of attainment of higher education showed an increase, were albeit continuously made to

⁸³⁴ Ibid.

feel that they were replaceable at any time, since their primary responsibility was supposed to be to their family. This feeling of substitutability in a working environment which became much more competitive required women to adopt a more assertive style and reinforced their professional ambition in order not to remain as “a second class” employee in broadcasting.

Through their striving to win a place in this field, whose already patriarchal patterns of work were reinforced by transition to neoliberalism, they had to develop strong individual personalities, challenging the taken-for-granted gender roles for women not only in the public sphere of work, but also in the domestic sphere. As one interviewee put it out, the established standards of their profession eventually made them adopt an unyielding way of conduct as part of their personalities, which they also maintained in their domestic lives. Yet, she admitted, their refusal to act as subservient housewives generated various problems in their families.⁸³⁵

On the other hand, these women entered working life in a decade when the image of woman as a professional active in the public sphere was not regarded with much suspicion but rather almost became institutionalized at least in urban areas. Furthermore, especially the second half of that decade became the setting for an emergent feminist movement which broadened the discourse on womanhood beyond the conventional rhetoric about women’s emancipation within the Republican modernization process. This movement incorporated into its agenda those matters about women’s subordination that were regarded as the sole property of family privacy and hence not spelled in the public opinion before then.

Amidst these socio-cultural developments, the women who worked on the professional staff of TRT in the 1980s, a decade whose popular culture invited

⁸³⁵ D.A.

previously repressed individuality back to the public sphere, were tempted to disclose their feeling of split between the worlds of home and work, without less hesitation than those whose professional socialization occurred in the previous decade, as observed in the interviews.

As this chapter demonstrated, the discourse on womanhood circulating on air involved mixed and conflicting meanings even when air was governed by a highly conservative administration implementing a more or less prohibitive disciplinary strategy against women's public existence. While TV disseminated the idea that family as the nucleus of conservative society is the place reserved for women, on one hand, it frequently introduced the image of individual woman surviving in "unexpected" fields to its audience, on the other hand. Actually, not only television but the overall popular culture of the decade was informed by those conflicting messages about womanhood as it was reflected in the way popular broadcast magazines depicted female broadcast professionals, which will be discussed in the last chapter of this dissertation.

CHAPTER 6

POPULAR IMAGERY OF FEMALE BROADCAST PROFESSIONALS

Popular culture has been the subject of a great deal of feminist analysis. Feminist scholars assume, as Storey writes, that “understanding how popular culture works both for women and for a patriarchal culture... is important if women are to gain control over their own identities and change both social mythologies and social relations.”⁸³⁶

More often than not, feminist scholars argue that popular culture has had a critical share in the establishment of stereotypes and in the promotion of a restricted variety of role models for women. They maintain “from bra-burning feminists to house-proud housewives, from sex-crazed seductresses to neurotic career women,”⁸³⁷ popular culture creates and transmits stereotypic images of women that invite misogynistic practices and that reinforce women’s subordination.

Popular culture is among the sites where the dominant cultural imagery of womanhood is constructed. It creates and perpetuates a certain image of womanhood while suggesting ideals of behavior for women. However, we cannot afford to dismiss popular culture as merely causing women to have “false consciousness” because popular culture is also a site where meanings are contested and where dominant discourses on womanhood are both reproduced yet subverted.

⁸³⁶ John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction* (Essex, Britain: Pearson Education Limited, 2009), p. 136.

⁸³⁷ Myra McDonald, *Representing Women: Myths of Femininity in the Popular Media* (London: Arnold, 1995), p. 13.

One feminist writer who made an earlier critique of popular culture was Betty Friedan. In her work *The Feminine Mystique*, first published in 1963, she criticized popular women's magazines for inventing and perpetuating a feminine mythology after the Second World War. "In the magazine image," she wrote, "women do no work except housework and work to keep their bodies and to get and keep a man."⁸³⁸ Friedan demonstrated that while these magazines often celebrated and praised the social value of housewife, they fostered the fear of women's deviance by "warning that careers and high education were leading to the masculinization of women with enormously dangerous consequences to the home."⁸³⁹

In fact, as Jane Marcellus has argued in her study about magazine representations of female secretaries and telephone operators in the interwar years in the USA, the question of how to portray employed women posed a real problem for editors of popular magazines, who had prescribed proper feminine behavior for long.⁸⁴⁰ This problem was usually solved by the idealization of domestic roles in fictional representations of working women, as demonstrated by Laura Hepke.⁸⁴¹ Also, Joseph Dominick and Gail Rauch's 1972 study of network television commercials in the USA demonstrated that when women were portrayed in occupational roles, these roles were almost always depicted as "subservient."⁸⁴²

Friedan had already defined the way popular magazines covered professional women in the 1950s as follows:

⁸³⁸ Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (London: Penguin, 1963), p. 38.

⁸³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁸⁴⁰ Jane Marcellus, "Woman as Machine: Representations of Secretaries in Interwar Magazines," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 83, no.1 (Spring 2006), p. 101.

⁸⁴¹ Laura Hepke, *Tales of the Working Girl: Wage Earning Women in American Literature, 1890 – 1925* (New York: Twayne, 1992).

⁸⁴² Joseph R. Dominick and Gail E. Rauch, "The Image of Women in Network TV Commercials," *Journal of Broadcasting* 16, no. 3 (Summer 1972), pp. 259 – 265.

Writing for these magazines, I was continually reminded by my editors that “women have to identify.” Once I wanted to write an article about an artist. So I wrote about her cooking and [shopping] and falling in love with her husband, and painting a crib for her baby. I had to leave out the hours she spent painting her pictures, her serious work – and the way she felt about it. You could sometimes get away with writing about a woman who was not really a housewife, if you made her sound like a housewife, if you left out her commitment to the world outside the home, or the private vision of mind or spirit that she pursued.⁸⁴³

Feminist scholars who study the relation between gender and mass media have not only protested the symbolic annihilation of women in popular culture. They have also opposed the professional underrepresentation of women in cultural industries. For example, Mulvey once said, “In proportion to women’s exclusion from cultural production, their image has been exploited.”⁸⁴⁴ Then, how does popular culture portray women actively participating in cultural production such as female broadcast professionals?

I started to write this chapter with this question in mind, and I thought that popular broadcast magazines would offer a valuable source for this analysis. While these magazines served as TV and radio program guides, they also introduced mass media figures to their audience, offering information about both their private life and their professional life. Particularly speaking, female broadcast professionals frequently appeared in these magazines with their historically changing roles. Indeed, women as professionals were among the images that readers frequently came across in these magazines.

On the other hand, popular broadcast magazines also constructed and perpetuated stereotypical definitions of womanhood. For example, in their study “Something for Boys: Framing Images of Women in *Broadcasting Magazine* in the

⁸⁴³ Friedan, p. 46.

⁸⁴⁴ Laure Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” *Screen* 16 (1975), p. 6.

1950s,” J.C. Foust and K. A. Bradshaw have found that a great majority of the images (85%) in this magazine, published in the USA, showed women either as decoration items or in stereotypical roles or behavior, while few images (only 12%) showed women in roles as off-air broadcast professionals.⁸⁴⁵ Book et. al reached a similar conclusion in their examination of 75 years of *Broadcasting & Cable Magazine*, published in Britain: This magazine rarely portrayed women in leadership positions in broadcast industries.⁸⁴⁶

This chapter questions how popular broadcast magazines portrayed the women on the professional staff of TRT in the 1970s and the 1980s. This analysis will offer valuable insights into the historical construction of the popular image of the professional woman in Turkey in these two decades. Such an analysis will also be beneficial for understanding how the particular socio-historical and cultural conditions of these decades influenced the relation between gender and the mass media.

To this end, issues of the popular magazines *TV’de 7 Gün*, which changed its name to *TV’de 7* and later to *TV’de 7 Gong* in the 1980s, and *Telemagazin* were scanned from 1975, when television magazines achieved certain popularity along with the expansion of TV ownership in Turkey, to the end of the 1980s by the method of random sampling. Also, several issues of a popular youth magazine *Hey*, which was published in the same period and which also covered articles about female broadcast professionals, were explored to enrich the data. In addition, *TV Radyo*

⁸⁴⁵ James C. Foust and Katherine A. Bradshaw, “Something for the Boys: Framing Images of Women in *Broadcasting Magazine* in the 1950s,” *Journalism History* 3, no. 2 (Summer 2007), p. 93.

⁸⁴⁶ Constance L. Book, Brandi Little and Harry A. Jessell, “75 Years of Broadcasting & Cable Magazine: An Examination of Women Featured in *Broadcasting & Cable*’s ‘Fifth Estater’ 1931 – 2006,” *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* 54, no. 1. (2010), p. 149.

pages of the popular newspaper *Milliyet* were scanned from 1972 to 1973 in order to cover the period before 1975.

The method of discourse analysis was employed in this chapter in order to examine how language constructs meaning, and how the language of these magazines constructs certain definitions of womanhood in relation to female broadcast professionals, in particular. Both the visual and written language of the sample magazine articles that introduced these professional women were analyzed in order to identify recurring patterns of representation having to do with power, sexuality, domesticity and womanhood.

In one of the first scholarly historical works on the stereotypes of ideal womanhood, Mary P. Ryan warned that such images “must not be confused... with the actual life experience of women.”⁸⁴⁷ I should admit that my aim is not to demonstrate whether the way these broadcast magazines portrayed the women who were employed by TRT as broadcast professionals corresponded to the reality per se or not. Such an aim presumes that media can and should represent the reality as it really is. Those who set off with this presumption tend to turn a blind eye to the question of whose reality one is talking about, as Brundson has stated: “Arguing for more realistic images is always an argument for the representation of ‘your’ version of reality.”⁸⁴⁸

Instead, the primary focus of concern in this chapter is how their identities as broadcast professionals were constructed from the 1970s to the 1980s. I think focusing solely on the continuities in representing women distracts attention from the

⁸⁴⁷ Mary B. Ryan, *Womanhood in America: From Colonial Times to Present* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1975), p. 10.

⁸⁴⁸ Charlotte Brundson, “Feminism and Soap Opera,” in K. Davies, J. Dickey and T. Stratford eds., *Out of Focus: Writing on Women and the Media* (London: The Women’s Press, 1998), p. 149.

historical changes that might have influenced media images of women.⁸⁴⁹ Therefore, in this chapter I attempted to historicize the mediated negotiation over the gendered identities of female broadcast professionals in Turkey in these two decades. Both continuities and changes in these women's media images were explored from a socio-historical and cultural perspective.

Both in the 1970s and in the 1980s, the women on the professional staff of TRT were depicted in domestic roles as housewives and mothers with slight changes in their imagery. Their professional identities were also defined as continuation of their supposedly feminine roles but not vice versa. Still, while these women were mostly invited to talk and pose in the popular press as the "housewife-mother heroine" in the 1970s, a tentative change towards balancing their domestic and professional identities was observed in their mediated images in the 1980s. Particularly speaking, the 1980s saw the image of the professional woman who was also expected to succeed in her private life.

Whereas the professional identities of the female TV artists who were not directly employed by TRT were mainly reduced to their bodily appearance in these popular broadcast magazines, the bodily features of female broadcast professionals were not underlined that much either in the 1970s or in the 1980s. Yet, it should be mentioned that particularly in the second half of the 1980s, the body started to be a significant dimension in the construction of the popular image of a female broadcast professional. On the other side, the sexuality of female broadcast professionals was not evoked except in terms of personal care and ladylikeness.

Education also appeared a major factor in the popular imagery of these female professionals. Particularly the magazine features taken from the 1970s gave

⁸⁴⁹ McDonald, p. 33.

almost every detail about their educational past, a trend which was not frequently observed in the 1980s, though. What changed in that respect from the 1970s to the 1980s was the following: While the state was identified as a “care giving father” in the discourse about the educational achievements of these women in the 1970s, education was perceived as more of a way of individual development in the following decade.

Indeed, the hegemonic discourse of individuality in the 1980s also influenced the way popular broadcast magazines depicted a female broadcast professional. These magazines started to spotlight these women’s individual tastes and hobbies not related to their domestic roles. This chapter argues that this emphasis both on the feminine body as a constructive aspect of these women’s professional identities and on their individuality arose from the temptation to promote pretentious consumption, which dominated the pages of the popular press in the changing socio-economic and cultural conditions of the 1980s.

The Imagery of Female Broadcast Professionals in the 1970s

The development of television magazines went hand in hand with the expansion of radio and TV receiver ownership in Turkey, particularly in the second half of the 1970s. *TV’de 7 Gün* was among the pioneers of these magazines. Erdoğan Sevgin, its chief editor, said the following about the publication of its first issue:

TV’de 7 Gün was born under very difficult conditions as television was not as developed in 1975 as it is now. Also, both *Günaydın* and *Milliyet* had published television magazines, and neither of them gained popularity. In those days, *Hürriyet* had *Haftasonu*. In order to enlarge this unit, they decided to publish a television magazine. We were asked to try also ourselves. However, the high echelons had worry. They believed a magazine all the pages of which were full of news about television would not gain popularity. ... Trial issues were produced by a

very small and amateur staff. When they won recognition, it was decided to publish the first issue in February.

The first issue (I think it was published by a circulation rate of ninety thousand) ran out that day. A few weeks later, the magazine had already gotten seated and even started to obtain a certain circulation rate. ... When *TV'de 7 Gün* was published, leave aside today's television magazines, newspapers did not have... even television sections. However, since the magazine won recognition, other television magazines started to be published immediately. Newspapers allocated a great deal of space to television.⁸⁵⁰

Both the expansion of TV and radio receiver ownership and the increased circulation rate of popular broadcast magazines turned those employed as broadcast professionals by TRT into well-known and prestigious figures in society. *TV'de 7 Gün* declared that one of its primary aims was to introduce TV and radio professionals to its audience, and several articles about these professional people covered the pages in almost each issue of this magazine. Sevgin wrote the following in one of his editorials:

Why do you read this magazine? We always think about it... Why do you buy this magazine from your news agent each Monday morning? Is it because it gives information about weekly TV broadcasts in the most detailed way? Or is it because it brings your home that colorful world behind the white screen... with the gossip about it? Maybe, you read us because we introduce the most interesting features of the celebrities you are a fan of? Or it is a habit...⁸⁵¹

The Female Broadcast Professional as “the Woman of Her Home”

As argued by Ahmet Oktay, although the focus on private life was a characteristic of the 1980s, it was not a totally novel phenomenon. He showed that the popular

⁸⁵⁰ “*TV'de 7 Gün*’ün 10 Yıl Yazışleri Müdürlüğünü Yapan Erdoğan Sevgin Derginin Çıkışını Anlatıyor,” 8 April 2008, <http://nostalji.anilarim.net/forum/lofiversion/index.php/t260.html> [14 June 2011].

⁸⁵¹ Erdoğan Sevgin, “Bu Dergiyi Neden Okursunuz?” *TV'de 7 Gün* 21 (21 May 1979), p. 5.

magazines in Turkey already showed an interest in privacy in the 1970s.⁸⁵² Oktay also mentioned that in these popular magazines women were often invited to talk and to pose in domestic roles as mothers or as wives until the 1980s.⁸⁵³

The popular broadcast magazines issued in the 1970s also followed this trend. While they introduced images of female broadcast professionals, they perpetuated domestic ideals of womanhood. First of all, female broadcast professionals were almost always defined in terms of men. That is, they were pictured in one of the following roles: single and looking for a husband, housewife-mother or widowed or divorced, or soon to marry.

Moreover, the magazine articles that introduced the women employed as professionals by TRT exhibited an exclusive focus on their domesticity. They were depicted mostly as “housewife-mothers” or as “house girls,” in case they were not married. In addition, most of their areas of personal interest were declared to belong to the sphere of home, such as knitting, cooking, baking or sewing. Not only did the magazine articles about these female broadcast professionals celebrate their domestic roles, but they also prioritized their “success” in private life over their professional achievements.

Among the sampled articles from the 1970s only one did not define a female broadcast professional in terms of men and did not emphasize her femininity. This article was published in *TV Radyo*, and it was about one of the five decorators employed by TRT TV, Emine Aktaç. The article informed the readers about the

⁸⁵² Oktay, p. 98.

⁸⁵³ Ibid.

challenges of Aktaç's profession. It stated that she was not able to allocate time to her self-development due to the limited number of staff employed in her unit.⁸⁵⁴

On the other hand, another article from the same magazine introduced Betül Aykan, the author of the tales told in the radio child's program called *Bir Varmış Bir Yokmuş* (Once upon a time). The visual portrayed Aykan spending time with her daughter at her apartment. The article stated that she was able to write these tales only after she finished housework and had her daughter sleep in the evening. The article added that although Aykan earned a really negligible amount of money, she was satisfied with her profession. The article declared, "The amount of income does not have any meaning against children's interest in... her tales." In addition, the article mentioned that the only reason why Aykan did not think about giving up her profession was "her love for and dedication to children."⁸⁵⁵

Soon after its first issue in 1975, *TV'de 7 Gün* allocated a definite number of pages each week to introduce the TRT's female TV and radio speakers. Not surprisingly, on these pages these women were portrayed either as "housewife-mothers" or as "cute girls looking for a husband," with their professional identities downplayed. One of these women was radio speaker Başak Doğru. The article about her stated that she "loved being the woman of her home." The article further asked the question, "Who does not want to be a husband who can silence his wife by a hand motion?" And it gave the answer, "Yüksel Doğru is such a husband who can interrupt his wife's words by a simple hand motion... because he is the Radio Voice Reception Chief."⁸⁵⁶

⁸⁵⁴ *Milliyet*, 26 March 1973.

⁸⁵⁵ *Milliyet*, 23 October 1972.

⁸⁵⁶ "İçimizden Biri: Onun Evi Radyo Evi," *TV'de 7 Gün* 7 (24 March 1975), pp. 11 – 2.

Another article introduced Aytaç Kardüz, a TV news speaker. There were two visuals in the article. One of them showed her announcing the news in a TV studio. In the other visual, she appeared in her daily life as walking around a park. Under these visuals it was written that Kardüz had two separate personalities: One of them is “a cheerful, lively... girl,” while the other is “a news speaker who reads out the texts on the screen... in a very serious manner.” The article informed the readers about Kardüz’s educational past. Then the last sentences of the article emphasized that Kardüz was “a cute house girl famous for her cakes,” “a feature of hers which [was] not known by the public much.” The article also declared that “Kardüz, who [was] a master chief in cooking, [was] successful in housework.”⁸⁵⁷



Fig. 27. TV news speaker Ülkü İmset with her children at home⁸⁵⁸

TV'de 7 Gün introduced another female news speaker Ülkü İmset to its readers. Next to a visual in which she appeared in her apartment, it was written that she was not able to spare any time to her hobbies, listening to the Western classical music and playing the piano, due to the requirements of housework and her profession. In

⁸⁵⁷ “Haberlerin Tatlı Serti,” *TV'de 7 Gün* 10 (7 April 1975), pp. 28 – 30.

⁸⁵⁸ Copied from “Mikrofonda 25 Yıl,” p. 12.

another visual, the readers were able to see her together with her children. The caption of this visual copied above said that she took the greatest pleasure from being able to find time to spend with her children. The article mentioned that Ülkü İmset knew sewing very well and sewed some of her clothes she wore on the screen herself. The article also declared the following: “Her children, her family and her duty are all İmset owns.”⁸⁵⁹

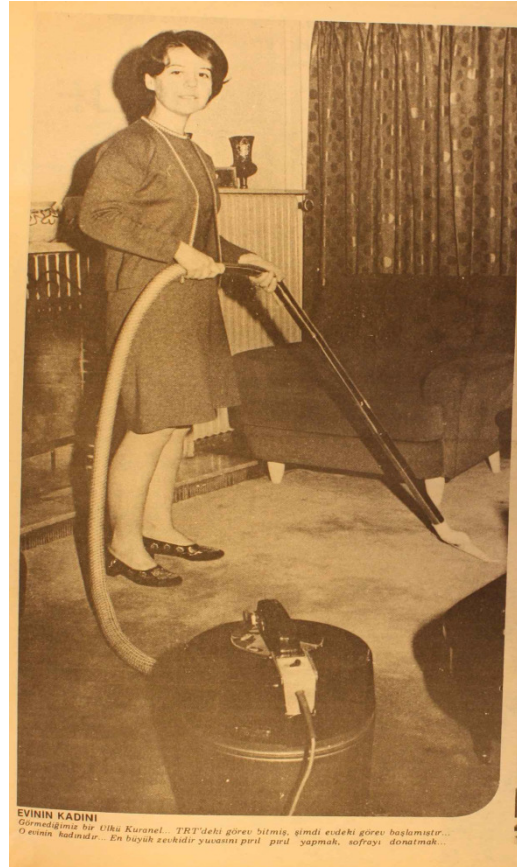


Fig. 28. TV news speaker Ülkü Kuranel doing housework⁸⁶⁰

A similar article portrayed another female TV news speaker Ülkü Kuranel. One of the visuals showed her reviewing the scripts of a news bulletin with a male new

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 12 – 4.

⁸⁶⁰ Copied from “Ülkü Kuranel’in Spikerlik Hayatı Şu Kelimelerle Başladı: ‘Doris Day’i Dinlediniz’,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 15 (19 May 1975), p. 11.

speaker sitting next to her. While a small place was allocated to this visual, which showed her performing her professional tasks, in another visual that covered almost half a page Kuranel posed as using a vacuum cleaner in her apartment. Under this visual it was written,

An Ülkü Kuranel you have not seen... The duty in TRT has finished; the duty at home has started now... She is the woman of her home... Her greatest pleasure is to make her house squeakily clean and to supply the dinner table...⁸⁶¹

Another article published in the same magazine four years later introduced TV speaker Cemile Kutgün and did not exhibit any significant change in the way it depicted female speakers. The title of the article was “Who else was left from good cooks: Attention! You can eat your fingers!” The article stated that Kutgün was one of the best cooks among TV celebrities and offered the details of three recipes she herself developed. In the visuals Kutgün appeared as cooking and serving dinner to her husband.⁸⁶²

Besides constructing the image of these female professionals as “woman of her home,” the double burden of home and work was almost totally out of the focus of these articles. In one article from *Hey* magazine, Mehtap Dinçler, a producer in the Department of Children’s Broadcasts, expressed her complain about the impossibility of having children due to her challenging profession:

I have been married for two years. My partner works in a private company as an economist. I love children very much; however, I cannot find any opportunity to have a child due to dealing with them [children as the target audience of her program].⁸⁶³

⁸⁶¹ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Görmediğiniz bir Ülkü Kuranel...TRT’deki görev bitmiş, şimdi evdeki görev başlamıştır... O evinin kadınıdır... En büyük zevkidir yuvasını pırıl pırıl yapmak, sofrayı donatmak...*

⁸⁶² “İyi Aşçılardan Kim Kaldı: Dikkat, Parmaklarınızı Yiyebilirsiniz!” *TV’de 7 Gün* 52 (24 December 1979), p. 23.

⁸⁶³ “Çocukların Sevimli Ablası Mehtap Dinçler Dertli: ‘Çocukları Sevmekten Çocuk Sahibi Olamıyorum,’” *Hey* 4 (2 January 1974), p. 45. The original text is as follows: *İki yıldır evliyim. Eşim*

The same article said Mehtap Dinçler substituted her unrealized desire to become a mother with her professional role, “the nice sister of children.”⁸⁶⁴



Fig. 29. Producers of *Kadın Dünyası* visiting women in a village⁸⁶⁵

These popular broadcast magazines defined these women’s professional roles with references to femininity and domesticity, as in the above-mentioned article about Dinçler. An article from *TV’de 7 Gün*, titled “The Village Tour of the Angels without Wings,” further illustrated this trend. This article introduced the female producers of the radio program *Kadın Dünyası*, Filiz Ercan and Günseli Alkol. The article offered the image of a physically mobile professional woman: “These two women have to... visit various villages and cities... in order to write these prescriptions.”⁸⁶⁶

At the same time, the same article celebrated these women’s success in their profession as long as this success was perceived as the continuation of their feminine/domestic roles. The article defined the aim of these female radio producers

bir özel şirkette ekonomist olarak çalışıyor. Çocukları çok seviyorum, ancak onlarla uğraşmaktan çocuk sahibi olmaya fırsat bulamıyorum.

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 43.

⁸⁶⁵ Copied from “Kanatsız Meleklerin Köy Gezisi,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 9 (9 April 1975), p. 43.

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Bu reçeteleri hazırlamak için... kent kent köy köy... dolaşıyorlar.*

as ensuring “peace and order at home,” however much they claimed to work for increasing women’s consciousness in their radio program. They were identified “as engineers of felicity who will bring your home order and peace.”

Moreover, they were said to “offer prescriptions of happiness to their audience.” The article mentioned that these female radio producers listened to the problems of village women in one of their visits to a village near Ankara. The village women complained about their husbands to Alkol and Ercan. However, “things were settled amicably” thanks to the female producers, who acted as “the doctors of felicity.”⁸⁶⁷

Popular broadcast magazines also opposed TV’s transmission of any images that challenged the ideal of housewife-heroine. For example, in 1979 Atilla İlhan produced a TV serial for TRT, *Paranın Kiri*. The main female character of this serial was a single journalist. *TV’de 7 Gün* defined this female character as follows: “a female journalist type, which some but not others have liked, with her flowing hair, her sepiolite cigarette holder which is never out of her hands, her *Bafra* cigarettes she frequently lights and puts out.”⁸⁶⁸

The article mediated the public opinion about this serial as follows:

For some, it is a copy of American serials... Its display of a life style Turkish society finds completely inappropriate... For some it is a European production which deserves watching... For some, the TV producers have spoiled the beautiful issue, the social content so as to put forward the character Journalist Ümit... For some, it is artificial and far from demonstrativeness...⁸⁶⁹

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁸ “Sağolasın Atilla İlhan,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 52 (24 December 1979), p. 25. The original text is as follows: *Kısacık saçları, elinden düşmeyen lületaşı ağızlığı ve birini yakıp birini söndürdüğü Bafra sigarası ile kiminin beğendiği kiminin eleştirdiği bir kadın gazeteci tipi.*

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Kimine göre Amerikan dizisi kopyası... Türk toplumuna ters bir yaşantı sergilemesi... Kimine göre seyredilebilir Avrupai bir yapıt... Kimine göre güzelim konuyu, sosyal içeriği, gazeteci Ümit’i öne çıkarmak için berbat etmişler televizyoncular... Kimine göre yapay, inandırıcılıktan uzak...*

And the authors of the article made their own critique about the serial, highlighting this female character's "ill-suitability" for society:

One thing we know is that Journalist Ümit in this serial over excites many circles with her behaviors, her personality as a night person, her independent behaviors that we cannot get much used to and her familiarity with the police commissioner. Where in Turkey is there a female journalist similar to that Journalist Ümit? The women disregarding all the values in order to receive news... What isolation from Turkish society is that? Besides, the female journalists of our hill [*Bab-ı Ali*] are very displeased with that wrong reflection.... Also, a few of them have applied to the Trade Union of Journalists in order to protest *Paranın Kiri* since "the filth of money" happened to appear on the screen as the filth of the female journalist.⁸⁷⁰

The Female Broadcast Professional as Educated by the Paternal State

While one major dimension of the popular imagery of female broadcast professionals was sanctification of their domesticity as housewife-mothers or as house-girls, the other dimension was the heavy emphasis on their educational achievements. The magazine articles about female broadcast professionals exhibited a tendency to offer almost all the details of the educational past of these women, most of whom were college graduates. Indeed, it appears that success in higher education constituted the second constructive aspect of their popular images, the first being their domesticity.

This emphasis on the educational achievements of female broadcasts professionals in the 1970s evoked the Republican ideal of the educated and modern Turkish woman taking an active part in the public sphere. As various studies have illustrated, in the popular culture of the early Republican era, women usually posed as the symbols of the Republican modernization project. Their portrayal as "self-

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid.

sacrificing mothers and housewives” did not challenge this ideal as the Republican discourse itself reduced women’s public existence to their maternal roles.

On the other hand, in the popular culture of the 1970s, the portrayal of female broadcast professionals as the symbol of the Republican modernization seemed to have been pushed into the background, so to speak. There were no explicit references to the Republican ideology in the magazine features and articles that focused on these women’s educational achievements. Instead, the emphasis on education as a constructive aspect of a female professional’s identity was mostly fed by the hegemonic ideology of developmentalism, which claimed that the only way to ameliorate social inequalities including gender inequalities was state-led development coupled with equality of opportunities in education.⁸⁷¹

Abu Lughod calls the discourse that informed mediated artifacts before the advent of liberalization in the 1980s “development realism,” which idealized education for the development of women’s social status within a national framework. This discourse aimed to make people see education as a virtue and believe in the necessity of education. She also argues that a paternalist mentality was “endemic” to the ideology of national development. It identified women as in need for the help of a paternal state for improving their life, mostly through education.⁸⁷²

Although the educational achievements of female broadcast professionals were constantly highlighted in the popular broadcast magazines from the 1970s, these women were not portrayed as autonomous individuals who developed their self-being via education. Instead, in line with the paternalist logic, these women were

⁸⁷¹ Development continued to be the catchword, and education was seen as one of the main ways of realizing it in Turkey in this decade. Particularly, women’s education appeared on the agenda of the era as a major concern, but the issue of women’s education was not regarded as a right in itself; it was mostly discussed in the context of its relation to social development.

⁸⁷² Abu-Lughod, *Dramas of Nationhood*, pp. 91 – 103.

mostly defined as girls in need of tutelage by a patriarchal figure. For example, the above-mentioned article about Ülkü İmset said that after she married Erhan İmset, who was the director of Ankara Television at that time, her husband took over the responsibility of training her about television.⁸⁷³ In a similar vein, in the magazines articles that offered details about these women's educational past the state was coded as "a father which sends its daughters abroad [usually to the BBC headquarters in London] for improving their skills."⁸⁷⁴

TRT or its certain branches were also portrayed as a father whose consent was sought for her daughter's marriage. For example, a magazine article published in *TV'de 7 Gün* in 1975 called Izmir Radio and Television "a father not giving consent to marry its daughters off the men outside the radio." The article, which covered the high incidence of marriages between the female and male staff of Izmir Radio and Television, stated, "This should probably be the reason for why the personnel of this enterprise work happily in friendship without any gossip."⁸⁷⁵ Izmir Radio and Television was said to be like "more of a warm family environment or a family enterprise than a state institution;" and the bachelors in Izmir were advised to "seek their chance somewhere else."⁸⁷⁶

⁸⁷³ "Mikrofonda 25 Yıl," p. 14.

⁸⁷⁴ "Haberlerin Tatlı Serti," p. 30.

⁸⁷⁵ "İzmirli Bekarlar Boşuna Ümitlenmeyin: İzmir Radyo ve Televizyonu Dışarıya Kız Vermiyor," *TV'de 7 Gün* 40 (10 November 1975), p. 8. The original text is as follows: *Bu kuruluştaki çalışanların dedikodusuz, dostluk içinde ve mutlu olarak çalışmalarının nedeni galiba bu olmalı.*

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid.

The Female Broadcast Professional with Her Downplayed Sexuality

This patriarchal figure was substituted by “a pair of eyes” in the portrayals of the on-air female celebrities who were not directly employed by TRT. This pair of eyes was assumed to belong to a male figure who gave a chance to these girls to change the course of their destiny by appearing on the screen. To say it otherwise, a commonality in the portrayals of these two groups of women, the female broadcast professionals and the on-air female celebrities, was the male figure that sometimes acted as an authoritarian yet care giving father, and sometimes acted as a man with a pair of attentive eyes who would discover attractive girls around him.

TV’de 7 Gün claimed that it would introduce not only female broadcast professionals but also the “female artists from the advertisements we see on TV, but we do not have much information about.”⁸⁷⁷ In the twelfth issue of the magazine, an article titled “Miss Leg” covered the life story of one of these female artists, Güngör Bayrak. The caption of a visual which featured her legs stated the following:

She wanted to be a teacher; it did not happen... She intended to be a nurse and a hostess; she was not destined to be... The destiny pushed her to Hilton as the Coffeemaker Beauty... And thanks to a pair of careful eyes there, she became one of the admired advertisement celebrities on television.⁸⁷⁸

In this kind of magazine articles, on-air female artists were usually represented as passive objects waiting for their discovery. For example, an article from *TV Radyo* informed the audience that some Italian producers who visited Turkey in order to

⁸⁷⁷ “*TV’de 7 Gün*’ün Yeni Yazı Dizisi 1: Reklam Yıldızları,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 12 (26 April 1975), pp. 40 – 1.

⁸⁷⁸ “Bayan Bacak,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 12 (26 April 1975), p. 41. The original text is as follows: *Öğretmen olmak istedi, olmadı... Hemşire, hostes olmaya niyetlendi, kısmet değilmiş... Kader onu Hilton’a kahveci güzeli olarak itti... Ve oradaki bir çift dikkatli göz sayesinde televizyon reklamlarının sevilen yıldızları arasına girdi.*

shoot a documentary film “discovered a TV celebrity in Ankara.”⁸⁷⁹ Another article from the same magazine introduced the female hostess of a popular TV quiz show Fethiye Tüzel. The article emphasized that her appearance on TV was the result of her “discovery by a male TV producer.”⁸⁸⁰ Again a magazine article from *TV’de 7 Gün* about TV artists Müjde Ar and İtir Esen declared the following in its title: “Television has created two more celebrities.”⁸⁸¹

Not only did popular broadcast magazines introduce these on-air female celebrities as passive figures but they also constructed their professional identities as being reduced to bodily existence. More often than not, their bodies were openly displayed with visual aids to arouse sexual fervor. To illustrate, in the above-mentioned article about Bayrak it was stated that she had answered the question of why she mostly appeared in sock advertisements, “It was a coincidence.” In turn, the authors of the article said the following:

Is ours a question, in a word! That is, the poor girl... cannot say, “They prefer me in socks advertisements since my legs are beautiful...” Of course, she would say “coincidence.” In point of fact, it is really a coincidence... that the Coffeemaker Beauty in Hilton strikes a pair of careful eyes and turns spontaneously into a “TV advertisement beauty...”⁸⁸²

In the 1970s while the on-air female celebrities, not directly employed by TRT, were usually represented as passive beings with their professional identity reduced into their bodies, the women on the professional staff of TRT were invited to pose as “self-sacrificing mothers” or as “loyal housewives,” as already discussed above.

⁸⁷⁹ *Milliyet*, 20 November 1972.

⁸⁸⁰ *Milliyet*, 16 October 1972.

⁸⁸¹ “Televizyon İki Yıldız Daha Yarattı,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 12 (26 April 1975), pp. 30 – 1.

⁸⁸² “Bayan Bacak,” p. 42. The original text is as follows: *Bizimki de soru mu yani! Kızcağız... “Bacaklarım güzel olduğu için çorap reklamlarında tercih ediyorlar” diyemez ya... “Tصادف” diyecek, elbet. Aslını ararsanız, gerçekten تصادف... Hilton’daki “kahveci güzeli”nin dikkatli bir çift göze çarpıp da “TV Reklam Güzeli” olurvermesi...*

Furthermore, there was almost no emphasis on these female professionals' bodily appearance. Instead, in several magazine articles these women themselves particularly downplayed their bodily features when they talked about their profession.

In a magazine interview with her, Ülkü Kuranel complained that the audience's paying interest to the physical appearance and to the clothes of news speakers instead of the news itself disturbed her.⁸⁸³ Similarly, Aytaç Kardüz discussed the following challenges of her profession as a TV news speaker:

At those nights when I announce the news on TV, I have my hair made-up in a simple fashion; I pay attention to the simplicity of the colors and the models of my clothes, and I take off my beloved ear rings. The reason is this: I do not want to take the audience' attention to those fancy appearances.⁸⁸⁴

The presenter of the TV program *Kadın ve Ev* Deniz Adanalı answered the question whether she was afraid of being visible on the screen as follows:

No, I have no fear... Whether my appearance on TV is beautiful or not neither excites nor frightens me. I do not appear on the screen so as to demonstrate my beauty. The issue which I pay attention to on the screen is the ability to talk properly. Since I had long worked as a speaker at Ankara Radio, I do not feel any difficulty in this regard.⁸⁸⁵

The magazine columns allocated to the audience's letters also acted as a forum where the relation between television and visibility of the feminine body was discussed. For example, a female reader wrote a letter of critique to *TV Radyo*. It was titled "TV Speaker Ladies Dress Too Badly." In it, she said the following:

⁸⁸³ "Ülkü Kuranel'in Spikerlik Hayatı," p. 12.

⁸⁸⁴ *Milliyet*, 2 October 1972. The original text is as follows: *TV'de haberleri okuduğum geceler saçlarımı sade bir biçimde yaptırır, giysilerimin renk ve modellerinin sade olmasına dikkat ederim ve çok sevdiğim küpelerimi çıkartırım. Bunun nedeni şudur: Seyircilerin dikkatlerini fantezi görüntüler üzerine çekmek istemiyorum.*

⁸⁸⁵ *Milliyet*, 8 February 1973.

Among those who read the news on television, the male ones appear on the screen in a very smart fashion. However, our news speaker ladies do not pay much attention to their clothes, unfortunately. Most of the time, they appear in front of us even in pullovers.⁸⁸⁶

Then the reader asked if the TV management was not sensitive to how speakers should dress on the screen.⁸⁸⁷

Two weeks later a female subscriber from Ankara gave a reply to this letter in the same column. The woman titled her letter “TV Speakers do not Show off:”

We discussed this problem with our friends. According to the conclusion we came to, TV’s female speakers announce the news well. They are not showing off and appearing in a fashion show. They do not need to dress smartly and ostentatiously. Their clothes are normal in comparison with what they do.⁸⁸⁸

It was not only the women working on the professional staff of TRT themselves who willingly bracketed aside their sexual identity in their public images. They were also expected to discipline their physical appearance on the screen, and those who featured their bodies were sometimes criticized by the popular press.

For example, in an article from *TV-Radyo*, which was about Seil Heper, who had left her post at Ankara Radio in order to become a night club singer in Istanbul, a discussion took place about the relation between the gendered identity of women and the requirements of public broadcasting. This article allocated space to her workmates’ ideas about her resignation from radio, provoking them with the question, “What do [you] think that Seil Heper left the radio house, which she had

⁸⁸⁶ *Milliyet*, 24 December 1972. The original text is as follows: *Televizyonda haberleri okuyan spikerlerden erkekler ekrana ok ık bir ekilde ıkıyorlar. Fakat hanım spikerlerimiz maalesef ekran karısında giyimlerine pek dikkat etmiyorlar. oėu kez kazaklarla bile ıkıyorlar karımıza.*

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁸ *Milliyet*, 15 February 1973.

called ‘my sweet home,’ and chose ‘money and fame’ instead?”⁸⁸⁹ Two of her male workmates believed that she was discovered by the nigh-club operators in Istanbul merely owing to “her physique and her interesting clothes she wore in TV programs.”⁸⁹⁰

Another further argued the following, identifying her resignation with almost a “sinful act:”

I think Seçil Heper’s appearance on the stage is early... The reason why I find it early is that her education is inadequate. She should have achieved success first in radio; then she should have appeared on the stage... It is ungratefulness that a radio performer leaves radio and goes to the stage, for radio brings up that performer by great efforts. The state attributes a salary to her, and the performer leaves all these behind and appears on the stage. This is not acceptable.⁸⁹¹

This derogatory attitude the popular press adopted against the self-affirmation of their sexuality on the screen by the female professionals demonstrated a change from the late 1970s onwards, after when body started to be considered a constitutive component of the professional identity of a woman on air.

The Imagery of Female Broadcast Professionals in the 1980s

The popular culture of the 1980s was reconfigured in line with the hegemonic discourse of individuality, as based on liberal premises, as already discussed in the previous chapter. An exclusive focus on the private life characterized the popular press’ visual and written language in the 1980s, which partially arose from the heavy

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Seçil Heper’in “sıcak yuvam” dediği radyoevinden ayrılıp “parayı ve şöhreti” seçmesi konusunda onunla uzun yıllar birlikte çalışan sanatçı arkadaşları ne düşünüyorlar acaba?*

⁸⁹⁰ *Milliyet*, 18 December 1972.

⁸⁹¹ Ibid.

state censorship on the press. Many issues which were deemed private and accordingly silenced before burst into the popular culture in that decade.

Against this temptation to privacy, women also attempted to develop an autonomous voice and carried many issues pertaining to women's subordination to the public agenda. Yet, the development of the talk on women did not necessarily correspond to women's emancipation per se. Instead, women were still invited to the public arena as the housewives-ladies or as objects of sexual passions.

At the same time, a change in the popular imagery of womanhood was observed from the self-sacrificing housewife-mother to the modern individual who has a career and who also wants to discover her body. This changing definition of womanhood in the 1980s invited women to be competitive and successful individuals in society without requiring them to render their bodies invisible. These developments also influenced portrayals of female broadcast professionals in popular broadcast magazines, as will be discussed below.

The Female Broadcast Professional as a Modern Career Individual

The tendency to praise the domestic roles of female broadcast professionals still dominated their popular imagery in line with the conservatist premises that circulated throughout the decade. Nonetheless, the prioritization of their domestic roles over their professional identities, which characterized their popular imagery in the previous decade, was gradually substituted by the celebration of the image of the successful professional woman who was also a housewife-mother.

Furthermore, these magazines' language started to highlight the split identity of these female professionals, who had to perform both their public and their private

roles, and these professional women were invited to express their complaints about the double burden on them, which were almost totally absent in the popular broadcast magazines issued in the 1970s.

Magazine articles continued to portray female broadcast professionals usually as housewives and as mothers. For example, in an article from *TV'de 7 Gün* "Canan Oğuz: The Woman of Her Home," the readers saw her serving dinner for her husband and her son at home.⁸⁹² Another article from this magazine told its audience about how pleased the two female news speakers were with their children's success at school.⁸⁹³

This article was among many others that emphasized the identity of female news speakers as mothers. Similarly, an article from another popular broadcast magazine *Telemagazin* covered the circumcision ceremony of the son of Nergis Kumbasar, a TV news speaker. This article particularly highlighted Kumbasar's maternal duties. Indeed, one of the captions of the article was the following: "She is first a mother."⁸⁹⁴

It should be still noted that in the kind of magazine articles which particularly covered the professional successes of the women on the staff of TRT, their motherhood was highlighted not in the main text but particularly in the visual language. For example, an article about Kolçalar showed her playing with her son at home. Above this visual it was written, "In Kolçalar's world, which is full of Doğa [the name of her son], now there is also a world of screen."⁸⁹⁵ Although the main text

⁸⁹² "Yuvasının Kadını Canan Oğuz," *TV'de 7* 18 (27 April 1981), p. 2.

⁸⁹³ "TRT Haber Merkezi'nde Karne Sevinci," *Telemagazin* 22 (3 June 1985), pp. 15 – 6.

⁸⁹⁴ "Genco'ya Erkeklik Yolunu Açanlar," *Telemagazin* 23 (10 June 1985), pp. 6 – 8.

⁸⁹⁵ "Kendine Geçer Not Verdi," *TV'de 7* Gong 28 (8 July 1985), p. 23. The original text is as follows: *Kolçalar'ın Doğa'yla dolu dünyasında şimdi ekran dünyası da var.*

of the article did not cover any details about her private life but was rather about her newly assigned professional task, presenting the TV entertainment program *Cumartesi Gecesi* (Saturday night), the visuals highlighted her identity as a mother.⁸⁹⁶

In another exemplary article, Meral Nayman, the speaker of the TV program *Elimizden Obamızdan* (From our country from our clone), was introduced. Although the main text of the article focused on her successful professional career at TRT, the visuals rather highlighted her “happy marriage” and her motherhood. The two visuals, which showed Nayman at work, covered a rather smaller place than the other three visuals, in which she was portrayed as a “happy housewife-mother.” For example, below one of such visuals was written, “Meral Nayman is a successful housewife... She has numerous talents, but she also finds time for knitting... The greatest pleasure of the new speaker of the screen is to see her handicraft on her daughter Elif.”⁸⁹⁷

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁷ “İşte Milyonları Büyüleyen İzmirli,” *TV’de 7 11* (5 March 1984), p. 19. The original text is as follows: *Başarılı bir ev kadınıdır Meral Nayman... On parmağında on hünere var ama Nayman örgü için de zaman bulur... El emeği göz nurunu kızı Elif’in üzerinde görmek ekranın yeni sunucusunun en büyük zevkidir.*

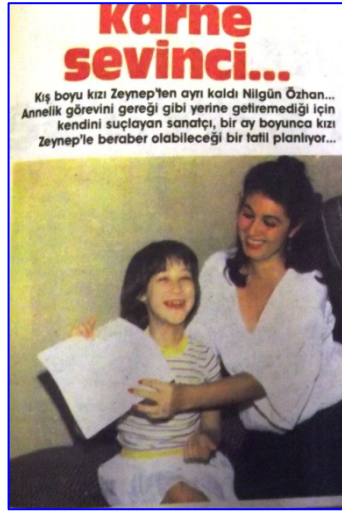


Fig. 30. TV actress Nilgün Özhan's happiness with her daughter's success at school⁸⁹⁸

Although popular broadcast magazines celebrated the maternal identities of the female broadcast professionals, they seemed to recognize the double burden on these women, at least. In the magazine interviews with some female broadcast professionals, the question of how they were able to handle their private and public roles was frequently asked. Either their success in maintaining a split life was celebrated or these women blamed themselves for their failure to overcome the challenge of being a professional woman married with children.

For example, an article about Nilgün Özhan's happiness from her daughter's successful school life highlighted in large type Özhan's self-blame that arose from her inability to spend time with her daughter in winter when she worked as an artist for the TV program *Hanımlar Sizin İçin*.⁸⁹⁹ A similar article titled "Sister on the Screen, Mother at Her Home" covered the private life of Derya Baykal, who presented the child genre *Uykudan Önce* (Before sleep) on TV. Under a visual that introduced Baykal with her children at home it was written that Baykal allocated all

⁸⁹⁸ Copied from "Hanımlar Sizin İçin'de Karne Sevinci," *Telemagazin* 22 (3 June 1985), p. 21.

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 20 – 1.

her spare time to her children. In the article she was quoted as saying that her profession did not prevent her maternal duties and that motherhood is not a duty, but a pleasure⁹⁰⁰

In a similar vein, the article “The Woman Who Makes Children Love Television” introduced a female TV children’s programs producer, Nedret Çatay. The article declared that Çatay was married with two children. She was reported to say that her ability to carry on her profession without any unrest erupting in her family depended on her husband’s “broadmindedness.”⁹⁰¹

Likewise, an article from *Telemagazin*, titled “A Real Pollyanna: This Woman Knows How to Get Happy,” covered the family life of Hamiyet Kolçalar, a television presenter. Kolçalar was portrayed as enjoying herself with her son in the visuals. One of the captions of these visuals was the following: “Here is love... here is motherhood.”⁹⁰² It was written that like every other female speaker Kolçalar could not spend sufficient time with her child at home since she was split between her professional and maternal duties. On the other hand, the article ended with Kolçalar’s following statement: “Being a presenter is nice; however, motherhood is a kind of emotion impossible to explain in words.”⁹⁰³

Although their motherhood was praised particularly in the visuals employed, a change in the relative weight attached to these women’s public and private identities was also observed in the 1980s in contrast to the previous decade: In some

⁹⁰⁰ “Ekranı Abla, Evinde Anne,” *Telemagazin* 12 (24 March 1986), p. 25. The original text is as follows:

⁹⁰¹ “Çocuklara Ekranı Sevdiren Kadın,” *Telemagazin* 10 (10 March 1986), p. 30.

⁹⁰² “Gerçek Bir Pollyanna: Bu Kadın Mutlu Olmasını Biliyor,” *Telemagazin* 33 (8 July 1985), p. 13. The original text is as follows: *İşte sevgi... işte annelik.*

⁹⁰³ Ibid., p. 15. The original text is as follows: *Spikerlik güzel, ancak annelik kelimelerle anlatılmaz bir duygu.*

articles, the professional and domestic roles of these women were attached almost an equal weight. A magazine article about Aylin Özmenek, the presenter of the educational TV program *Başarılı Gençler* (The successful youth), illustrated this tentative change. The article introduced her as follows:

The presenter of *Başarılı Gençler* is also the mother of two successful young people. On the other hand, she keeps the title as the first female speaker who directed a panel discussion on the screen. Having been a radio speaker for totally 18.5 years, Aylin Özmenek is also interested in training young radio speakers... nowadays. She is also making preparations for assuming the speakership of a culture-education program... which we will watch soon.⁹⁰⁴

The article ended with the following sentence: “And Aylin Özmenek lives the happiness of adding two tangible ‘successes’ at her home to her professional achievements.”⁹⁰⁵ Another article which exemplified this change covered information about TV producer Elvin İlyasoğlu. The visuals showed her presenting her program on the screen, playing a musical instrument at home and enjoying herself with her daughter. Below the visual in which she was portrayed with her daughter, it was written that in her life the second most important part is taken by her daughter Elif whereas the first part is allocated to her profession.⁹⁰⁶

The following sentences from this article described her as “a cute lady” continuing to study on behalf on her profession at her home:

An apartment in Etiler, which has been tastefully furnished... A small and plain study room whose curtains were secured... The first things that caught the eye in the room were a piano, a desk and books lining

⁹⁰⁴ “*Başarılı Gençler*’in Sunucusu İki Başarılı Gencin Annesi,” *TV’de 7 14* (29 March 1982), p. 14. The original text is as follows: *Başarılı Gençler*’in sunucusu aynı zamanda iki ‘başarılı genc’ in annesi... Öte yandan, ekranda açık oturum yöneten ilk kadın sunucu olma ünvanını elinde bulunduruyor... Tam 18.5 yıldır radyo spikeri olan Aylin Özmenek şu sıralarda radyoda... genç spikerlerin eğitimleri ile de ilgileniyor. Bir yandan da... yakında izleyeceğimiz yeni bir kültür-eğitim programının sunuculuğunu üstlenme hazırlığında.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Ve Aylin Özmenek, meslekteki başarılarına evindeki iki somut “başarı”yı katmanın mutluluğunu yaşıyor.*

⁹⁰⁶ “Televizyona İki Yeni Sunucu Geldi,” *TV’de 7 11* (5 March 1984), p. 19.

the walls... Also a typewriter and a roller tape on the desk... A pretty cute lady is studying hard sitting in front of her typewriter... The litter bin next to her is full of the papers which were released from the typewriter yet not found approvable, and her desk is covered with books, files and tapes.⁹⁰⁷

An article about Fatma Karaca, a TV forecast presenter further illustrated this trend. The article highlighted Karaca's feeling of self-trust as a result of her success in maintaining her double life composed of her family and her profession. Karaca was reported to have raised her son in collaboration with her husband until he was three years old. She was quoted to say, "Even in those difficult times I have never thought of giving up my profession. I have always loved my work."⁹⁰⁸

A similar magazine article reported, "24 hours a day is not enough for famous TV presenter Ayşe Egesoy, who has established a triple life for herself composed of her profession, husband, and Kemal [the name of her son]."⁹⁰⁹ According to the article, "Egesoy has been divided into three." The following sentences highlighted the split identity of Egesoy:

A screen celebrity is first a public official. Especially if this celebrity is a woman and married, she is... also a housewife. Apart from her work, she has a different world she has established out of her partner and her home.⁹¹⁰

Egesoy was said to have no complaints about this "heavy load." In contrast, she claimed to have been pleased with each separate part of her life. The article concluded that Egesoy's success in her profession depended on her "peaceful and

⁹⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁸ "Aranan Kan Bulundu," *Telemagazin* 25 (13 May 1985), pp. 22. The original text is as follows: *O zor dönemlerde bile mesleğimden ayrılmayı düşünmedim. Her zaman severek çalıştım.*

⁹⁰⁹ "Ayşe Egesoy: Üç Parçaya Bölündü," *Telemagazin* 9 (3 March 1986), p. 30. The original text is as follows: *İşi, eşi ve Kemal'i ile kendisine üçlü bir dünya kuran ünlü sunucuya 24 saat yetmiyor.*

⁹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 31. The original text is as follows: *Ekran ünlüsü önce devlet memurudur. Hele hele kadınsa ve de evliyse bu ünlü... aynı zamanda ev kadınıdır. İşi dışında, eşi ve evi ile kurduğu bir başka dünyası vardır.*

happy home.” Actually, the article portrayed Egesoy as “having lapsed into housework.” The visuals pictured her cooking; she was cooking because “the men... would come home soon as hungry wolves.”⁹¹¹

The Flexible Attitude towards Marriage in the Popular Press

As Oktay mentions, popular magazines already started to adopt a more flexible attitude towards the institution of marriage in the 1970s. In order to illustrate this, he quotes a magazine article published in *Hayat* in November 1973. This article asked its readers “whether marriage becomes a thing of the past.” Although the article gave a negative reply to this question, it was striking enough that it dared to cover the issue of group marriages (a marriage like agreement between more than two people whereby all partners live together, share finances, children and household appliances), according to Oktay.⁹¹²

Likewise, popular broadcast magazines started to loosen their attitude to marriage towards the end of the 1970s. For example, an article from 1978 covered the news about Perran Kutman’s decision to divorce under the title “The Ugly Queen of the Screen has also opted for freedom.”⁹¹³ Two years later an article about Jülide Gülizar’s wedding ceremony was published in the same magazine with the title “Jülide Gülizar Smiles again after 16 Years.” The title gave the message that marriage is what makes a woman happy. On the other hand, in the article Gülizar’s marriage was defined in terms of her professional identity as the presenter of the TV

⁹¹¹ Ibid.

⁹¹² Oktay, pp. 101 – 2.

⁹¹³ “Çirkin Kraliçe de Hürriyeti Seçiyor,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 30 (24 July 1978), p. 9.

discussion program *Bir Konu Bir Konuk*, stressing her freedom as a self-developed woman: “She has chosen a ‘permanent’ guest for herself.”⁹¹⁴

Besides, the article quoted Gülizar’s following critical statements about marriage:

I was not thinking of marrying until the past two months. I created my life with my own effort, and I was maintaining it. I have arrived at today alone both materially and spiritually. I wanted to make everyone accept that a single woman can stand straight up in this world, and I have achieved this.⁹¹⁵

The flexible attitude towards marriage became more visible in the 1980s. On one hand, marriage was still defined as the greatest source of happiness in a woman’s life. For example, a magazine article about TV news speaker Aytaç Kardüz’s engagement explained what marriage meant for a woman as follows:

Here is elegance, beauty, modesty and success... She had almost all of these... However, was she happy in the fullest sense of the term? The greatest happiness was to share such loveliness and kindness with a “faithful friend...” in mind, in heart and in personality as a whole.⁹¹⁶

Marriage was also seen as almost an impediment on a woman’s individual freedom, though. For example, a magazine article about how divorce changed the life of a female broadcast professional stated that Şadiye Amansızoğlu, a weather forecast presenter on TV, “who started to learn Italian, read books and listen to music” after her divorce, “tries to experience everything a married woman cannot.”⁹¹⁷ Still, the

⁹¹⁴ “Jülide Gülizar 16 Yıl Sonra Yine Gülüyor,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 9 (25 February 1980), pp. 3 – 4. The original text is as follows: “Sürekli” bir konuk seçti kendisine.

⁹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 4. The original text is as follows: *İki ay öncesine kadar evlenmeyi düşünmüyordum. Yaşamımı kendi çabamla kurmuştum. Ve sürdürüyordum. Maddeten ve manen bugüne tek başıma gelmişim. Tek başına bir kadının da bu dünyada dimdik durabileceğini herkese kabul ettirmek istiyordum. Bunu başardım da...*

⁹¹⁶ “Söz Kesmeye Geldiler Yüzüğü Takıp Gittiler,” *TV’de 7 Gong* 50 (30 December 1984), p. 3. The original text is as follows: *Şıklıksa şıklık, güzellikse güzellik, mütevazılıksa mütevazılık, başarıysa başarı... Hemen hepsine sahipti... Ama tam anlamı ile mutlu muydu acaba? Çünkü en büyük mutluluk böylesi iyilik ve güzellikleri paylaşmaktı bir “can yoldaşı” ile... Kafaca, yürekçe ve de tüm benliği ile...*

⁹¹⁷ “Soyadı Uzun Günleri Kıaldı,” *Telemagazin* 13 (31 March 1986), p. 40.

article underlined that Amansızoğlu started to “look at us more sadly on the screen” after she got divorced.⁹¹⁸

In some magazine articles, some from the female professional staff of TRT themselves also declared their hesitance about marriage. For example, an article quoted the following statement of a woman working as a broadcast professional Fatma Tokçabalan: “Living alone is impossible for people. However it is a great mistake to marry so that ‘I can have somebody standing by me.’”⁹¹⁹

In 1987, an interview with announcer Tendü Koşal was published in *TV’de 7 Gong*, in which she discussed the challenges a married professional woman faced. She answered the question why she did not have any children as follows:

I love children. However, I think it is not enough to love children. It is important to raise that child, to make him/her a person beneficial to society. It is egotism to have a child in our conditions. If we owned a child, he/she would grow up as an orphan who had a mother and a father.⁹²⁰

Also, she gave the following reply to the question whether she had any disagreement with her husband due to her professional responsibilities: “My husband demonstrated great sympathy and maturity. He budged from his own needs and made sacrifices when necessary. If he had annoyed me in this issue, my marriage would not have proceeded.”⁹²¹

Then she answered the question of what she was planning to do in case she resigned or retired as follows:

⁹¹⁸ Ibid.

⁹¹⁹ *Milliyet*, 10 August 1989. The original text is as follows: *İnsanların yalnız yaşaması mümkün değil. Ancak “Yanımda birisi olsun” diye evlilik yapmak çok büyük bir yanlışlık.*

⁹²⁰ “Tendü Koşal: ‘Çocuğum Analı Babalı Yetim Olarak Büyüyecekti,’ *TV’de 7 Gong* 33 (17 August 1987), p. 13.

⁹²¹ Ibid., p. 14. The original text is as follows: *Benim eşim çok anlayış ve olgunluk gösterdi. Gerektiğinde kendi isteklerinden ödün verdi, fedakarlık yaptı. Beni bu konuda bunalıtsaydı ya işim ya evliliğim yürümezdi.*

I started to work as soon as I finished faculty. That is, I have never been a housewife. Therefore, if I have time, I want to work for charity associations... It is very meaningless to spend time staying at home, going to meetings, gossiping, backbiting each other, eating bakery products and gaining weight.⁹²²

In an interview with her published in *TV'de 7 Gün*, Jülide Gülizar answered a question about what she was planning to do after she retired in a similar manner to Koşal, challenging and subverting the ideal image of the “housewife-mother heroine:” “My new life? Of course, I will not stay at home. That means my death. There are proposals from some higher education institutions. I went to talk with some of them myself. Working as a journalist is also among my plans.”⁹²³

The Female Broadcast Professional with Her Highlighted Individuality

Whereas the female broadcasts professionals’ successful educational past was one of the constructive blocks of their popular imagery in the 1970s, the emphasis on their educational achievements was reduced in the following decade. Although almost all the magazine articles taken from the 1970s gave every detail about their educational past, this trend was not always observed in the 1980s.

Furthermore, the masculine narrative role ascribed to the state as “a care giving father” was almost absent. The role of education in these women’s evolution into self-developed individuals was highlighted, instead. An article introducing Esra Akpınarlı, who acted in the TV advertisements for a furniture brand, illustrated this change. The article stated that despite giving the message “Let every young person marry” in the TV ads, she had no desire for marriage. Instead, she was planning to go to Britain in order to learn English. The article congratulated Akpınarlı for this

⁹²² Ibid.

⁹²³ “TRT Defteri Kapandı Emeklilik Defteri Açıldı,” *TV'de 7 Gün* 15 (6 April 1981), p. 14.

decision of hers and said that Akpınarlı would return from Britain with a novel personality.⁹²⁴

The abandonment of the portrayal of the state as a patriarchal figure was also illustrated by an article in *TV'de 7 Gün* published in 1984. In the visuals of the article TV speaker Tendü Yılmaz appeared as studying English both at home and at a classroom with other female students around her. The article defined the TRT's contribution to Yılmaz's training as a merely financial affair:

Television speaker Tendü Yılmaz pays 14,000 liras each month to take English courses. The fee is actually paid by TRT. However, if she does not attain a good grade in two months, TRT will cut down the fund and will retrieve the money it has paid for Koşal so far...⁹²⁵

These magazine articles also stressed the individuality of female broadcast professionals by spotlighting their individual hobbies and personal tastes, while in the 1970s they usually declared that these women had almost no time to spare to their personal areas of interest due to the load of their domestic roles.

What is more, the articles from the 1970s showed a temptation to list domestic activities like cooking, knitting and sewing among these women's individual hobbies. On the other hand, in the magazine articles from the 1980s, female broadcast professionals appeared as engaging in personal hobbies other than these domestic activities. For example, in the article that introduced the presenter of the entertainment program *Müzik Magazin* (Music magazine), Jale Akay, the visuals pictured her spending time with her family at home, while the main text covered her hobbies like painting and playing the piano in addition to her career development at TRT.

⁹²⁴ "Ekranlardaki Gelin İngiltere Yolcusu," *Telemagazin* 24 (6 May 1985), p. 30.

⁹²⁵ "Tendü Okullu Oldu," *TV'de 7* 15 (2 April 1984), p. 14. The original text is as follows: *Televizyon spikeri Tendü Yılmaz Koşal ayda 14.000 lira ödeyerek İngilizce dersi alıyor... Parayı TRT ödüyor... Ama bir ay iyi not alamazsa öğretmenlerinden TRT kurs parasını keseceği gibi şimdiye kadar kurs için Tendü Koşal'a verdiği parayı da geri alacak...*

Another article about a female presenter on the screen Esra Bora underlined her personal areas of interest like music more than her family life. It said that Bora, for whom “24 hours a day is not enough,” was divided between her hobbies and her profession.⁹²⁶ Likewise, in the above-mentioned article about Fatma Karaca, she was seen walking outside in a park in the visual titled “The Secret to the Healthy Life” copied below. Under this visual it was written that jogging was among Karaca’s hobbies.



Fig. 31. TV forecast presenter Fatma Karaca⁹²⁷

The stress put by popular broadcast magazines on the individual hobbies of female broadcast professionals was also fed by the temptation to encourage pretentious consumption, which characterized the popular press of the decade. A magazine article about a female TV presenter Jülide Sönmez declared: “The greatest passion of

⁹²⁶ “Esra Bora’da Ne Marifetler Var: Sunucunuz Kanun da Çalar,” *Telemagazin* 27 (27 May 1985), p. 35.

⁹²⁷ “Aranan Kan Bulundu,” p. 22. The caption beneath the picture is read as follows: “The Secret to Healthy Life.”

Sönmez, who complains about not being able to spare time for herself..., is using her automobile.”⁹²⁸

A similar article titled the “Beautiful Speaker Now Has a Brand-New Renault” reported that TV news speaker Şengül Karaca’s husband bought an automobile for her as a gift.⁹²⁹ In the visual Karaca appeared as driving her brand-new automobile in sports clothes. The article first listed and advertised the features of the automobile. Then, it explained why Karaca needed it, stressing both the requirements of her profession and her domestic roles:

Whereas an automobile was a luxury for some, it was a necessity for others. However, it was undoubtedly a necessity for those, like Karaca, who have an occupation in which even minutes are very important. In order to get to work on time and in comfort, in order to escape from the loud noise of the capital and to entertain herself with her family, in order to spend her vacation days with her son Can...⁹³⁰

As argued by Yael Navaro Yashin, in the mass consumer society of the post-1980 period, consumption styles were perceived and coded as a major indicator of personal identities. People self-affirmed their identities in the public sphere by the way they consume.⁹³¹ This packaging of identities for consumption started to characterize the popular imagery of the women on the professional staff of TRT. For example, they occasionally acted as models introducing the fashion trends. In one of

⁹²⁸ *Milliyet*, 1 August 1989. The original text is as follows: *Kendisine hiç vakit ayıramadığından şikayet eden... Sönmez’in en büyük tutkusu araba kullanmak.*

⁹²⁹ “Güzel Spikerin Altında Şimdi Gıcır Gıcır Bir Renault Var,” *TV’de 7 Gong* 12 (18 March 1985), p. 22.

⁹³⁰ *Ibid.* The original text is as follows: *Kimilerine göre lükstü araba, kimilerine göre ise gereksinim. Ama Karaca gibi dakikaların bile çok önemli olduğu bir işte çalışanlar için gereksinimdi kuşkusuz. Zamanında ve rahatça işine gidip gelebilmek, Başkent’in gürültüsünden kaçıp ailece yorgunluk giderebilmek ve oğlu Can’la birlikte tatil günlerini değerlendirmek için...*

⁹³¹ Yael Navaro-Yashin, *Faces of the State: Secularism and Public Life in Turkey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 80.

these articles, “Canan Kumbasar Sounds Paris,” Kumbasar posed for the magazine in various fashion clothes at her apartment.⁹³²

The language of the article was influenced by the hegemonic proposition that a woman can display her individual character by the way she dresses:

Kumbasar wears a skirt and a shirt, a topcoat or her fur coat depending on the condition. And she combines her elegance with accessories like a scarf, a black hat and a pair of gloves again depending on the condition. Here are the most important secrets of her elegance. It is in the “suitability” of the beautiful presenter... A certain style dominates the clothes of Kumbasar... And the common feature of Canan Kumbasar’s clothes is a different classicism, a noble style and a rich appearance.⁹³³

In a similar article about Kardüz, she was defined as follows: “She has been in front of us a few days a week for years. She has almost reflected the fashion of the year on the screen by her different hair styles, her chic and elegant clothes she wears on.”⁹³⁴

Unlike the 1970s, a trend was observed towards highlighting “the feminine body” in the popular imagery of female broadcast professionals. Whereas the importance of their bodily appearance for their professional roles was devalued in the previous decade, in the 1980s the feminine body appeared as an asset that ensured success for these professional women. In fact, body was coded as an asset not only to be displayed on the screen but to be invested in by the way of personal care and consumption of luxury products.

One of the magazine articles that underlined the role of the feminine body for women’s success in the broadcasting profession was published in *Telemagazin* in 1985. This article introduced Jale Arıkan, who worked as an interim speaker for one of the popular television channels in Germany. The article stated that Arıkan caught

⁹³² “Canan Kumbasar Paris Kokuyor,” *TV’de* 7 6 (30 January 1984), p. 15.

⁹³³ Ibid.

⁹³⁴ “Ve Aytac Kardüz Nikah Masasında,” *TV’de* 7 8 (8 February 1985), p. 3. The original text is as follows: *Yıllar yılı haftanın birkaç günü karşımızda olmuş, değişik saç biçimleriyle, üzerine giydiği şık ve zevkli elbiseleri ile adeta ekranlardan yılın modasını yansıtmıştır.*

the opportunity to address millions of people by her “chic and elegant” appearance.⁹³⁵ A similar article showed a female TV presenter in her new looks and clothing style and said the following: “The beautiful presenter on TV renewed herself from top to toe.”⁹³⁶

Indeed, popular broadcast magazines already had started to put forward female broadcast professionals’ bodily features in their imagery in the late 1970s. They perpetuated the idea that a female broadcast professional should take care of her bodily appearance not only on behalf of her profession but also on behalf of her feminine roles. For example, in 1978 a magazine article about TV speaker Sevinç Yemişçi asserted that the reason for her renewed bodily appearance was her marriage:

Now, we understand the reason for the great change in Sevinç Yemişçi... When she first appeared on TV, she was pretty much criticized for her promiscuous clothing. However, despite so many accusations, she paid attention neither to her make-up nor to her clothing. Just at that moment... Yemişçi refreshed as a flower. She changed everything from her hair style to her way of walking, from her make-up to her clothing. She even had cosmetic surgery. In no way we were able to find out why she had felt the need to have such a change. Apparently, she had been making preparations for a secret marriage.⁹³⁷

This stress on the bodily features of female broadcast professionals became much more prominent in the 1980s. They were expected to take care of their bodies by personal care or by consuming luxurious products both in order to “find and keep a man” and in order to achieve popularity on TV.

⁹³⁵ “Alman Ekranındaki İlk Türk Spiker,” *Telemagazin* 24 (6 May 1985), p. 10.

⁹³⁶ “Bu Ne Değişiklik,” *Telemagazin* 11 (17 March 1986), p. 24. The original text is as follows: *TV’nin güzel spikeri saçından tırnağına kendini yeniledi.*

⁹³⁷ “TV’den Amerika’ya Bir Gelin Daha,” *TV’de 7 Gün* 30 (24 July 1978), p. 9.

An article which provoked this expectation offered the details about “Miss Tendü’s Enjoyment at the Hairdresser’s.”⁹³⁸ The visuals pictured Tendü Yılmaz having her hair done at a hairdresser’s, and the caption of the article was as follows:

Each woman finds a particular way to appear beautiful. In this regard, the beautiful speaker of our screen Miss Tendü pays attention to her hair. The beautiful speaker, who has visited the same hairdresser’s for exactly eight years, has her hair made up three days a week without fail.⁹³⁹

The article claimed that Tendü Yılmaz had two reasons for this: “The beautiful presenter attributes her visits to the hairdresser’s, which happen three days a week, to her profession and to her husband’s demand.”⁹⁴⁰ The article further quoted this statement of Yılmaz’s: “The reason is that I have an occupation which requires a great deal of care and a husband who wants to see me at least as well-cared for as I am on TV.”⁹⁴¹

In a magazine interview with TV presenter Ayşe Egesoy, the issue of the importance of bodily appearance for the profession of TV broadcasting was discussed. Ayşe Egesoy was asked a provocative question in this respect: “Miss Ayşe, it is said that you are the most flagrant among the speakers appearing on the screen. Your clothes, earrings, hair and accessories are notorious. What do you think

⁹³⁸ “Tendü Hanım’ın Kuaför Sefası,” *TV’de 7 23* (31 May 1982), p. 25.

⁹³⁹ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Her hanımın güzel görünmek için özellikle bulduğu bir yol vardır. Ekranlarımızın güzel spikeri Tendü Koşal da bu konuda saçlarına önem verir. Tam sekiz yıldır aynı kuaföre giden güzel spiker haftanın üç günü mutlaka saçlarını yaptırır.*

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Güzel spiker haftanın üç günü kuaföre uğramasını işine ve eşinin isteğine bağlamaktadır.*

⁹⁴¹ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Çünkü her zaman bakımlı olmayı gerektiren bir işim beni en az ekrandaki kadar bakımlı görmeyi arzulayan bir eşim var.*

about this issue?”⁹⁴² She gave the following answer to it, emphasizing the role the press played in the reduction of their professional identities to their bodies:

The press has confronted this issue. They were not interested in my profession but in my clothes and earrings. However, what I do is not an occupation which can be belittled at all. It takes me nearly 25 days to prepare for a 45 minutes program. I myself write the program texts... On the other hand, it takes me only 25 minutes to prepare for standing in front of the camera. For me it seems completely inappropriate that people brush aside the 25 days and hunt down the 45 minutes and an earring.⁹⁴³

On the other hand, the same interview revealed that female broadcast professionals themselves had a changing understanding about the nature of their profession in the 1980s. To illustrate, Egesoy replied the question about whether she herself played any role in provoking the audience’s interest in her bodily features as follows:

People already live various difficulties in their daily lives. I think they somehow take a rest and shed from the influence of those heavy conditions thanks to the person who addresses them presentably, the person they see when they return home in the evening and turn on TV. Also as a woman, as a woman who addresses millions, I have to be well-groomed. People want to see beautiful things now.⁹⁴⁴

The Dilemma of the Combination of Liberalism and Conservatism

Saktanber argues that in the 1980s among the dominant images of womanhood transmitted by popular magazines a frequent one was the kind of “free and inviting

⁹⁴² “Ayşe Egesoy’la Söyleşi,” *TV’de 7 33* (17 August 1987), p. 15. The original text is as follows: *Ayşe Hanım ekrana çıkan sunucular içinde en çok göze batan kişi olduğunuz söyleniyor. Elbiseniz, küpeniz, saçlarınız, takılarınız milletin dilinde dolaşıyor. Siz bu konuda ne diyorsunuz?*

⁹⁴³ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁴ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *İnsanlar zaten günlük yaşamlarında çeşitli güçlükler zorluklar yaşıyor. Akşam evlerine döndüklerinde televizyonu açtıklarında onlara eli yüzü düzgün bir şekilde seslenen kişiyle biraz olsun soluklandıklarını o ağır şartların etkisinden bir anda olsa sıyrıldıklarını düşünüyorum. Ayrıca bir kadın olarak, milyonlara seslenen bir kadın olarak bakımlı olmak gerekiyor. İnsanlar güzel şeyler görmek istiyor artık.*

woman who displayed hyped-up sexuality.”⁹⁴⁵ The popular imagery of female broadcast professionals had a notable difference in this respect, though. Despite featuring their bodily images, popular broadcast magazines did not evoke these woman professionals’ sexuality except in terms of ladylikeness and grooming, as seen in the above-quoted articles. On the contrary, the portrayal of female celebrities as sexually provocative beings in popular broadcast magazines became almost the norm in the 1980s.

In fact, sexuality continued to be among the TRT TV’s taboos throughout the 1980s. Some television artists occasionally protested the public television’s censorship on sexuality. For example, Ayşen Gruda made the following complaint about this ban on sexuality on the screen:

I have pains with TRT as an artist. ... They say, “Oh, do not wear that; oh, do not let your underarm appear;” they put bans on everything that discusses relations between women and men. It is impossible to kiss each other on the screen; you cannot do anything about sexuality. However, these are also available in life!⁹⁴⁶

Although TV continued to address and portray women mostly as “self-sacrificing and loyal housewives and mothers,”⁹⁴⁷ the image of womanhood transmitted by the public television was not monolithic at all, as discussed in the previous chapter. Particularly as regards sexuality, even though it was still a taboo on the public screen of TRT, especially television advertisements appealed to sexual desires by featuring the feminine body.

⁹⁴⁵ Saktanber, p. 218.

⁹⁴⁶ *Milliyet*, 9 August 1989. The original text is as follows: *Sanatçı olarak TRT ile ağırlarım var. ... “Aman onu giyme, aman kolunun altı görünmesin,” diyor; kadın-erkek ilişkilerinden söz eden her şeye yasak koyuyorlar. Ekranda öpüşmek mümkün değil, cinsellikle ilgili hiçbir şey yapamıyorsun. Oysa, yaşamda bunlar da var!*

⁹⁴⁷ See Saktanber, p. 216.

In this respect, a magazine article titled “Advertisements Smell Sex” declared, “The TRT Corporation, which shut down its doors to sex in all of its units, closes its eyes, albeit to a certain extent, to the kind of sex that used the gate of advertising to be mirrored on the screen.”⁹⁴⁸ Describing TRT “as an institution which tries to broadcast within certain prohibitions, traditions, customs and social anxieties,”⁹⁴⁹ the article stated that despite censoring sexuality in both foreign and domestic productions, TRT was not able to prevent advertisements from appealing to sexuality.

Interestingly, this article adopted an ambiguous attitude against the visibility of sexuality on TV. On the one hand, it congratulated those advertisers who succeeded in marketing their products with appeals to sexuality. On the other hand, it warned them against “embarrassing the Turkish family.”⁹⁵⁰

How can we explain this conservative attitude of popular magazines against the visibility of sexuality on the public television in a decade that was characterized by what Gürbilek describes as “the representation of the private life and sexuality by a tentative discourse of liberalization and individualization that was provoked by the popular press”⁹⁵¹ itself?

The apparent contradiction between the popular press’ provocation of sexuality and its call for conserving the family against the sexist messages on the screen was not a contradiction at all; instead, it was an off-spring of the novel alliance of liberalism with conservatism in the 1980s. While the cult of individual as

⁹⁴⁸ “Reklamlar Seks Kokuyor,” *Telemagazin* 35 (22 July 1985), p. 30. The original text is as follows: *Her ünitesinde sekse karşı tüm kapılarını ardına kadar kapamış olan TRT Kurumu reklam kapısından girip ekranlara yansıyan sekse bir ölçüde de olsun göz yummaktadır.*

⁹⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 31.

⁹⁵¹ Gürbilek, p. 21.

a liberated being was one constructive side of the hegemonic discourse of the 1980s, conservatism in its neo-liberal form was its other side. Although this discourse aimed at the free development of the market without state intervention, it exalted the family as a sound moral institution. To put it in other words, whereas economy was at the center of the demands for change, the nuclear family was at the center of the demands for conservation in the neoliberal discourse of the era.⁹⁵² This alliance of conservatism with liberalism also found its expression in the popular press' discourse on sexuality.

Popular broadcast magazines published provocative articles about the visibility of sexuality on TRT TV in the 1980s. In fact, these articles were characterized by an apparently ambiguous attitude toward the issue in the following sense: On one side, they seemed against the evocation of sexual desires on television on behalf of conserving the structure of the Turkish family. On the other side, these articles themselves used a language which reduced female artists' professional identities to their sexual appeal.

For example, an article from *TV'de 7* in 1987 asked the audience whether "the way destined for the screen passes through the bed." The article quoted a female TV artist's "confessions" about her career development. She said she became subject to sexual harassment by the male TV producers who assigned her roles in TV serials:

Thanks to my manager, I went to Istanbul Television in order to meet Ramazan Bakkal. He gave me the scenario. He took my address and phone number. I read the scenario and accepted the role. He said "I will inform you." Three days later news about the filming arrived. Mister Ramazan told me that he wanted to come to my apartment in the evening. He came to my apartment at eight o'clock the same evening. I had a girl friend at home; I did not want to invite him inside. He said "It is a very important issue," and came inside. He kept telling me exactly "I like you very much. Do me a favor!" Of course, I did not accept it.

⁹⁵² Hakan Yılmaz, 2006, "Türkiye'de Muhafazakarlık, Aile, Din Batı," http://hakanyilmaz.info/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/OSI-Conservatism-Sunus-Yorumlar1.28465456.pdf [25 November 2011], p. 3.

He went mad and left in anger. The following day her assistant phoned me and said, “Mister Ramazan wants to work with you in another serial. You are too beautiful for this serial. We need an Anatolian type woman.”⁹⁵³

Although the article adopted a critical attitude to sexual harassment, its visual still depicted the artist in a way reducing her professional role to her sexual identity. This female artist was portrayed in a way provoking sexual desires of the male gaze. For example, in one of the visuals she was pictured lying down on a bed as half-naked.

The ambiguity that characterized the attitude of popular broadcast magazines to the issue of visibility of sexuality on TV became particularly notable in the manner they covered the TRT’s domestic serial *Duvardaki Kan* (The blood on the wall) in 1985. This serial dealt with the massacre of Armenians in eastern Anatolia during the First World War. The serial was high on the agenda of the popular press with its huge budget and its staff of artists in 1985. One of the most frequently discussed topics in the magazine articles covering this serial was that Meral Zeren, who was said to have “become a current issue due to her nudity,”⁹⁵⁴ performed the character of Talat Pasha’s wife.

Telemagazin severely criticized TRT for employing a “sensational female celebrity” in this serial. Zeren was said to have “achieved publicity by displaying her body.” The magazine gave the information that the character acted by her would be killed in the scenario because she had been mixed up in “an illegal love affair” in her real life. Against the rumors that TRT was planning to substitute her with another female artist “notorious for her nakedness,” *Telemagazin* “invited the TRT producers

⁹⁵³ “Ekranada Giden Yol Yataktan mı Geçiyor: Ece Berkant’tan Yeni İtirafı,” *TV’de 7* 52 (20 December 1987), p. 4.

⁹⁵⁴ “Annemi Meral Zeren mi Canlandırıcak?” *TV’de 7 Gong* 28 (8 July 1985), p. 24.

to the common sense” and suggested that they employ another “valuable theatre artist” in the serial instead of this woman.⁹⁵⁵

TV’de 7 Gong followed *Telemagazin* in accusing TRT about this particular issue. In one of its interviews about the serial, Talat Pasha’s son-in-law expressed his disillusionment: “It is said that Haluk Kurdoğlu [a theatre actor] performs Talat Pasha. Then, why is it not a theatre actress who acts as my mother?”⁹⁵⁶ In this interview he defined her mother as follows:

My mother was a very modern woman who rode horses, who went on trips with Talat Pasha, who wore the latest fashion jockey clothes and who never used *çarşaf* (an outer garment covering a woman from head to foot and designed to hide her body from the view of men) and veil.⁹⁵⁷

In the visual right above these statements, Meral Zeren looks at the audience from a bed where she was lying. On the other hand, the visual next to it portrays Talat Pasha and his wife. This visual particularly highlighted Talat Pasha’s wife’s ladylikeness and loyalty to her husband, emphasizing the contrast between the two female characters.

Another article from *TV’de 7 Gong* about this serial was titled “And the Blood on the Wall Became the Stain on the Screen.”⁹⁵⁸ The article, which reemphasized the “ill-suitability” of Meral Zeren for this serial, covered the news about “illegal love affair” of its other female artist Emel Tümer, and made the following comment about this “scandal:”

The determination that was demonstrated in order not to take necessary measures despite all these warnings ultimately ended with the scandal

⁹⁵⁵ “Bir Çıplak Gitti Bir Çıplak Geldi,” *Telemagazin* 3 (20 January 1986), p. 18.

⁹⁵⁶ “Annemi Meral Zeren mi Canlandıracak?” p. 24. The original text is as follows: *Talat Paşa’yı Haluk Kurdoğlu oynuyormuş. Peki annemi neden bir tiyatrocu oynamıyor?*

⁹⁵⁷ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Benim annem ata binen, Paşa ile gezintilere çıkan, son moda binici giysileri giyen, çarşaf ve peçeyi hayatı boyunca kullanmayan çok modern bir kadındı.*

⁹⁵⁸ “Ve Duvardaki Kan Ekrandaki Leke Oldu,” *TV’de 7 Gong* 46 (11 November 1985), p. 13.

Emel Tümer gave rise to... Therefore, the TRT producers, who opened the screen to naked people with domestic serials..., were not able to prevent the blood spot on the wall from turning into the stain on the screen.⁹⁵⁹

Whereas the authors of the article accused TRT of provoking sexual desire on television, in their visual language they themselves addressed the sexual desires of the audience by portraying Tümer in her underclothes. Ironically enough, the caption just beneath this visual said, “The Nude Artist for the Sensitive Issue.” It continued as follows: “Emel Tümer, who was among the nudes of Yeşilçam, was assigned a role in *Duvardaki Kan* without taking into account her private life.”⁹⁶⁰

The research showed that in the 1970s the popular image of a female broadcast professional was usually pictured as the housewife-mother heroine, with her professional tasks being considered the continuation of her domestic roles to the public sphere. As another major component of these women’s popular imagery in that decade, their successful educational background was frequently emphasized within the prevailing developmentalist ideology. However, instead of considering education as a way to women’s individual development, it was rather perceived as a favor the state offered to its “daughters” as a patriarchal figure. Indeed, in several magazines features TRT itself was portrayed as a father.

Whereas their educational achievements were a critical part of the image of female broadcast professionals in the popular press in the 1970s, attention shifted away from education to bodily appearance when the on air female artists not directly employed by TRT were concerned. They were usually represented as passive beings

⁹⁵⁹ Ibid. The original text is as follows: *Tüm bu uyarılara karşın gerekli önlemleri almamakta gösterilen kararlılık sonunda Emel Tümer’in neden olduğu skandal ile noktalanıyordu... Yerli dizilerle ekranı çıplaklara açan TRT’ciler böylece “duvardaki kan”ın ekrandaki leke olmasını engelleyemiyorlardı.*

⁹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 15. The original text is as follows: *Hassas Konuya Çıplak Oyuncu: Yeşilçam’ın çıplaklarından olan Emel Tümer’e özel yaşamı dikkate alınmadan “Duvardaki Kan”da rol verildi.*

waiting for their discovery, with their professional identities reduced to their bodily appearance.

In contrast, the physical appearance of female broadcast professionals was usually downplayed in their popular imagery. Actually, these women themselves particularly concerned about bracketing aside their bodies within their professional tasks, and those who “failed” to do so came across serious criticism in the popular press. Still, a commonality in the portrayals of these two groups of women was the patriarchal figure that sometimes acted as an authoritarian yet care giving father and as a man with a pair of “attentive eyes discovering attractive girls around him” some other times.

In the 1980s, a change towards balancing their domestic and professional identities was observed in the female broadcast professionals’ mediated images in popular broadcast magazines. While particularly the visual language of these magazines was still characterized by the tendency to feature their domestic roles with motherhood being the first, they were also invited to pose for these magazines as professional career women. They also openly expressed their complaints about the double burden on them on these magazines’ pages, which was almost absent in the popular magazines of the previous decade. Even on some occasions, female broadcast professionals themselves talked within a language that challenged the ideal of the “housewife-heroine” in these magazines.

Furthermore, these magazines started to spotlight the individuality of female broadcast professionals. This was particularly observed in the changing definition of education as a way to self-development instead of as a favor the state as a care giving father offered to women. Also, the focus on these women’s personal tastes and hobbies not related to domestic life implicated this trend. This emphasis on the

personal tastes and hobbies of these women was closely related to the popular press' temptation to encourage pretentious consumption in the 1980s. Popular broadcast magazines transmitted and perpetuated the idea that a woman displays and affirms her individuality by the way she consumes.

In addition, the body was coded as an asset both to be invested in by consuming luxury products and to be displayed on the screen, whereas their bodily appearance had been deemphasized in the popular broadcast magazines from the 1970s. Still, the sexuality of the women working as broadcast professionals for TRT was not evoked except in terms of grooming and ladylikeness.

On the contrary, popular broadcast magazines tended to portray the female TV artists not directly employed by TRT as objects of sexual desires. Yet, these magazines adopted an apparently ambiguous attitude to the visibility of sexuality. On the one hand, they themselves provoked sexual passions in their depiction of these female artists. On the other hand, they frequently accused TRT TV of admitting sexuality inside the Turkish family.

This apparent ambiguity was not ambiguous at all since the 1980s was not only a decade when sexuality and private life was articulated within a discourse of individualization and liberalization. It was also a decade when family was praised as the sound basis of a conservative society. The approach of popular broadcast magazines to the visibility of sexuality on the public screen was an implication of both the alliance of and the tension between conservatism and liberalism that characterized the cultural landscape of the 1980s.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This study scrutinized the construction of the gendered subjectivities of the women employed as broadcast professionals by TRT from the mid-1960s to the end of the 1980s, when radio and TV broadcasts were monopolized by the state in Turkey. Situating these female broadcast professionals' personal narratives within the changing institutional circumstances at TRT from its establishment until the debut of commercial television, the study questioned the ways they were incorporated into the state ideology as agents, the restraints on their engagement in media production both on and off air as well as their attempts at defining, making sense of and affirming their professional identities against those restraints.

In addition, this study explored the ways the dominant discourses and practices of gender, as sponsored both by the state and by the popular culture, became involved in the negotiation on womanhood on air. It examined how those women, as active participants of a distinct public sphere constructed by mass media forms of radio and TV, were involved in this negotiation on womanhood and how the way they addressed and talked about women on air reproduced and/or posed a challenge to the dominant gender ideology.

The overall concern of this study was to make visible women's agency in media production, which has been usually downplayed in conventional scholarly accounts about media. Also in the current literature on gender and media, there is a prevalent oblivion to women's professional participation in the creation of media texts, except for some statistical studies which have recorded male-dominated

employment patterns in this sector. Particularly for Turkey, there are few studies on the history of women in media production. Moreover, the existing research about media history in Turkey accepts the state radio and TV primarily as ideological instruments of the political authority and attaches priority to their structure over the agency of actors involved in their development.

Against these conventional historical accounts about mass media in Turkey, the main assumption of this study was that considering state radio and television mere instruments of hegemony neglects the complex ways those cultural forms operated in Turkey. Admittedly, radio and TV were either directly or indirectly supervised by the state from their introduction until the end of the 1980s, and the charter of TRT, established in 1964, was informed by the imperative to serve national interests on behalf of the state. Furthermore, the institution was deprived of its constitutionally guaranteed autonomy since 1971, which rendered it highly vulnerable to interventions by the central political authority as it is still today. On the other side, as was discussed throughout this study, various struggles and negotiations that occurred in the state-run field of broadcasting generated splits in the hegemonic state ideology as it was mediated on air.

During the period of state monopoly, air was frequently rendered unwholesome by what was oppositional and misfitting. As this study particularly demonstrated, the discourse on womanhood circulating on air governed by the state was one of the areas where the fractures within the state hegemony resisting its self-closure to oppositional meanings became concrete.

First, female viewers did not adopt messages circulating on the state governed air as “passive dupes.” Rather they interpreted, negotiated and sometimes actively contested them according to their personal life experiences, as this dissertation

demonstrated by examining some female readers' letters covered by the national press about TV and radio programs.

Second, as this study mainly argued, those on the professional staff of TRT participated in media production with their divergent ideas, ideals and desires. In fact, they managed to have certain independence from the state authority and labored to some extent in their own cultural fields. As was illuminated through their personal narratives, even under the circumstances of strict censorship, and even when they claimed that they did not produce any texts contradicting with the broadcasting principles determined by the political authority, they did not transmit the state ideology to masses as passive conduits. Instead, they critically mediated these principles.

One of the main conclusions derived from the examination of their personal narratives was that for the women employed as broadcast professionals by the state, the process of mediating the state ideology to audience was more painful since they attempted to achieve and maintain a position in a male-dominated professional field informed by the hegemonic gender ideology that devalued women's work on the basis of their "femininity." That they had to endure the double burden of work and home also made their involvement in media production a challenging experience for women.

To admit, the study found out that during the late 1930s and the 1940s, when radio lived through an institutionalization process as a state enterprise, women were encouraged by the Republican elites to be actively involved in radio production not merely as entertainers but also as announcers and news speakers, which were regarded as uncommon occupations for women in many other parts of the world, including Europe and the USA, at that time. Despite this progressive approach of the

regime to women's employment in radio broadcasting, as was argued in the study, the main motive for the Republican radio's apparently welcoming attitude towards women was to manifest the political authority's will to modernization.

Also, the public identity women attained on air was articulated within a strictly national framework. The Republican radio basically acted as a school disciplining its employees into the national identity with specific implications for the women it recruited as professionals. In that respect, the study particularly found out that the women's musical traditions which were developed by the *harem* women or by women from non-Muslim communities during the later Ottoman period were silenced on air within the concern of creating a style of musical performance that reflected the modern/national spirit.

By the 1950s, the first generation of the "Republican girls" had started to seek employment as professionals in the public domain after completing their education. By examining the life stories of the women who started to work for radio in that decade, the study revealed these women were not given a public voice on a "golden plate" by the state elites. Instead, especially those coming from more provincial origins waged individual struggles against the patriarchal authority at home in order to be able to exploit the opportunities of education and employment the Republican state literally offered to women. They tried hard to win the recognition of the male members of their household for their participation in the world outside home and transformed the masculine-dominated patterns of power in the domestic sphere in this process. Related to this, what they underlined most in making sense of their professional lives was the opportunity of individual empowerment and emancipation working for radio offered.

These points are usually ignored in the revisionist feminist accounts about the Republican women, though, as the study put out critically. Also, the revisionist feminist scholars turn almost a blind eye on the mothers' active role in the development of the "Republican girl" since they attach primacy to the urge of the "Republican fathers" to raise their daughters as representatives of the Republican modernization in the public life.

Nevertheless, as seen from these women's life stories, either by their domestic labor or by their readiness to argue with their husbands on behalf of their daughters, their mothers became these women's foremost aids in their attainment of public identities. This observation could help the feminist scholars dealing with the Republican history rethink their research premises, which have so far underestimated the mothers' "back-stage" contribution to the construction of the Kemalist female identity as a publicly active figure, thereby more or less reproducing the hegemonic gender discourse which prioritizes male's labor simply because it is more visible in the public sphere.

These revisionist feminist accounts also claim that the Republican male elites treated female professionals working for the state with tolerance and offered them a kind of paternal hand. In that respect, the study found out that this paternal protection at work had a Janus-faced character in the sense that male radio elites both encouraged and supported women to move up the career ladder but put restraints on their professional development by secluding them inside the radio house.

The study showed that these women were not always complacent about the patriarchal authority of their male seniors at work. They objected to confinement into the radio house and ultimately managed to receive the authorization to work outside on behalf of their professional duties. Defiance against the Republican discourse on

womanhood was not a stranger to them either. On occasions, they individually resisted being reduced to the category of “Turkish woman” as the passive symbol of the modernization drive.

After the establishment of the TRT in 1964, radio was defined as a means of citizen education in line with the developmentalist premises of the period. The study brought out that the redefinition of the radio’s social function created new opportunities for women to assert their selfhood in the public sphere through air waves. While they had usually performed as singers, musical instrument players or announcers on air by then, they started to be recruited as reporters, producers, news speakers and technical staff in increasing numbers in the second half of the 1960s.

The study argued that the admission of rising numbers of women to the institution resulted from its urgent demand for young intellectuals who could reach masses by word. In a society where the number of those with a higher education degree was still low, this necessity required the newly established TRT to welcome young urban women, including both graduates and students, to its ranks as professionals at higher rates than many other state institutions of the period with deep-stated discriminatory patterns of employment against women.

Most of the women and men TRT recruited as professionals in the second half of the 1960s came from urban middle or higher income group families which transmitted the Republican cultural capital to their offsprings. In this way, as the study mainly argued, the field of broadcasting was kept a “family affair” among the urban elite, resulting in a work space constructed upon the shared Republican-modernist dispositions. It also meant a more or less congenial and egalitarian working environment for women which imbued them with a sense of professional ambition.

Throughout the 1970s, TRT, which also started TV broadcasting, became a more prestigious institution than many other state economic enterprises of the period, with generous social benefits exclusive to its staff. At the same time, in that decade, there was a striking rise in the ratio of higher education graduates with a continuing weight of men among them, for most of whom a post at TRT might have probably seemed all the more charming. Thus, the TRT authorities were able to behave more selectively in their admission practices in that decade, which more or less worked to women's disadvantage.

As the study demonstrated, particularly the administrations appointed by the conservative nationalist coalition governments in the second part of the 1970s, which behaved within the taken-for-granted norms and values about womanhood, like "a woman's ultimate place is her family," targeted primarily the women on the professional staff of TRT when they set off an quest for posts to be emptied and replaced with their supporters, which resulted in a general decrease in the ratio of the TRT's female staff at that time period.

In their personal narratives, most of the women who worked for TRT in the 1960s stated that it was like a "school" whose codes of conduct were constructed upon the seemingly indifferent criteria of merit. As was discussed in the study, TRT was not only a technical school where students got to know the profession of broadcasting by experiment. It was rather a school where the public service understanding of broadcasting, derived mainly from the BBC example, was inculcated to students, and where students learned how to translate the Republican cultural capital they brought in with themselves to a developmentalist language within this understanding.

The study found out that TRT remained loyal to its schooling function in its broadcasts throughout the 1970s, as well. This was mostly an outcome of the continuing influence of the radio and TV producers affiliated with the left over the institution's decision-making mechanism, despite the attempts at breaking down their hold over TRT by the military intervention in 1971 and by the conservative nationalist governments in the second half of the decade. Not only did these broadcast professionals try hard to sustain the educating ideal through their productions but they also developed a tradition of public service broadcasting within TRT into which newly recruited ones were socialized.

The young broadcast professionals, both male and female, employed by TRT regarded themselves as “missionaries by merit” enlightening a society deemed “ignorant.” Radio and TV programs shared the basic moral message that cultural elites were the ones who could provide society with social justice, help the needy and develop society. In this way, as this study argued, education was defined as a virtue that justifies social hierarchies, and people were made to share the belief in the necessity of education.

On the other side, another significant finding of this study is that the TRT's young broadcasting staff reinterpreted this “enlightening” mission as pioneering the formation of public opinion on those social problems which were not spelled much before. With the rising appeal of the leftist discourse on the public-political platform, they articulated the educating framework of broadcasts from a more or less leftist ideological positioning. This entailed building the audience's consciousness about various socio-economic inequalities, including gendered ones, thereby challenging the idea of nationhood as a classless and coherent whole.

Women were one of the main audience categories, along with peasants, which both radio and TV were expected to address within the educating imperative. As the study demonstrated, a paternalist discourse that regarded women as passive victims to social problems, thereby in need of the guardianship of the state elites, was endemic to the radio and TV's address to the female audience throughout the developmentalist period. The women on the professional staff of TRT themselves usually adopted this discourse in their productions catered for women. Their work was underlain by a general attitude of knowing what was good for women within a patronizing style of address and claimed to overcome women's subordination mainly through education within the framework of progress and modernity.

Another important outcome derived from the examination of the discourse about womanhood circulating on air in the developmentalist period of the 1960s and the 1970s was that the broadcast content addressing women did not question much the patriarchal authority at home. The gendered power imbalances in the domestic sphere that put women in a disadvantageous position were not made into objects of the public discourse disseminated by cultural forms of radio and TV at that time period.

The study argued that the emancipatory potential of those media for women was still lying somewhere else, however. First of all, it should not be underestimated that some female producers, who albeit spoke and wrote within the discourse of developmentalism, saw education not merely as the panacea for the "backwardness" of their country, but as personally empowering and enriching for women. They produced their texts with the aim of broadening women's horizons behind the restricted sphere of domesticity and incorporated into the contents of their programs various issues of socio-political interest.

Second, radio and TV brought to air many issues and concerns specifically related to women's emancipation both in the second half of the 1960s and in the 1970s usually by the individual efforts of the female producers who accepted the risk of being stigmatized as "violating the common morality." They authored many productions which criticized various forms of gender inequalities in the public life. These productions challenged the social consensus that the gender inequality in the public sphere was overcome by the modernizing Republican reforms.

Third, many of these female producers created a potential public platform where they could talk to women from divergent social origins and share their concerns as woman. Particularly in the second half of the 1970s, there were women's programs on radio through which this potency of being a "school" where to experiment the creation of an autonomous woman's voice was disclosed. Although it did not necessarily mean that a feminine, let alone feminist, sensibility informed their production decisions, by highlighting the similarities in women's experiences across various social groups, their programs helped to contribute to the formation of a shared identity of womanhood.

The study also argued that from the female broadcast professionals' point of view, their occupation was not merely as a means to realize the ideal of elevating society. It was also a path, albeit painful, which enriched and empowered them as individuals as they walked over it. Nevertheless, the field of broadcasting did not become a "thornless rosary" at all for these women throughout the developmentalist period. They had to face many challenges informed by the dominant gender ideology for attaining, keeping and improving their position in it.

The dissertation demonstrated that these women's apparently privileged position in society as professionals employed in civil service, albeit sponsored by the

state, were not very secure. It was rather precarious as it always bore the shadow of the restraints and limitations generated by the dominant gender ideology. It should be admitted that the female broadcast professionals dealt with the gendered restraints on their engagement with media production mostly individually amidst the lack of an autonomously organized women's movement in the developmentalist era of the 1960s and the 1970s, when class seemed to be a more central concern concealing contestation and change in the field of gender. Still, I believe that their individual efforts for participation on a par with men in media production should be accepted as a significant contribution to the struggles in the field of gender politics that would culminate in the women's movement in the following decade of the 1980s.

The study also maintained that the imagery of womanhood circulating on air throughout the developmentalist period did not carry fixed meanings. Whereas many radio and TV programs addressed the female audience as housewife-mothers, the image of female laborer also received its share on air in the second half of the 1970s, along with the rising ratio of the female participation in the urban labor force. In those radio and TV programs, problems with women's involvement in the labor force were frequently negotiated from a class-based angle, and the criticism about gendered inequalities at work was translated to a concern with the longed for transformation of the overall socio-economic structure.

As it came out towards the end of the 1970s, an autonomous woman's voice was about to emerge, though, which rejected the reduction of masculine domination to a mere question of underdevelopment or of socio-economic inequality. This voice resonated on air mostly through the broadcasts of foreign TV drama series that spoke to women's particular concerns. Indicating the influence of the second-wave feminism on the popular culture in the West, these series allocated an important

space on air to the female characters distorting the taken-for-granted gender norms and values as active individuals in the public life.

The military coup of 1980s was a critical turning point in Turkey's history in political, economic and also in cultural terms. Besides all, the coup initiated a transformation in the hegemonic state ideology from developmentalism to neoliberalism as aligned with a conservative moral-political discourse, with specific implications for women's private and public lives.

The second part of the 1980s, in contrast to the highly authoritarian environment of the coup period, was characterized by the outburst of many issues considered a matter of privacy before to the public. Particularly the print media, with its increasing diversification, popularity and profitability as a business, served as the main channel whereby people were provoked to disclose their individuality to the public sphere.

Not surprisingly, it was also a period when women "rediscovered their womanhood," and freely affirmed it in the public life. That time period also became the setting for the emergence of an independent feminist movement which demanded women's empowerment as individuals not only in the public life but also in the domestic sphere.

The study showed that the changing patterns of talking about women highly influenced the messages about womanhood circulating on air in the second half of the 1980s. Despite not being a thoroughly emancipatory force for women, television started to cover more frequently the image of woman who survives alone in uncommon professional fields dominated by men, particularly within its foreign and domestic drama series. On the other side, through its daytime women's programs, television interpellated its female audience within their domestic roles and assumed

the task of educating them about how to become modern housewives, particularly by adopting their household and personal consumption patterns to a “longed-for Western life style.”

The study argued that this apparent contradiction in the address of TV to women was the offspring of the combination of neoliberalism with conservatism in the dominant political and cultural landscape of the 1980s. While liberalism entailed assertion of individuality more freely in the public life for women, they were also invited to assume their “natural” responsibilities as home-makers by the conservative ideology.

As was demonstrated in the discussion on the changing imagery of female broadcast professionals in popular broadcast magazines from the 1970s to the 1980s, this split in the dominant cultural discourse on womanhood became concrete also in the way the popular press represented these women. While these magazines continued to portray the women on the professional staff of TRT in their domestic roles as housewife-mothers in the 1980s, they also started to introduce them as modern career individuals. Also, whereas they coded body as a constitutive component of a female broadcast professional’s identity in the 1980s, they did not evoke these women’s sexuality except in terms of personal care and ladylikeness. Actually, these magazines adopted an apparently inconsistent attitude to the issue of sexuality on air. While they condemned TV for inviting sexuality inside the Turkish family, they themselves displayed various female TV artists merely as objects of sexual passions on their pages. As was argued in the study, this inconsistency was also informed by the combination of liberalism with conservatism in the dominant cultural landscape of the period.

This study also explored the implications of the alliance between conservatism and liberalism for the women's positioning in the broadcasting sector as professionals and found out that their already precarious position was reinforced mainly due to the expansion of contractual employment along with the transition to a neoliberal path of economic growth in the 1980s. While the state started to act more or less like a business enterprise, and to employ contracted and temporary personnel in increasing numbers in many of its services, the conservative assumption that "women's deserved place is the home" was evoked to justify the definition of women as an easily substitutable labor force. That is, the conservatist ideology, feeding itself on uncertainties, fortified its offence against women with neoliberal employment practices.

In the 1980s, amidst an overall decline in the reputation of being a civil servant, a rise was observed in the ratio of the female work force in civil service in parallel to the increasing number of women with higher education degrees. As wealth was about to replace education as the main status symbol, men left their less prestigious posts in civil service to young educated women and entered the private sector, which offered them more attractive employment opportunities.

As found out in the study, this gendered employment pattern was not much observable at TRT until the end of the 1980s, though. Since it continued to have a monopoly over the radio and TV broadcasts despite the rising expectations of the private sector otherwise, and to offer its staff exclusive social benefits as stated in its charter, TRT more or less maintained its prestigious position compared to other state economic enterprises of the period. This was actually accompanied by the decline in the ratio of its female staff until the late 1980s.

In the highly authoritarian political environment where the prerogative of executive was reinforced against the legislative and the judiciary, as guaranteed by the 1982 Constitution, the single party government of the MP, the first democratically elected government after the 1980 coup, appointed a representative of the conservative wing in it, Tunca Toskay, as the head of TRT. By ignoring the established norms of seniority and promotion arbitrarily, the Toskay administration assigned men with conservative-nationalist political inclinations to the senior posts, especially to the Supervision Office.

As the study showed, the presence at TRT of those with divergent ideological backgrounds as cultural producers mediating the state ideology to the audience reverberated on air in the form of conflicting messages, despite the shared generic conventions. Another result was breaking down of the shared cultural dispositions among the TRT's staff with particular implications for the female broadcast professionals it employed.

Behind the scenes, now these women had to work with men, some of whom were reluctant to shake hands with them, besides all else. Especially the young female professionals recruited on a contractual basis and working under more precarious conditions than the permanent staff came across the kind of men who seemingly offered a paternal hand to them since they demanded to exploit these women's relatively disempowered position in order to reinforce their control over the broadcasts and who, on the other hand, regarded these young women as readily substitutable in the first instance.

The study argued that the transformation of TV into a commercial medium celebrating and promoting consumption, as entailed by the transition to neoliberalism, did not occur smoothly in the 1980s. In many instances, the TRT's

producers, both male and female, retained their loyalty to the public service understanding of broadcasting and reflected this in their productions on air as much as possible despite the government's attempts for commercialization of the field of broadcasting.

On the other hand, as was maintained in the study, especially following the debut of the day time broadcasts after 1984, TV started to acquire a double-faced nature in the sense that while it aimed to educate certain audience groups like women, peasantry and children within certain conservative-nationalist precepts during the day time, it transmitted rather a more populist broadcast content in the prime evening hours when fathers, supposed to be the ones who bring home bread, were available at home.

The new administration appointed after Tuncay's term tried to introduce a more popular appeal to the address of TV. It made efforts for socializing the audience into the dominant state ideology not through restrictions, limitations and sheer censorship but incorporation of popular cultural forms like Arabesque to air as the objects of the disciplining power of the political authority. As the study concluded, these developments suggested that the screen was not a degendered teacher dressed in dark colors and trying to educate the audience with a stick in its hands anymore. It was about to transform into a "colorful supermarket." And this transformation was completed after the start of the commercial television right at the beginning of the next decade, which is out of the scope of this study.

Still, the research findings imply that any argument about a linear pattern of evolution of the broadcast content from a public service to a market framework from the developmentalist era to the neoliberal 1980s would be too schematic. As the discussion on the introduction of television technology in the late 1960s revealed,

although the political elites apparently welcomed TV as an effective means of citizen education, their concern for making this service “profitable” informed the plans about its development. This market imperative resulted in starting the installation of the national TV network in the cities of Ankara, Izmir and Istanbul, where the assumed audience profile of television was composed of upper and high income urban families.

What is more, even though it eventually derived its organizational and broadcast principles from the BBC as the pioneer institution of public broadcasting, TRT differentiated from it in terms of the composition of its income. Unlike the BBC, it received a large part of its revenues from the advertisements on air in addition to the subscription fees. Thus, however much the TRT authorities claimed to remain loyal to the public service understanding of broadcasting, they felt obliged both to increase the figures of radio and TV ownership and to catch the interest of the audience as much as possible.

Also, as demonstrated in the study, an ongoing tension, in that respect, informed the public discussion on the contents of broadcasts not merely in the 1980s, but also especially in the second half of the 1970s, when television started to become more popular in society. TRT was accused by the intelligentsia of acting like a merchant and violating its public service ideal, albeit enshrined in its charter, in both time periods.

For the part of the women employed as broadcast professionals by TRT in the 1980s, although the emphasis on the loyalty to the Republican ideals in their personal narratives seemed to have faded as they entered the working life in a period when this identity acquired a much more taken-for-granted status in society, as the research

showed, they still bore the Kemalist female identity as an educated and publicly active woman, in two main respects.

First of all, they continued to perceive their professional role as educating and uplifting society like their counterparts employed by TRT in the previous developmentalist decades. Yet, it should be noted that neither those employed in the 1980s nor the ones in the 1970s did regard their professional identity simply as a missionary duty on behalf of social development. For both groups of women, working as a professional for a public broadcasting institution also offered incredible opportunities of self-empowerment.

Second, as closely related to their perception about their profession as a path to individual emancipation, both of them considered work outside home as a point of exit from the restrictive modes of femininity and employed a rather derogatory language against the group of women who prioritized their domestic responsibilities over their public roles.

Indeed, as also mentioned in the introduction to this study, these women told a narrative of continuity extending from the developmentalist to the neoliberal period, which was albeit broken by the JDP's coming into power in 2002. This split in their stories was also the moment where some of them started to question the idealized female image as a publicly active figure, sponsored by the Republican regime.

In this regard, one of the main conclusions derived from this study is that accepted frameworks of historical analysis do not have a one-to-one correspondence either with the local time of institutions or with personal narratives of actors involved in them. Thus, we should problematize these given schemes of history by critically attending to the particularities of the field we study. Instead of imposing established

historical narratives, like the one from developmentalism to neoliberalism in Turkey with the 1980 coup as its turning point, on the personal stories of our objects of study, we should look for the moments where their personal life stories contest long-held historical generalizations. This is the actual point where the power of a research strategy sensitive to people's sense-making practices as real historical agents is lying.

I hope any prospective studies about the implications of the transition to commercial broadcasting for the women's positioning in this professional field will not only witness women's contribution to media production, but also tell us a lot about the potency of radio and television for women's empowerment. The literature on women and media in Turkey needs such research which attests to the historical construction of the gendered subjectivities of the women active in the media sector under the circumstances where the public broadcasting institution coexisted with private mass media corporations. Also, the issue of the imagery of womanhood circulating on a fractured media space calls for critical examination by media scholars.

Considering the current process we are living through, I think that the mainstream media's claim to be an actor of civil society protecting democratic rights and liberties against any possible encroachment by the political authority is unfounded. Furthermore, today almost nobody is questioning whether TRT, albeit accepted as an autonomous state institution within the amendments to the 1982 Constitution, is controlled by the political authority or not. The hold of the government over it is taken for granted for the time being, unfortunately.

Besides censoring any oppositional messages in the mainstream media, both public and private, the conservative liberal JDP does not currently refrain from manifesting its tendency for disciplining the minute details of citizens' private and

public lives and puts this tendency into practice not simply by seeking popular consent but also by violent methods as seen in its measures against the country-wide democratic protests today. Also, the government talks and acts with the hegemonic masculine language that invites women back to the domestic sphere to assume their responsibilities as “desirable” housewife-mothers on behalf of Turkey’s development into a global actor.

On the other hand, along with the current developments in the web technology, new media forms are emerging. The social media space is like a school to experiment the construction of a woman’s voice that represents diverse groups of women and that allows women to organize their protests against the dominant gender codes put into circulation by the conservative political authority. Where this novel mediated experiment through which women strive for their right to have a say on life as its active producers against the encroachment of neoliberalism as aligned with conservatism will evolve in the future waits media scholars’ critical scrutiny.

All in all, the ultimate finding of this study is that the participation of women in radio and TV broadcasting as active mediators of the state ideology, however conditioned by the particular socio-historical and cultural circumstances under which they were involved in this field, resulted in the disclosure of these mass media forms’ potential for women’s empowerment as a challenge to the dominant discourses on gender sponsored by the state authority. They produced programs which enlarged women’s horizons outside the domestic sphere, which helped them recognize and assert their rights as individuals and contest their misrecognition in society, and which acted as potential public platforms for the development of an autonomous woman’s voice by allowing women to share with each other their particular concerns and experiences.

I hope that this finding will pave the way for a critical review of our conventional understanding of mass media as a simple instrument for the production and perpetuation of hegemonic gender discourses. It will also help us look at mass media forms as cultural spaces where women as their active participants not only produce and reproduce dominant gender identities but also negotiate, challenge and contest it. As long as we otherwise continue to accept these women as passive conduits whereby the state ideology is transmitted to audience and as thoroughly complicit in their own subordination, their voice will be lost, however much it is amplified on air.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. ALLOCATION OF THE TRT'S ACTIVE STAFF BY DEPARTMENT, EDUCATIONAL STATUS, AND GENDER IN 1969

Department	College		High School		Junior High School		Primary School		Unqualified	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Board	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General Directory	130	48	104	32	18	33	89	16	16	1
Ankara Television	45	24	103	26	20	5	13	2	-	-
Ankara Radio	35	44	193	33	24	16	49	38	58	6
Istanbul Radio	42	24	112	45	26	17	45	22	33	5
Izmir Radio	17	6	45	9	10	1	18	2	6	2
Mersin Radio	5	-	21	9	-	2	16	3	5	1
Erzurum Radio	2	1	23	2	3	-	12	7	7	-
Diyarbakır Radio	4	1	19	5	4	1	17	4	4	-
Trabzon Radio	1	-	2	-	1	-	2	-	2	-
City Radios	11	4	31	4	10	1	22	1	3	-
Casual	13	-	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	310	152	666	165	116	56	283	95	134	15

APPENDIX B

ALLOCATION OF THE TRT'S SALARIED STAFF BY GENDER IN SOME SELECTED YEARS BETWEEN 1969 AND 1992

YEAR	MALE (%)	FEMALE (%)	TOTAL
1969	1486 (75)	483 (25)	1969
1976	3097 (79)	822 (21)	3919
1978	3998 (79)	1044 (21)	5042
1980	4202 (79)	1099 (21)	5301
1982	3995 (80)	1028 (20)	5023
1984	3920 (80)	981 (20)	4901
1986	4233 (82)	948 (18)	5181
1987	4500 (82)	1020 (18)	5520
1992	2171 (76)	662 (24)	2833

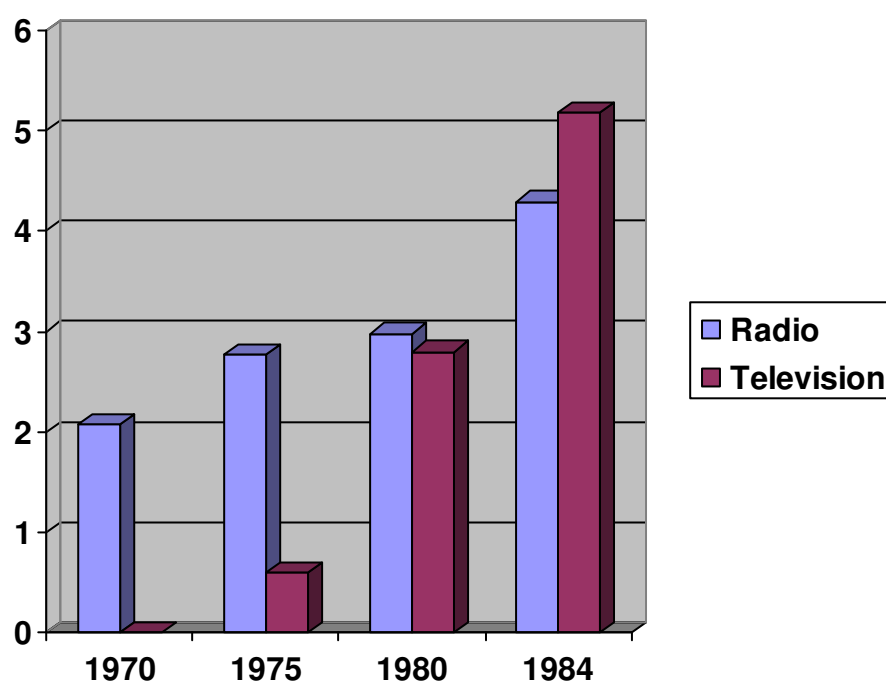
APPENDIX C

THE PROPORTION OF THE LENGTHS OF PROGRAM GENRES ON TV IN SOME SELECTED YEARS BETWEEN 1970 AND 1989

GENRE	1971 (%)	1974 (%)	1977 (%)	1981 (%)	1984 (%)	1987 (%)
Education and Culture Programs	18	19.31	11.8	18	29.5	31
Children's Programs	5	6.69	7.5	9.2	-	-
Current Events, Sports and Magazines	8	8.31	10.5	-	-	-
Plays, Drama Series and Cinema Films	20	28.67	26.1	31.4	24.9	29
Music and Entertainment Programs	23	9.56	22.1	13.1	12.8	12
News Bulletins, News Programs, Weather Forecasts and Announcements	26	21.65	22.1	29.4	25.8	20
Advertisements	-	5.67	-	7.8	4.3	7

APPENDIX D

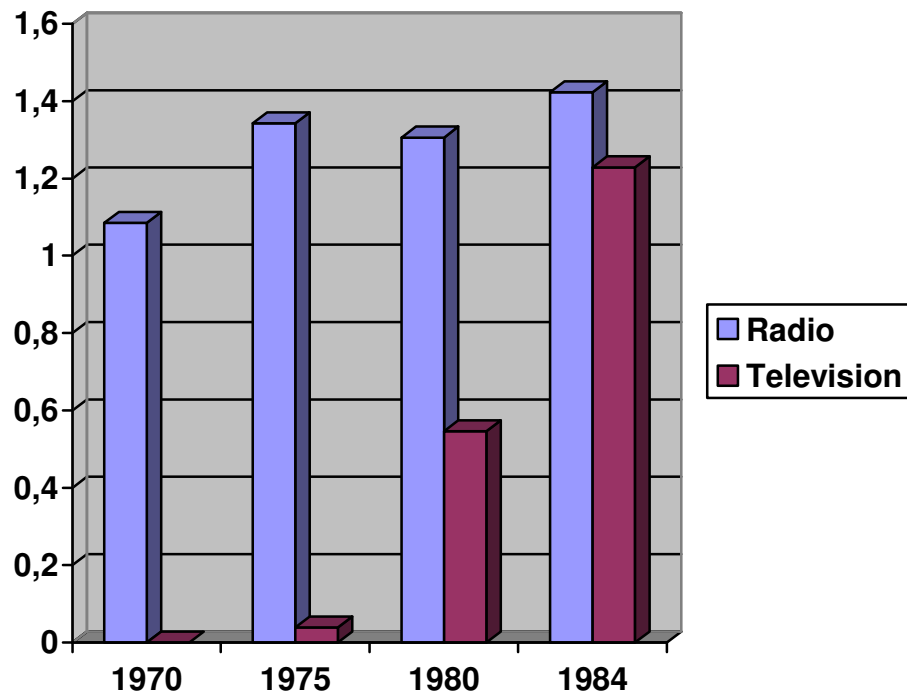
THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGISTERED RADIO AND TELEVISION RECEIVER OWNERSHIP IN CITIES BETWEEN 1970 AND 1984



Note: The figures are given in millions.

APPENDIX E

THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGISTERED RADIO AND TELEVISION OWNERSHIP IN VILLAGES BETWEEN 1970 AND 1984



Note: The figures are given in millions.

APPENDIX F

THE ORIGINAL TEXTS OF THE TRANSLATED QUOTATIONS

CHAPTER 2

168 Radyoda kaldığım süre içinde elli dört makamda dört yüz altmış adet klasik Türk musikisinin en önemli eserlerini öğrendik. Bunları tek tek defterime kaydettim. Sonra bu defteri 15 Temmuz 1940 tarihinde daktilo ettirip ciltlettim. Halen de saklıyorum. Çünkü bazen bir eser okunurken kulağımı tırmalayan bir yanlışlık olduğu zaman, açıp bakıyorum.

197 Hükümet gençlerden hiç hoşlanmamaya başlayınca... Radyo Müdürü de onlardan hoşlanmamaya başladı. Bu gençler de giderek suya sabuna dokunur oldular canım! Hem bu seferkiler Tan Matbaası'nı taşıyanlar, kitapları alanlarda yakanlar değil. Bunlar bir tuhaf. Her akşamüstü Kızılay'a dökülüyor, başbakana ve onun bakanlarına karşı bağırıyorlar. ... Bunlar da gençlerin üstüne atlı, coplu polislerini sürüyorlar; göz yaşartıcı bombalar atıyorlar.

201 Cemal Reşit ve Ekrem Reşit furyası başladığı zaman onlar, aile dostları olarak bizim hayatımızın çok içindeydiler. 16 yaşındayken ben bir oyunu tercüme ediyorum İngilizceden Türkçeye, oyunu alıyorum Ekrem Reşit'e götürüyorum babamla beraber. Oyunu alıyor adam, Muhsin Bey'e götürüyor. Öyle bir devir ki bu, böyle birazcık dil bilenler hemen kendilerini ortaya atıyorlar. 16 yaşında kimin haddine düşmüş de böyle oyun tercüme ediyor. Fakat öyle bir şey var.

210 Ankara'da bir şey daha dikkatimi çekiyordu. Kızlar yollarda öyle rahat yürüyorlardı ki... Hatta durup vitrinlere bile bakıyorlardı. Allah beni bundan

korusun... Babama göre namuslu kızlar... başı önde, kaşları çatık yürürlerdi.

Burada hemen söylemem gerekiyor, babamın namus anlayışı uğruna 30'uma varmadan kaşlarımın arasında iki çizgi hafiften oluşmuştu.

217 Taa Mersin'den kalkmış, sözüm ona okuyacağım diye Ankara'ya gelmişsin. Ama bir halt bilmiyorsun ve öğrenemeyeceksin de. En iyisi sen Mersin'e dön, orada ev süpür, çamaşır bulaşık yıka, soba yak. Evet soba yak. Çünkü sen kaloriferin ne olduğunu da bilmezsin. Baban senin için boşuna para harcamasın.

218 Ağzımı açtığım anda, o deliklerin her biri kocaman kocaman mağara kapılarına dönüştü. İçleri kapkaranlık. Bütün dikkatimi toplayarak baktığımda, o karanlıkta Ankara Kız Lisesi öğrencilerinden oluşan bir kalabalık gördüm. Bu kez alay etmiyorlardı. Büyük bir heyecan içinde anonsumu bitirip dışarı çıktığımda, karşıdaki kontrol odasında beni izleyenler sordular. "Anonsa başlarken neden böyle ters ters bakıp, başını acayip bir şekilde salladın? Anonsu bitirdiğinde de yüzüne acayip bir gülümseme yayıldı." Nedeni çok basitti. Mağaradakilere hava atmak istemiştim.

227 Benim kızım erkek gibidir, ordunun içine salsam tertemiz çıkar" diyen bir ana babanın elinde büyümüşüm. Şimdi bir ordunun içinde değildim ama, ordu sayısında bir erkek topluluğu içindeydim, tertemiz çıkmalıyım. Dahası, herkese "erkek gibi bir kız" olduğumu göstermeliydim. O nedenle, duruşumdan yürüyüşüme, bakışımdan davranışıma, oturup kalkışımdan konuşmama kadar erkeksi olmalıyım.

228 Annemin, benim üniversite yıllarımda, sürekli yaşadığı vicdan azabı da, beni istediği gibi giydirip kuşatamamasıydı... Benim fakülte yıllarımda kızların çok büyük bir bölümü her gün bir başka kıyafetle gelirdi. Bunlar Ankara

TED’de okumuş kolejli kızlardı. Yani zengin aile çocukları. Benim bir siyah eteğim, kendi ördüğüm bir gri kazağım, bir de annemin dikiği yazlık bir beyaz gömleğim vardı. O beyaz gömlek iki günde bir, akşamları yıkanır, sabahleyin ütülenip giyilirdi.

230 Bu sınavlar da uzun, upuzun bir öykü... Beş altı aşamadan geç, “Adın ne? Anan baban kim? Nerede çalışıyorsun? Evli misin bekar mı?” vb. türünden sorularla sade suya tirit bir mülakatta elen ve yerine ‘kartvizitli’ birinin seçildiğini gör. Son derece moral bozucu... Ama beni yıldırıyor. Çünkü biliyor ve inanıyorum ki, “Çok güzel bir sesim var, çok güzel şiir okuyorum, ben spiker olacağım.”

231 Gece nöbetlerinde kendimi stüdyoda değil de, sekizinci bir renk ortamında, 13. ayın 5. mevsiminde yaşadığımı sanırdım. Ellerimde bu gecelerin ipini çekecek bir güç olduğunu düşünür, bu güçle her şeyi istediğim gibi değiştirebileceğimi sanırdım. Kadere ve zamana hükmetmek, bir kaşık suda kopan fırtınaları bir üflemeyle darmadağın etmek... Ve benzeri sıkıntılar kolayca üstesinden gelebileceğim oluşumlardı.

232 Ankara Radyosu’nda dinleyici önünde yapılan ilk programda okuduğum... bu iki dizeyle başladı mikrofon yaşamım... O ilk ve özel programı daha başkaları izledi. Artık ben programlarda sürekli şiir okuyordum. Bir gün Ebcioğlu çok güzel bir sesim olduğunu ve çok güzel şiir okuduğumu söyleyerek, “Seni spiker yapalım” dedi. Bu sözleri, bu işlere hevesli bir genç kıza söylenmiş bir çift güzel söz olarak algılamak hiç aklıma gelmedi. İnanmak daha güzeldi. Bu sözlerin söylenişinden beş yıl sonra açılan spikerlik sınavına başvurduğumda Hikmet Münir Kıbrıs’ta bir görevdeydi. En kuvvetli desteğimden yoksun olarak sınava girmek, moralimi epeyce

bozmuştu, ama kulaklarımda hep yankılanan sesi benim dağılıp çözülmemi önlüyordu.

233 Çok gerektiğinde röportajları yalnızca erkek spikerler yapıyor. Naklen yayınları ise mutlaka dışarıdan kimseler. 30 Ağustos ve 29 Ekimlerde asker kökenliler, 19 Mayıs'ta ise Gazi Eğitim Enstitüsü hocalarının bazıları... Doğal olarak günün birinde biz hanımlar bu duruma isyan ettik. Biz de röportaj yapmak istiyorduk ve bunu erkekler kadar biz de başarabilirdik. Başkaldırımız yönetimce haklı bulundu. Arada bir de olsa, röportajlara hanımlar da gönderilmeye başlandı.

235 ... Benim gönlüm naklen yayındaydı... Umutsuz bekleyişim sürerken, Scarlatti adında bir İtalyan hafif müzik orkestrası geldi Ankara'ya. Bugünkü Büyük Tiyatro sahnesinde bir konser verecekti ve bu konser radyodan naklen yayınlanacaktı. Radyo Müdürü Ümit Halil Demiriz 'Naklen yayın, naklen yayın deyip duruyordun, al işte sana naklen yayın' diyerek bu görevi bana verdi... Ben üç gün boyunca eve kapandım, yemek yememecesine hazırlıklar yaptım. Dönüp dönüp yeniden yazdığım sayfalar dolusu metni neredeyse ezberlemiştim. Artık hazırdım. Ama... insanların önüne, sahneye çıkarken ne giyecektim? Koskoca Ankara Radyosu'nu temsil ediyordum. Öyle günlük kıyafetle çıkmak olmazdı ki. İyi, ama öyle bir kıyafetim yoktu. Bir gece için de dünyanın masrafını yapıp almaya değmezdi ki. Bir arkadaş imdadıma yetişti. O gece için, ışıklar altında pırıltılar saçan siyah bir giysiyle beyaz yumuşacık tüylü bolerosunu bana verdi. Acele çarşıya çıkıp topuklu bir ayakkabı aldık. Kuaföre gidip o yılların modası Farah Diba stili bir de saç yaptırdık. Kaşımı, gözümü, dudaklarımı boyayıp makyajımı tamamladık.

Üstelik bu işten anlayan arkadaşlar sahne makyajının koyu yapılması gerektiğini söyleyerek boyaların üzerinden bir kat daha geçtiler.

236 Siyah giysi ve beyaz bolerolu halimi gördüğümde, kendimi yadırgamamın üstüne, bir de bana sipsivri gelen topuklu ayakkabıları ayağıma geçirince, bir apartmanın tepesinde aşağılara bakıyormuşum gibi bir duygu gelip içime oturdu. Müthiş rahatsızdım. Oyalı boyalı yüzümü aynada gördüğümde ise, hiç tanımadığım biriyle karşılaştığımı düşündüm. Benim için olumsuz sayılabilecek ne varsa hepsi bir aradaydı, ama o kadar çok istediğim bir işi yapacağım için hepsine katlanacaktım.

237 O sıralarda ben Ankara Radyosu'nda 2,5 yıllık spikerdim. Çok severek, ayılıp bayılarak başladığım bu meslekte sanırım umduğumu bulamamıştım. Başlangıçtaki o içimden fışkıran mutluluk giderek orasından burasından bir şeyler yitirmeye başlamıştı. Çünkü yaptığımız iş, yalnızca elimize verilen metinleri okumak. Radyoda program diye bir şey yok. Naklen yayınlar dışarıdan birkaç kişinin tekelinde... Haber servisi diye bir bölümü yok radyonun. Günde sabah, öğle, akşam ve gece bültenleri olarak dört kez haber okunuyor. Bunların da “ana haber bülteni” değerinde olanları bizleri de yetiştirmeye çalışan dev gibi spikerlere okutuluyor. Bizlere de sabah 7:30, gece 22:45 bültenleri kalıyor. Yani biz yenilerin yaptığı tam anlamıyla “Haberler bitti, şimdi oyun havaları. Oyun havalarını dinlediniz, şimdi sıra şarkılarda” vb. cümleleri ard arda sıralamak. Yani durum benim için tam bir hayal kırıklığı...

238 Rıza birtakım sıkıntıları göğüslemek, çözümler aramak yerine bohem yaşamayı seviyor. Ben de severim böyle bir yaşamı ama... O şiirler yazsın, yayınlatsın, toplantılarda onları okusun... Atak yapım nedeniyle ata otu ben

vermeye çalışıyorum. Örneğin çocuğu doktora götürmek gerekiyor, doctor parasını ben denkleştiriyorum, doktora annemle ikimiz götürüyoruz. Kışlık odun kömür parası bulmak için ben çırpınıyorum.

242 Annem İzmir Ticaret Lisesi'nin ilk mezunlarından. İlkokula başladığında eski yazıyla başlamış. Sonra Latin harflerine geçmişler. Ve o zamanlar... 1930'lar herhalde... merkezi atama sistemi varmış. Ve babasını genç yaşta kaybetmiş. O merkezi sisteme başvurmuş. Ankara'da... Kızılay... Orda kadın memuriyeye ihtiyaç varmış. Ve oranın ilk kadın memuriyesiydi. Ölmeden önce de bana vasiyet etti, "İlla tabutuma Kızılay bayrağı koyun" diye. 33 yıl çalıştı. Babam da burada İktisadi ve Ticari Bilimler Akademisi'nden mezun olmuş. O da aynı merkeze başvurmuş iş bulmak için. O da İstanbul'dan başvurmuş. Onun da tayini Ankara'ya çıkmış. Orda tanışmışlar, birbirlerini beğenmişler... Sonra ben doğdum.

244 Ankara Kız Lisesi'nde... yüksek duvarlarla örülmüş bir avlusu vardı... Ve iki tane erkek lisesi vardı o zaman. Biri Gazi Lisesi, bir de Atatürk Erkek Lisesi. Kız Lisesi'ne çok yakın bir binada da Kız Enstitüsü vardı. Gazi Liseliler Enstitü'nün kapısında... beklerlerdi. Atatürk Erkek Lisesiler de Kız Liselileri... beklerlerdi. Kendi aralarında bölüşmüşlerdi.

245 Ben... sınavı kazandığımda... *Çocuk Saati*'ndeydim. O yıl spikerlik sınavı açılmış. Doğrusu kaç yıldır *Çocuk Saati*'nde metin yazıyordum, seslendirme yapıyordum, piyano çalıyordum; ama gerçek anlamda spikerliğin ne olduğunu bilmiyordum. Bir spiker kavramı vardı ve çok iyi bir radyo dinleyicisiydim. Eski roman yazarlarından Mükerrerrem Kamil Sun *Çocuk Saati*'ni yönetiyordu. O ısrar etti, "...Sınav açılıyor, mutlaka gir" diye. Yani ben hocamın isteğini kırmamak için girdim. Kazandım. Fakat 18 yaşımı

doldurmamış olduğum için memuriyet kadrosuna tayinim çıkmadı... 18

yaşımı doldurduktan sonra kadroya girdim.

248 Babamızın ilçede kahyası, çobanı, uşakları, yardımcısı vardı. Evde özellikle yaz ve güz aylarında çeşit çeşit kadınlar çalışırdı. Babam yeleğinin cebinde kocaman bir altın saat taşırdı. Ama bizim pabucumuz iyice [delinmeden]... önce pabuç almaz... hele kitap defter alabilmemiz için tek kuruş harcamak istemezdi. Bu türden gereksinimlerimizin karşılanabilmesi için annemizin onunla uzun süren meydan savaşları vermesi gerekirdi.

249 Üç erkek kardeşimin özgürlüklerine karşın gün batarken beni eve kapatmalarına öfke duyardım. Haksızlıktı bu. Babam başta, dördünün de bulaşıklarını ben yıkıyor, gömleklerini, pantolonlarını ben ütülüydüm. Annem hepsiyle tek başına başa çıkamazdı ki... Bizim onlara verdiklerimize karşın onlar bize hiçbir şey vermiyorlardı. Babam hiç değilse işe gidiyordu. Ortanca kardeşim biraz ona yardım ederdi, ama öteki ikisi eve girer, çıkar, “Bugün ne yemek var?” diye sorarlar, biri de pabuçları kapı önüne neden daha iyi dizmediğimizi... anlamak isterdi. Yoksa onu sevmiyor muymuşuz? Yoksa başımıza ağır mı geliyorlarmış? İşte okula gidiyorlar, onlar da derslerini çalışıyorlarmış ya!... Böyle özürleri vardı. Herhalde ben de salt böyle bir özrüm olsun diye okula gitmek istedim. Çünkü evde kimse bana okumanın... iyi bir şey olduğunu söylemedi. Okula gitmenin... tek somut yararı, o zamanlar görebildiğim kadarıyla insanı o can sıkıcı ev işlerinde kurtarmasıydı.

252 Okumak istiyorum!... Kendimi Nallıhan’daki evde, bir odaya kapatmıştım. Üç gün... kapıyı açmadım. Açlık grevi... Kapıyı kırıp beni çıkardıklarında baygınmışım.... Sonra babamın... sesini işittim: “Sanki burada ortaokul var

da!”... Annem mırıl mırıl bir şeyler söylüyor. Sonunda babam haykırmıştı:

“Bıktım! Topla çocuklarını git!... Ankara’da okut!”

253 Erkeklerimiz dış hayattan daha iyi haberli olsunlar, ... alanlarda, sokaklarda, içki evlerinde ufukları genişlesin diye biz, onlar için, günün on altı saati didinip duruyorduk. Annemin erkeklere kazaklar örmeye, onların çoraplarını yamamaya oturduğu “boş saatleri,” benim de ders çalışma saatlerimdi. Bunu bile kimsenin gözüne batmadan, “boş saatlerim olduğunu” çaktırmadan yapmam gerekiyordu.

256 O iki buçuk lira sanki benim kurtuluşumdu. Babamı, bana vereceği para için sevmekten kurtuluşumdu. Annemi, o parayı babamdan alabilmek için üzmekten kurtuluşumdu. Hatta o iki buçuk lira, benim aşık olabilme özgürlüğümüdü. Başkasının emeğiyle, bizim olan gövdemizi kullanma hakkımız bile bulunamazdı.

257 Bana dürüst, özverili, çalışkan, mutlak çalışkan olmam öğretilmişti, ama yanı sıra uysal, silik, sessiz olmam da öğretilmişti. Açlık grevlerimizle, evden kaçma gibisinden gözüpekliklerimle, kuşkusuz okula gitmenin ve bir işe girmenin ahlaksızlık olmadığını kanıtlamak üzere de fakülteyi bile bitirmiştım. Babama ve erkek kardeşlerime göre sık sık düz yolun dışına çıkmıştım, aykırı yerlere sapmıştım, sonuçta da onlar da ortada aykırı hiçbir şey olmadığına inanmak zorunda kalmışlardı. İşte şimdi de ekonomik özgürlük istiyordum. Gizlice Ankara Radyosu’nun “memur alma sınavları”na girmiştım. İşe alınmıştım.

259 Kapıyı vurup çıkamıyor, ortalıkta kendi kimliklerimizle dolanamıyorsak... daha bir sokak öteye gitmeden bütün erkeklerimizin üzerimize çullanacağından kimsenin kuşkusu bulunmadığı içindi. Ama işte Feride’nin

gurbet ellerdeki yaşamı bize olmazın olurluğunu kanıtlıyordu... Aşıksak, aşık olduğumuz gençle, yalnız onunla bir yuva kurmak istiyorsak, o kapı da her şeye karşın hala ve hep açıktı. İşte Feride... sonunda sevdiği adama kavuşuyordu. Bu durumda ortada Doktor Hayrullah gibisinden babacan bir koruyucunun bulunması yeterliydi. Acaba benim Doktor Hayrullah'ım kim olabilirdi? ... Feride'yle tanıştıktan hemen hemen sekiz yıl sonra onun... babacan koruyucusu yaşlı askeri doktora duyduğu derin saygı ve sevgi, kendi adıma tek kişide odaklanmış olarak tecelli etti. Refik Ahmet Sevengil'e aşık olmuştum. Babam yaşındaydı, ama yüreği coşkularla doluydu. Daha önemlisi, Refik Ahmet Bey, benim yazdıklarımla alay etmiyordu. Beni yüreklendiriyordu. O yıllarda buna öylesi gereksinim duyuyordum ki...

260 Beni, Radyo Dairesi'nden Ankara Radyosu'nun temsilcilerini iyileştirmeye gönderen Refik Ahmet Bey, bir gün bu yayınlar için neler tasarladığımı sormuştu. Radyo oyun yazarlığı bilinen bir tür değildi. Oyunlar, bu kanalı öğrenmiş birkaç yazarın tekelindeydi. Refik Ahmet Bey'e üç maddeli bir tasarı sunmuştum... Bu temel atılımların ayrıntılarına da girmiştım... Refik Ahmet Bey, masmavi bakışlarında beni onayladığını belli eden bir pırıltıyla, "Tek yardımcın yok, bunların hepsini gerçekleştirebilecek misin?" demişti. Radyo Dairesi Müdürü olarak tasarılarımı evetlemesi, bana yetecekti. Kendimi enerji dolu hissediyordum.

263 O günlerde program müdürü olarak görev almıştım. Aklımda hep sürekli oyun biçimini radyoda ilk olarak uygulamak düşüncesi vardı. Fakat bu işi ancak yetenekli bir yazar ve tiyatrocu başarabilirdi. Aynı günlerde Adalet Ağaoğlu da Ankara Radyosu'nda ikinci kez göreve başlamıştı. Meğer o da

sürekli oyun biçimini radyoya getirmeyi düşünürmüş. Hemen kolları sıvadı ve bugün hala devam etmekte olan sürekli oyun programını oluşturdu.

266 “Sevim Abla” ile birlikte yazdığımız, adına da *Bir Piyas Yazalım* dediğimiz oyunun sergilendiği ilk gece geliyor aklıma. Yıl 1952... Ankara... Alkışlar dinmek bilmiyordu... Aynı sahnede ben, beş altı yıldır pek çok başka oyun da izlemiştim... Bizim oyunumuz gördüğüm oyunlarından hepsinden daha iyi değildi. Yine de en büyük alkış payının bize ayrılmış olduğunu görüyordum. Bir şey sezmiştim. Bu sezinin itisiyle selama çıkmamakta direttim. Galiba, alkışlardan yarısından fazlası bizim birer “genç kız” olmamıza idi. Hem genç, hem yerli oyun “kadın yazarı” ... Alkışlanan herhalde resmi ideoloji idi.

CHAPTER 3

277 Benim okuduğum okul gayet erkek kalabalığının çok olduğu bir okuldu. Son derece az kadın vardı. Nerdeyse böyle bir amfi dolu erkek ve mesela 15 tane kadın... Kalabalık kaçtı diye hesaplasam, herhalde 250 erkeğe 15 kadın falan düşüyordu. Yani kadınlar o sırada Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi’nde çok küçük bir azınlıktı.

279 Derslere devamda erkek öğrencilerden daha disiplinliydik. ... Buna rağmen değerli bir kadın profesörümüzün, “[B]urada oturan her kız öğrenci en az üç kişinin nafakasına engel oluyor” isyanını sık sık dile getirdiğini hatırlarım. ...Bu... hesap nasıl yapılıyordu? Herhalde baba, anne ve çocuk... Demek ki bizler fuzuli işgal durumundaydık.

282 Ben Ankara’ya liseyi bitirdikten sonra özgür olmak için giden genç kadınlardan biriyim. Aileden kurtulmak için... önce Mülkiye’ye gittim. Ama orada durum enteresandır. Mülkiye’de kaymakam ve diplomat

olamayacağımı aşağı yukarı üçüncü sınıfa geldiğimde anladım. O vakte kadar bilmiyordum böyle bir şey olduğunu. ... Kadınları vali yapmıyorlar. ... Yasa vardı. Onu değiştirdiler sonra. Birisi... başvurdu değiştirilmesi için. Aynı biçimde diploması açısından yasak yoktu, ama orda da örnek yoktu. Yani sekizinci sınıf bir sekreter olarak kadınlar genelde hep kalmış. Onun üstüne çıkamamışlar. Daha doğrusu büyükelçi olma hayali... Altlarda çalışmayı kabul edersen diplomat oluyorsun. O ikisini fark edince yeni bir iş alanı olarak TRT’de karar kıldım.

293 Bizi eğitenler Türkiye’nin ileri düzeyde üstatlarıydı. Türkiye’nin en büyük kültür adamlarından eğitim aldık. Güzel Türkçe konuşma konusunda bizi eğittiler, ve Nüzhet Şenbay, Turgut Özakman, Mahmut Tali Öngören, Baki Süha Ediboğlu, Oğuz Yılmazhiçyılmaz, Doğan Soylu ve Rıdvan Çongur gibi hocalarımız da radyo eğitimi verdiler. Bize öğrettikleri ilk şey özerklikti. Yani, “Şimdi siz buradasınız, ama siz... klarnetçi değilsiniz. Sizin işiniz, halkı belli bir düzeye getirmek için yapacağınız programlarla eğitmek. Onun için önce kendinizin çok eğitilmiş olmaması lazım... Çünkü kararı siz vereceksiniz.”

305 Saat 5.30 dolaylarında radyo boşalmaya başladılar. Ve radyoda bir nöbetçi spikerle yayında görevli bir teknisyen kalırdı. O böyle hüznü bir andı. Koca bir bina karanlık ve siz orada yalnız kalıyorsunuz. O günkü radyo müdürümüz Salih Akgöl akşamları herkes gittikten sonra stüdyolara gelip bakardı. Asık suratlı, ciddi, fazla konuşmamıza fırsat vermeyen bir müdürdü. Ama sonradan fark ettik ki, o asık yüzünün ardında çok sıcak, çok sevecen bir yürek vardı. İşte yıllar sonra bana dedi ki, “Çok küçüktünüz, ben sizi radyoda

bırakırken içim sızlardı.” Biz nöbetçiyken gelip kontrol etmesinin nedeni de buymuş. Bu korkuyla yayınımızı izlermiş.

308 Son ayak sesi de kesildiğinde duyduğum ürpertiye hiç unutamam... O

koskocaman binada yüzünü bile görmediğim bir gece bekçisiyle ben kalmıştım. Duyduğum ürpertiye bastırmak için... odanın kapısını kilitledim... İçimden sürekli Kasaroğlu ya da Muammer Yaşar’a telefon etmek geldi. Ne var ki elim telefona her uzanıpta “Gündüz yaptığın kahramanlığı berbat mı edeceksin?” diyerek vazgeçtim.

316 Ben radyomu açtığım zaman milliyetçiliğimle, Müslümanlığım ile ilgili sözler duymak istiyorum. Ama düğmeye basınca ne duyuyorum? Rus profesöre aşık bir kızın aşk sözlerini. Bu memlekette komünistlerin işi yoktur, olmayacaktır da... Rus profesöre aşık olanlar, o rejimin hasretini çekenler gitsinler efendim, gitmeyeceklerse de bu Müslüman memleketin havasını, radyosunu mülevves aşklarıyla kirletmesinler.

321 Arzu ederseniz Türkiye’nin en üst yöneticileriyle bir arada olabilirsiniz... ya da isterseniz en uç yerde. Yani ben cumhurbaşkanıyla da yemek yedim, ama bir göçer çadırında da yatabilirdim. Çok olmuştur öyle; Hakkari’ye gidip program yapıp göçer çadırlarında kaldığımız dağlarda. Ama bir cumhurbaşkanıyla da yemek yemişliğimiz vardır.

322 Spiker Gökçen Solok’la birlikte Haber Merkezi’nin kapısından içeri ilk adımımızı atıyoruz. Bu adımımıyla, yaşamımda yepyeni ve çok güzel olacağına inandığım bir dönem açılıyor. Tam da istediğim gibi, yarım saat bile doğru dürüst masa başında oturulmayacak... Bugün Ankara’da, yarın Gaziantep’te, öbür gün Kars’ta... Soluk soluğa yaşanacak bir dönem...

332 Salı sabahı 9’da “boşanmalar” konusunda bir program. Bir genç kızla bir erkek konuşuyor. Erkek avukat... boşanma sebeplerini sıralıyor. Zina der demez genç kızda bir hayret... Küçük hanım sanki Amerika’yı yeniden keşfetmiş... Gerçekçi program da böyle olur işte! Küçük hanım zinayı bilmiyor!

334 Mucur TRT muhabiri çevredeki toplum kalkınması çalışmalarını TRT Yurt Haberleri Servisi’ne bildiriyor ve Köye Haberler bülteninde sık sık Mucur’dan söz ediliyor. Bir sabah Karaçalı köyünde radyo dinleyen iki kadın, türküler bittikten sonra köylerinin adını duyunca kulak kabarttılar. Köydeki toplum çalışmaları anlatılıyordu. Öğretmen, muhtar ve imam el ele vererek güç birliği yapmışlar, köye su getirmişler, okul bahçesini ağaçlandırmışlardı. Şimdi de yolu yapmak için uğraşıyorlardı. Kadınlar haberi sonuna kadar ağzı açık dinlediler. Başka haber okunmaya başlanınca biri diğerine sordu: “... Radyo bizim su getirdiğimizi, yolumuzu yapacağımızı nasıl duymuş dersin? Kim söyledi acep?” Diğer bilgiç bilgiç başını salladı: “Nereden bilecek? Geçenlerde bir tayyare geçtiydi ya... Alçaktan gidiyordu; onun şoförü görmüş olacak.”

337 Günlerin birinde *Kadın ve Ev Saati*’ni hazırlayan arkadaşım telaşla odama dalıp acil bir işi çıktığını, programını hazırlayamayacağını söyledi ve yerine benim bir seferlik bu işi yapmamı rica etti. “Neden olmasın, elbet yaparım,” diye yanıtlayıp işe koyuldum. Bütün yapacağım, kadınlara bir iki kolaylık öğretip, bir de yemek tarifi vermek... Ancak yayın kontrolü açısından Feridun Fazıl Tülbentçi Hocamızdan “yayınlanır” onayı almamız gerekiyor. ... Anneciğimden öğrenmiş olduğum yemeğin tarifini... yazıp imzaya götürdüm. Gözü kapalı “olur”u verdi. Programı seslendirdim, iki gün sonra

yayına girdi... Ve gerçek kıyamet işte o zaman koptu. ... Tülbentçi bana veryansın ediyordu: “Kızım ne yaptın sen? Kına sürülen ellere oje tarif etmek de nereden geldi aklına?” Ben hala şaşkın şaşkın ne... yaptığımı anlamaya çalışırken bir arkadaşım olaya açıklık getirdi: “Yani,” dedi, “neden... kuru fasulye yerine karides kokteyli tarifi verdin, diye soruyor.”

339 Kolumun altında bir yığın kitap, köy kahvesine dalmıştım. Tarladan dönen çok terli... adamlara “Acaba bölge radyomuzda yeni yayınladığımız *Tarım Saati* programını biliyor musunuz?” diye sormaya kalkmış, pürtüklü pürtüklü çıkan sesimden utanıp, bu sorunun tınısıyla baş başa kalmıştım. Çünkü iskemlelerini öte yana çekerek bana sırt dönmüşlerdi. Karı-kız haliyle benim oraya yakışmadığımı usullerince belli ettiler.

347 Yirminci yüzyıl insanoğlunun yaratma gücü sayesinde kendisini yok etmeye başladığı bir çağdır... Üç milyar çevresinde insanın yaşadığı gezegenimizde açların, çıplakların, yoksulların sayısı iki milyarı aşmaktadır... Piyasayı yükseltmek için besinlerini denize döken toplumların yanında, açlıktan, yoksulluktan, bakımsızlıktan kırılan uluslar yaşamaktadır... Ve insanlığın bu korkunç yozlaşması... akıllara durgunluk veren teknik gelişmelerin, zaman ve uzaklık kavramlarını ortadan kaldırdığı; doğayı denetleyen bilimlerin tanrıya meydan okuduğu, kader gibi... ilkel kavramların çoktan tarihe karıştığı bir çağda sürüp gitmektedir. Dünyanın işte bu görünümünü bizim halkımıza anlatmamızın zamanı çoktan gelmiştir ve radyo... gerçeği... gösterme olanaklarına sahiptir... Radyo... halkımızın çağımızın düzeni içindeki yerini kavramasına yardımcı olabilir. Üstelik bilinçli bir radyonun bu amaca hizmet etmesi kaçınılmaz bir görevdir.

352 TRT’de, bütün gece, seçim sonuçlarını derleyip Haber Dairesi’ne

ulaştırmakla görevli kalabalık bir memur topluluğu içinde sen de varsın. ...

1960 Anayasası’na dayalı olarak kurulmuş İşçi Partisi’ne kimi illerden biraz

oy geldikçe, ikide bir ayağa fırlayıp “Yaşasın!” diye bağıırıyorsun. Memur olmayı hiç öğrenemedin! Memur olmak, sakınık ve renksiz olmak demektir.

Bu sen değilsin. Herkes de TİP’e oy gelmesinden senin kadar hoşnuttur

sanıyorsun. Her saat başı, “Yaşasın, yaşasın!” diye el çırpıp çığlık atman

yetmedi, sabaha doğru Genel Müdür Adnan Öztrak’ın seni çağırıp, “Nasıl

gidiyor?” sorusunu sana neden sorduğunu bile düşünmeksizin, “İyi, iyi, TİP

Meclis’e girecek!” diye coşkudan eteklerin uçuşarak yanıtlayışın hele! Özerk

TRT’de, genel müdür başta, sanki herkes TİP’liydi de!

357 Yeni TRT yasası hepimize taze kan pompalamış gibiydi. Özerkliğin ne

olduğunu hiçbirimiz bilmiyorduk, ama “artık özerkiz” deyip duruyorduk.

Konuyla ilgili öğrendiklerimiz, biraz da sezgilerimiz bize her şeyin daha

kolay ve daha güzel olacağını söylüyordu. En önemlisi de bu güzellikleri

bizler yaratıp topluma sunacaktık ve bu keyfi ilk yaşayanlar bizler olacaktık.

Rüyada gibiydik. Sözün özü, hepimiz özerklik sarhoşuyduk. O dönemdeki

TRT çalışanları için 1 Mayıs 1964... bir rüyanın başlangıcıydı.

361 Radyo... değişik toplum kesimlerine açıklık kazandırmak ve toplumsal

sorunlarımızı... dürüstlikle halka göstermek zorundadır... Eğer bir toplumda

gelir dağılımı büyük bir dengesizlik gösteriyorsa; kalkınma çabalarının

yükünü yoksul köylü, işçi ve memur taşıyorsa; küçük bir azınlık ise yasa dışı

yollardan elde edindiği gelirle bey gibi yaşıyorsa, o toplumda zaten eşitsizlik

var demektir. Halk zaten bölünmüş... Bu durumda ulusal bütünlüğü

zedelemek için halkın büyük çoğunluğundan gerçekleri saklamak,
herşeyden önce [radyonun] işlevini yapmasını engellemek sayılır.

362 1964 yazında Program Müdürü rahmetli Güntekin Orkut beni Pazar
nöbetlerinden sileceğini ve her Pazar Ankara'nın bir köyüne giderek oralarda
röportajlar yapmamı istediğini söyledi... Gittiğimiz yerlerde köyün-köylünün
her türlü sorununu... banda kaydediyor, bu sesleri yetkili makamlara
doğrudan duyuruyorduk. Bu programlara, daha doğrusu köy ziyaretlerine
sıcak bakmayan bir kesim vardı. Köy kadınları... Her şeyden önce beni
kendilerinden saymıyor, yönelttiğim soruları da yanıtlamaktan kaçınıyorlardı.
Sonraları fark ettim ki, bu kadınlar bir de verecekleri yanıtlardan dolayı,
kocalarından korkuyorlardı.

364 Bu korku, Kalecik'in bir köyündeki kadınlarda çok belirgindi. Köye
girdiğimizde Akara Radyosu yazılı minibüsü... çocuklar ve köyün erkekleri
karşıladı... İlk olarak köyün kadınlarıyla bir çay içmek istediğimi söyledim....
Yarım saat sonra... beni kahvaltıya bekledikleri haberi geldi... Kahvaltı
boyunca yaptığımız konuşmalarda, bu kadınların en az beş çocuk annesi
olduğunu öğrenmiştim. Aralarında 7-8-10-12 çocuklu olanları vardı. Hepsi de
bu durumdan yakınıyorlardı. Bir doğum kontrolü programı için bu kadınlar
biçilmiş kaftandı. Yakınmalarından... cesaret alarak, doğum kontrolüyle ilgili
bir programda konuşup konuşmayacaklarını sordum. Hem gönüllüydüler,
hem de “Abovvv, bizim herif ne der, kötü bir şey söylersem döver vallaha”
diyorlardı. Bir süre düşündüler, bakıştılar. Hemen her köyde rastlanan
“hükümet gibi bir kadın” son sözü söyledi: “Konuşun be!.. Nasıl olsa...
yiyorsunuz dayağı. Varın bir de radyoya konuştunuz diye yiyin. Hiç olmazsa
bir sebebi olur yediğiniz dayağın. Siz de söyleyeceğinizi söylemiş olursunuz

ya...” Doğal olarak kadınlar “evet” dediler. Mikrofonu orta yere koydum. Hepimiz çevresine daire yapıp sıralandık. Tape’i çalıştırdım, ilk soruyu yönelttim. Başladılar konuşmaya, sıkıntılarını, yakınmalarını, dileklerini öylesine içten, öylesine doğal biçimde dile getiriyorlardı ki... Yaklaşık yarım saat konuştular.

373 Fakat kapıları üst üste, üst üste kapalı, hava deliği pencerelerine kalın demir parmaklıklar takılı bir hücrede... bileklerimden duvara zincirlenmişçesine tutukluyum... Kurtulmak... Kurtulmalıyım. Bazı geceler kendimi sokağa atıyorum. Tutuklu olmadığımı, özgür olduğumu hissetmek istiyorum. Yapamıyorum; kendimden kurtulamıyorum...

374 İstifamı büroya bıraktığımı Turgut’a söyledim. Yakın arkadaşım... ve Radyo Dairesi Başkanımız, “Kabul etmem ki...” dedi. Çok mu şaşırdı; çok mu sevindi? Gözlerini kaçırınca ne olduğunu anlamak güç. Anlamadım.... Şimdi müthiş bir özgürlük duygusu içindeyim. Ama “özgürlük” bedava değil. Hayatın en pahalı şeyi.

376 Bilgesu yazar, yazdığı zaman da biraz uçar. Şimdi ben onu yere indirmek mecburiyetindeydim. Arada bir mesela birini intihar ettirir. İntihar yasak. İntihar eder mi Türk? ... Şimdi ben de bunun üzerine içeriye gider intihar sahnesini kestiririm. Birazdan gelir, bu kesilen kısım önüme atılır. Üç gün o orada kalır. Yani unutma bu yaptığını. Çürüyünceye kadar o orada kalır. Bana ders verirdi.

381 1961 Anayasası reaksiyoner bir anayasadır. TRT Kanunu da bu anayasaya dayanarak çıkarılmış reaksiyoner kanunlardan biridir. Ancak radyonun kendisinin de taraf olabileceği düşünülmemiştir. Bugün radyo hükümetin emrinde değildir; ama Türk milletinin hissiyatına mukaddesatına karşı bir

radio da olmamalıdır. Milletin temayül ve inançlarına göre yayın yapılmalıdır.

383 Bu soruların... bütün arkadaşlara sorulduğunu öğrendik... Bu tuhaf sorulara muhatap olmuş kişiler olarak... 1961 Anayasasının ne kadar özgürlükçü olduğunu düşünmeye pek de vaktimiz olmadı. Bu sorular TRT’de çalışma hakkını kazanmamız için değildi. Zaten çalışıyorduk. Örgüt üyesi ve anarşist olup olmadığımız herhalde merak ediliyordu... Aklanmış olduk ki, kimse soruşturma sonrası işinden olmadı... “Özerk” ve “tarafsız” yayıncılık için yola çıkan kişilere devletimizin uygun gördüğü soruşturma böyleydi.

388 Bu sabah TRT’de bizim odaya gittim. Arkadaşlarla dayanışmamız bir sonuç vermemiş. Uzman arkadaşlarda bir umutsuzluk hali... Erkekten maskotumuz, yeni gelecek yönetim kurulunun her şeyi düzelteceğini söylemekte; biz “dişi”lerin yüz anlamı ise, maskotumuzun özel bir oda, ortası yeşil deri kaplı masa, üstünde sumen, yanında özel telefonla zil, basınca da kapısında belirecek bir sekretere nihayet kavuşacağı umudunu taşıdığı doğrultusunda... Bana nasılsa *Ankara*’nın Selma’sını çağrıştıran, bozkırda hayatına bir anlam kazandıracağı umuduyla buralara... gelmiş arkadaş ise, Başkent İttihatçılarına katlansa mı, onların yazar çizerlerini ehven-i şerden mi saysa ikilemleri içinde, bunalımda.

389 O zamanlarda denetim diye bir mekanizma yoktu. Otokontrolü siz kendiniz yapacaksınız. Neyi vererseniz bu halk nereye doğru gider, siz bileceksiniz. Tabii TRT’nin kuruluşuyla beraber yayın planlama dediğimiz yer de kuruldu. Bu yayın planlama her yıl yıllık yayın planı çıkarırdı. Bu planlamaya göre programlarınızı düşünün, önerilerinizi yapın, ona göre de oluşturun. Ama

kendi denetiminizi de kendiniz yapın. Neden? Yasalar karşısında yaptığınız yanlışın sorumlusu sizsiniz.

397 O tarihte (1964 – 1965) bir dizi program hazırlıyordum. Programın ana teması kuşaklar arası çatışmayı gözler önüne sermekti. Sık sık “kuşak” sözcüğünü kullanıyordum. Eskilerin “nesil”i yerine... Refii Cevat Ulunay bir köşe yazısında şöyle diyordu: “Biz nesil derdik. Bunlar kendilerine kuşak diyorlar. Kuşak değil, uçkur bunlar...” Bu cümleyi hiç unutamadım.

398 Radyo programlarında kullanılan dil, Merkez Program Dairesi’nin üzerinde önemle durduğu bir konudur. Daha önceki program dönemlerinde olduğu gibi, önümüzdeki program döneminde de, Türkiye Radyolarında halkın rahatça anlayabileceği ortak bir dille yayın yapılabilmesi için çaba gösterilmesine devam edilecek, dil konusundaki çalışmalar sürdürülecektir. Atatürk devrimlerini yaymakla görevli bir Anayasa kuruluşu olarak TRT radyolarının dili artık Dil Devrimi ile güdülen amaca, istenilen ölçüde yaklaşmış bulunmaktadır. Hatta bundan sonrası için radyo dilinde birtakım aşırılıklara meydan vermemek dahi söz konusudur, denilebilir.

403 *Sartre Küba’yı Anlatıyor* kitabının *Kitap Saati*’nde tanıtımına izin verdim diye, TRT ve savcı el ele kol kola beni mahkemeye sevk etmişlerdi... Aylar sonra mahkeme, [bizim] “suçsuzluğumuza” karar vermiş olmasına rağmen, TRT bana peşinen verdiği “unvan indirimi” cezasını geri almıyor... Velhasıl TRT yargı organının da üzerinde bir kurum olup çıktı. Faşizmin pis kokusu... Bu sefer de TRT’nin “Hukuk İşleri” odasına gönderiliyorum ve odadaki avukatlar bana: “Programın yayınına dikkatsizlikle izin vermişim deyin...” öğüdünde bulunuyorlar. Kanım donuyor. Böyle yaparsam... altımdaki gencecik program yapma sorumlusu tek başına mahkemeye gidecek.

407 Yayıncılık işinden ayrılacağım. Artık salt kendim için yazacağım. Topluma ses dalgalarıyla uzanmakmış, insanımızı eğitmek, toplum bilincini yükseltmekmiş... Kalsın. Kaleminin ucundan kendi iç sesimle ne dökülüyorsa o olmalı. Özgür kalem... Tamam da, ya üretken olamazsam? “Ev kadını” olup çıkarsam ya? ... Verili değerlerden doğma şu kaygıya bak sen!

CHAPTER 4

408 Kadın olmak zor, hala çok zor... Çünkü dünyamız hala erkeklerin dünyası. İnsanlığının dünyasını erkekler düzenliyor, hele kadınların dünyasını... Biz kadınlar çoğu zaman pantolon giyiyoruz. Ne bir eksikimiz, ne de bir fazlamız var. Tanrıya şükür, hepimiz o pantolonların içinde de kendimizi erkek filan gibi... algılamıyoruz. Yani değişen bir şey yok, biz o pantolonlarla da kadınız.

417 12 Mart 1971 öncesindeki yıllar 1968 hareketinin yoğun olarak dünyada ve ülkemizde yaşandığı yıllardı. Tabii biz de bunun dışında kalamazdık, 20’li yaşlardaydık ve biz de gençtik, gösterilere katılıyorduk... Bazı... yöneticiler, “yapmayın, etmeyin” dese de, dinleyen kim? ... 68 kuşağından etkilenmiştik.

424 Ben çok uluslararası toplantılara katıldım... Ve orda bize hep şey diyorlardı, “Sizde ne çok kadın yönetici var! Sizin kadınlarınız çok üst kademelere kadar gelebiliyor. Biz ancak sekreterliğe kadar çıkabiliyoruz.” ... Belki kadın bir genel müdür yardımcımız olmadı. Ama ağırlıklı karar verici olarak... öyle bir itilmişlik hissetmedik... Zaten böyle bir hırslımız da yoktu. Biz program yapmak için buradaydık... Kadın olduğu için terfi ettirilmeyen bir insan

yok... Öyle bir anlayış olmadı hiçbir zaman. Burada kadınlara özel ayrımcılık hiç olmadı.

431 Müteaddit emirlere ve bütün ünitelere dağıtılan *TRT Sözlüğü*'ne rağmen spikerlerin, takdimcilerin, konuşmacıların kendiliklerinden kimsenin anlayamayacağı kelimeler uydurdıkları, prodüktörlerin hazırladıkları bir kısım metinlerde bu gibi uydurma kelimeleri bolca kullandıkları görülmektedir. Bundan böyle *TRT Sözlüğü* dışında uydurma kelimeler kullananlar hakkında kati işlem yapıp Kurum'la ilişkileri kesilecektir. Denetçiler programlarda böyle uydurma kelimeler bulunup bulunmadığı yönünden de inceleme yapacaklar ve tespit edebildiklerini Makam'a bildireceklerdir. Konunun üzerinde yayınla ilgili müteselsil amirlerin durmalarını ve emrin personele imza ettirilmesini, bu gibi olayların tekrerrüne meydan verilmemesini önemle rica ederim.

434 12 Mart 1971 olduğunda toplum adına yapmayı düşündüğümüz her programın kamuoyunda yargılandığını gördük... Sabahları yayınlanan bir dizim vardı ve çok dinleyicisi vardı. Ben hukuk bilgilerini aktarmaya kişinin hukukundan başladım... İnsanlar halk okulu gibi... avukatların, hakimlerin tekelinde olan bilgiye radyodan bir düğmeyi çevirerek ulaşabiliyorlardı. Boşanma konusunda geldiğimde medeni kanunun ilgili hükümlerine göre nasıl boşanılacağını karşılıklı olarak birbirine soruyor iki kişi. Kadın ve erkeğin eşit boşanma hakkı olduğu anlatılıyor... O zamanki *Tercüman* gazetesinin bir köşe yazarı bir sabah "Türkiye'nin aile kadınları ahlaksızlığa teşvik ediliyor, Türkiye'deki TRT programcıları ne yapmak istiyorlar, kadınları ahlak dışı yollara sevk ediyorlar" gibi... Benim programımla ilgili

olduğu anlaşıldı, dediler ki program bantları ve program metni Ankara'ya gönderilsin, 1972 galiba... Bu üzerimizde baskı unsuru oluşturmaya başladı.

448 Günlerden beri gerek radyodan gerekse televizyondan TRT'ye sınavla spiker alınacağı ilan ediliyordu. Ben de, aranılan bütün şartlara haiz olduğumu düşünerek, kalkıp İstanbul Radyoevi Müdürlüğü'ne gittim. Danışmadaki zat elime bir kağıt verdi... Olumsuz bir cevap alacağımı tahmin etmediğim halde, belki de daha birçok yerde aynı acı neticelerle karşılaşmış olmamın verdiği tesirden kurtulamayışımın sonucuyla olacak, “gayrimüslim olmamın” bir engel teşkil edip etmeyeceğini sordum. Adam gayet heyecanlı bir şekilde, “Olmaz kardeşim, olmaz. Türk vatandaşı olmak şart” dedi... Buz gibi oldum. Hiçbir şey söyleyemeden kağıdı bırakıp dışarı çıktım. Biz Türk vatandaşı değil miyiz? Eğer değilsek hiç olmazsa ne vatandaşı olduğumuzu öğrenelim.

449 Biz Ankara Radyosu'nda göreve başladık... Orada sonradan “Neden biz o kağıda imza attık?” dediğimiz bir şey de yaşadık. Sınavlar bitti, seçildik, ama şöyle bir şey söylendi bize: “Kızlar televizyonu seçmeyecek. Çünkü onlar evleniyorlar, çocuk sahibi oluyorlar ve de iş aksıyor.” Oysa gerçekte uygulamada her zaman kadınlar çok çalışırdı hem televizyonda hem radyoda. Ama biz bir kağıt imzaladık. Kimisi dış yayınlara gitti, kimi radyoyu seçti. Başka ne vardı önümüzde seçenek? O kadardı. Yani televizyon bir seçenek değildi

450 O dönem televizyonda çalışan bir yığın hanım prodüktör vardı. Ve bunlar şeye gitmek istemiyorlardı. “Mış” yani, yönetim öyle ifade ediyordu. Anadolu'daki çekimlere gitmek istemiyorlarmış. İstanbul'un dışına çıkmak, Ankara'nın dışına çıkmak istemiyorlar. Bunu gerekçe gösterdiler bize. Kadınlar radyoyu seçsin, çünkü televizyoncu olunca dışarı çıkmıyorlar diye.

Oysaki ben kızım daha altı aylıktı, on gün Karadeniz’e gittim iş seyahatine.

Hiç böyle bir problemimiz olmadı, ama bu yönetimin kararıydı. Aslında bu Anayasa’ya aykırıydı, eşitlik ilkesine aykırıydı.

451 Şimdiki aklımız o zaman yoktu, gençtik. Bir de TRT’ye girmeyi çok istiyorduk. Özel bir televizyon şansımız da yoktu. Tekti. Ya mesleğimizi yapmak için oraya girecektik, ya da birtakım arkadaşlarımız gibi bankalara, bakanlıklara gidecektik. Biz kurumda olmak için her şeye razıydık yani.

475 Halkımız üzerinde çok fazla etki yaratan yayınlar Türkiye dışından gelenlerdir... Türkiye’nin son yıllarda geçirdiği buhrandan sonra sanırsınız ki, televizyonumuzun genişlemesinin amacı *Uzay Yolu* programındaki yakışıklı Kaptan Kirk’ü tüm Anadolu’ya tanıtmaktır... Şimdi de *Kaçak* adlı yeni dizideki Dr. Kimble Anadolu’nun belki de hiç doktor girmemiş bölgelerine dek giderek oralarda yepyeni ama bomboş bir dünya yaratacak... İşte doktorsuz Anadolu böylece televizyon sayesinde bir doktora kavuşacaktır.

484 Televizyon daha gencecikti. Başında da, yine gencecik bir isim, daha tanımadan hepimizin bayıldığı İsmail Cem vardı. Daha ilk günden “işime” aşık olmuştum. Her şeyi “hemen” öğrenmek, “hemen” yapmak istiyordum. Çok heyecanlıydım. Çok mutluydum.

492 Televizyonun yemekhanesinde yapılan bir toplantıda İsmail Cem prodüktörleri toplamış konuşurken yine bir deneyimli bayan prodüktör arkadaş ayağa kalkıp “Siz Arjantin, Brezilya gibi toplumu uyutmaya çalışıyorsunuz. Maç yayını az gelişmiş üçüncü dünya ülkelerinde yapılan bir şey. Siz yanlış bir iş yapıyorsunuz” diye direkt İsmail Cem’e söyledi... O

hanım, çok değerli bir gazetecinin kızıydı. İyi eğitilmiş, iyi kültürlü ve doğruyu görebilen bir hanımdı.

498 Alaya alınan milli ahlakımızdır; çağdışı diye tanıtılmaya çalışılan aile müessesemizdir. Bir film seyrediyoruz hep birlikte ekranda; evlilikte kızlığın manasızlığını ve fuzuliliğini anlatıyor. Bir ressama sormuşlar, “Kadına yakışan en güzel renk nedir?” diye, “Haya” demiş. Türk tarihi, Türk kadınının iffetiyle en parlak sahifelere sahiptir.

529 Eşler arasında iletişim, aile hukuku... Bunlar kadını mutlaka ilgilendirir. O iletişimin sağlıklı yürümesi çocukları, dolayısıyla toplumu rahatlatacaktır. Onun için tabi karı – koca ilişkilerini, çocuk... eğitimini, gerektiğinde yemek tarifini yaptık. Ama onun yanında güncel olayları özellikle izlemeye çalıştık.

533 Biz 5 Ağustos günü programa başladık. 6 Ağustos, benim oğlumun doğum günüydü... Bize dendi ki, “Siz dinleyicinizden farklı insanlar değilsiniz. Sizin de işte ev işi sorunuz var, bebeğiniz var, çocuğunuz var... Yani dinleyici ile aynı sorunları paylaşan insanlarsınız. İcabında biriniz programa geç girin, eğer işte gerekiyorsa, yani işte komşunuzun çocuğu kızamık olmuş, ona doktor çağırmışlar. Biraz ben başında durmak zorunda kaldım, deyin ya da çocuğum okula giderken huysuzlandı, ben okula götürmek zorunda kaldım deyin, ondan sonra çocuğun okula adaptasyonu konusunu anlatın.” İkinci program günü, Günseli’nin bir sorusu ile başlıyordu, ‘Neden üzgünsün?’... “Bugün çocuğumun doğum günü, ben bu program için buradayım, aklım onda,” filan gibi bir laf ettim. Aslında... çocuğumuzu kullandık bir anlamda. Çünkü Hiroşima’ya atom bombasının atıldığı günün yıldönümüydü ve biz Hiroşima’yı anlatmak niyetindeydik. Yani Günseli, “Neden hüzünleniyoruz,

sağ, sağlıklı barış içinde bir ülkede yaşıyor, oysa şu kadar yıl önce

Hiroşima...” deyip başladı.

538 Çok sayıda kadının olduğunu hatırlıyorum özellikle program kesiminde.

Programcı kadınlar da ellerinde bayağı kuvvet olan kadınlardı. Çünkü onların her dediği dedik oluyordu. Yani program kesimi Haber Merkezi’ne göre daha bağımsızdı. Çünkü o bir tane programı üstleniyor, onu sonuna kadar götürüyor.

541 Ne giyeceğimi, saçımı nasıl yaptıracağımı, makyaj işini nasıl becereceğimi, haber okurken nereye bakacağımı... Hiç, ama hiçbirini bilmiyordum. O ilk gece, bugün bile anımsadığımda... bir karabasandır benim için. Hiç kimse bir şey söylememiş, erkek arkadaşlarımız da yardımcı olmamıştı. Kendi kendime düşünüp çözüm bulmaya çalıştım. Haber okuyacağıma göre ciddi giyinmem gerek. Saçlarımı yaptırmam gerek. Peki ya makyaj? Bunu hiç beceremem ki... Yanıtı, Haber Merkezindeki bir arkadaştan geldi. İnci Süer, “Ben yaparım” dedi. Ve yaptı. Ciddi olsun diye kopkoyu bir makyaj... Ve üzerimde... günün modası... simsiyah bir elbise... Karalar Prensese gibi... Kendimden hiç memnun kalmamıştım... Bu rahatsızlığımda haklı olduğumu, o gece ekrandan birkaç poz fotoğrafımı çeken arkadaşım bunları bana gösterince daha çok anladım. Sanki 80 yaşında bir kadın... Yüzünün ifadesi dayak atar gibi.

547 Öncelikle TV haberlerinde bir spiker enflasyonu vardı. En inandırıcı olması gereken program, haberlerdir. Görüntü olarak da istikrar kazanması gerekir. Batının büyük TV’lerinde haberleri bir kişi sunar. Adeta bir yazı işleri müdürü gibidir o sunucu.

549 Dün gece TV’de haberleri okuyan babacan tavırlı ve tok sesli spiker, dudacağının üzerine konan bir sineğı eliyle kovmaya çalışırken çok enteresan bir durum meydana gelmiştir. Elinin çarpması sonucu sonunda masanın üzerine bıyığını düşüren spiker, derhal kaptığı gibi dudacağının üzerine yapıştırıp haberleri okumaya devam etmişse de yaptığı dümen çakılmıştır. Durumu fark eden uyanık TV ilgilileri, bu spikeri kontrolden geçirince, bunun haber okuması yasaklanan hanım spikerlerden Jülide Gülizar olduğunu görmüş ve hayretler içinde kalmışlardır. Suçüstü yakalanan Gülizar “Hangi akla hizmet ediyorlarsa spikerlerin haber okumalarını istemiyorlar, ben de erkek dümeniyle durumu idare edecektim, ama bir sineğın kurbanı oldum” demiştir. TRT Genel Müdürü İsmail Cem, “bu gibi yumurtalı vaziyetlerin tekrar meydana gelmemesi için, her spikerin ekrana çıkmadan önce bıyıklarının çekileceğı ve bir sünnetçi tarafından kontrol edileceğini” açıklamıştır.

551 Batı TV’lerinde, örneğın BBC’de kadın spikerler haber okumazmış. Oysa yabancı TV’leri seyredenler hatırlayacaklardır, pek çok kadın haber spikeri vardır. Hem radyoda, hem TV’de. Son gezilerimde Üsküp’te gördüm, Türk yayınlarının haber spikeri bir Türk hanımdır. İtalya’da da haber okuyan hanım spikerler vardır. Hem olmasa ne olacak?

560 Ben TRT’ye girdiğimde benim kalifikasyonlarımla iki senede müdür olmam gerekirdi. Ama asla yapmazlardı beni müdür... Esas olarak kadın olduğum için. Neden? Seni bir kere şey düşünüyor yani... Bunu merkez haberlere koysam bir gün Parlamento’da, bir gün Bakanlar Kurulu’nda, bir gün bilmem nerede... Nasıl olacak bu iş? Önce eteğini uzat mı desem? Arkasından... Şurada hele önce bir Dış Haberlerde masa başında otursun.”

561 Ben İngiltere’den döndükten sonra tekrar radyoda devam etmeyi

düşünmüyordum. Radyoda ya da televizyonda... İngiliz Konsoloslugu’nda... Neydi? Ankara’da İngiliz Basın... Tam adını hatırlayamadım, şimdi. O da Çankaya’dadır. Şimdi hatırlayamıyorum, çok ayıp belki ama. Orada benim BBC’de yaptığım göreve benzer bir kadro boşalmıştı. Ve BBC’den aldığım referanslarla ben oraya hiç sınavsız girebilirdim. Ben istifamı istedim. Çünkü yayıncılık... Yatma saatiniz belli değil, yemek saatiniz, uyku saatiniz... Hele evliyseniz, hele çocuklarınız varsa çok zor! Ve ben doymuştum. Doygunluk noktasındaydım. Kesinlikle istemedim. Fakat Doğan Kasaroğlu “baba” olarak, ama mafya babası gibi, kesinlikle eşimin de beynini yıkadı. Beni de... Hatta ben oraya müracaat etmişim. “Gelmeyecek,” demişler oraya... Hala üzülürüm. Yeri de çok güzeldi. Tenis kortları falan bile olan bir binaydı. Sabah 9’da gidecektim. Akşam 5’te evimde olacaktım. Ve zorla Haber Merkezi’nde göreve başladım.

564 Makarios olayı vardı Kıbrıs’ta. O gece ben nöbetçi idim. 20 haberlerini kız-

erkek okurduk. Ama kapanış haberlerini tek kişi sıraya bağlamıştık. Benim sıram... Ben Haber Merkezi’ne geldim. Karanlıktan bir adam çıktı. Yani korktum da. Hıfzı Topuz. O danışmanıydı galiba, Genel Müdür danışmanıydı. “Hanımefendi, hem kutlamak için, hem özür dilemek için buradayım“ dedi. Baktım. “Ben,” dedi, “bu gece olağanüstü bir gece olabilir, erkek spiker koyalım yerine dedim. Hayır, dediler ve siz beni bunu söylediğim için pişman ettiniz. Gıyabınızda özür dilemek istiyorum. Ben böyle bir şey söylemişim. Ve çok başarılıydınız. Teşekkür ederim,” dedi.

566 Doğan Kasaroğlu beni kurtarmak istedi. Bir tane gözlüklü bir şey vardı.

Erzurum’dan gelmiş bir muhabir yurt haberlerinde. Yılmaz’dı galiba adamın

adı. “Sizi götüreceğim,” dedi. Ben de dedim ki, “Tamam, iyi, gidelim; ama kitaplarımı da bırakmam.” Haydi, arkasından bir saat bir kitap pazarlığı yapıldı... Doğan Kasaroğlu ne biçim şey yapmışsa artık Emniyet’te, yani? Ben kitaplarımla birlikte arabaya bindirildim. Ondan sonra eve götürdü beni. Kitapları yukarıya çıkarttı. “Çok teşekkür ederim,” dedim. “Yok,” dedi, “gidiyoruz... Doğan Bey sizi Muammer Yaşar’la birlikte evde bekliyorlar.” Yılmaz, Doğan Bey’in evine götürdü beni. Çok güzel sofr kurulmuş, rakılar, yeşil fasulyeler, bilmem neler... Beni bekliyor. “Niye seni götürdüler; ne sordular?” İkinci bir sorguya tabii tutuldum. Sonra içi rahat etti. Bir şey yok herhalde kızda diye beni gece 11’de tekrardan evime yolladı.

567 Ben başladım, 15 gün sonra İstanbul’da bir kolera salgını başladı. Ben dedim ki, “Ben İstanbul’a gitmek istiyorum. Bana izin verir misiniz? ”Şöyle bir kötü kötü baktı. “Sen daha çok yakında... çok az oldu burada çalışalı. İzin hakkın yok” dedi. “Eee, nasıl gideceğim peki?” dedim. “İzinsiz mi gideceğim İstanbul’a?” Bir karış astı suratını, gitti... Biraz sonra önüme evraklar getirdiler... Geçici görevle İstanbul’a tayinimi çıkarmış. Bir ay... Sonra dedi ki, “Sakin radyoya uğramaya kalkma,” dedi. “Haber Merkezi’nin oraya gitme, git evinde otur!”

569 Bir orman bakanının etkinliğini izlemeye gitmiş, dönüşte haberini yazmıştım. Gerçeği şefime itiraf ederek “Aslında bakan bu sözlerin hiçbirini söylemedi. Zaten hiçbir şey söylemedi. Bu yüzden ben uydurdum” dedim. Şefim, haberi aldı, Bakan’ın... “sözlerini” okudu, “Tamamdır” dedi... Şefim de, müdürlerim de... benden her zaman böyle hoşnut değillerdi elbette. Bu yüzden... görevden alındım. Artık çatışmaları, toplumsal olayları izleyemeyecektim. Gerekçesi de, “kadın” olmamdı. Beni, yine “kadın”

olduğum için, kültür-sanat muhabiri ilan ettiler. Ben de bir gün, yeni alanımdan bir özel haberle karşılarına dikildim. Bir kamu kuruluşunun araştırmasını haber yapmıştım. Ankara'daki genelevlerde çalışan kadınlar arasında yapılan bir araştırmaydı bu ve aslında ortaya gerçekten çok ilginç veriler çıkmıştı. Ama haber müdürüm köpürdü: “Orospuların haberini mi yayınlatacaksın TRT'de!” Sakin sakin itiraz ettim, haberi savundum ve sonunda pes ettirdim... TRT, haber müdürünün özellikle vurguladığı gibi, tarihinde ilk kez Can Akbel'in sunduğu gece bülteninde, “orospuların haberini” yayınladı.

575 ...Mitingde, biz TRT'nin kadınları da sloganlar patlatıyorduk. Miting, o günlerin “klasiği” gibi noktalandı. Polis mitingi bastı ve dağıttı... Jülide Gülizar'la yan yanaydık. Diğerleri gibi, biz de kaçmaya başladık. Koşarken Jülide seslendi: “Şu tarafa...” Gösterdiği yöne doğru arkasından koştum. İki katlı bir eve daldık... Evin sahibesi, Jülide'nin tanıdığıydı. Ve belli etmemeye çalışsa da, bu davetsiz misafirlikten hoşlanmamış olmalıydı. Çünkü, zaten bir grup misafiri vardı: Tiril tiril giyinmiş, ellerinde çay fincanlarıyla, kibar kadınlar... Jülide'yle ben... saçımız başımız darmadağın, “gün”ün ortasına bomba gibi dalmıştık. Kibarlıktan olsa gerek, neden o halde olduğumuzu, nereden geldiğimizi sormadılar! Jülide'yle bir süre, hayatın bu farklı yüzünü paylaştık. Çayımızı içip kurabiyelerimizi yedik. Ve “tehlikenin geçtiği” kanısına varınca, izin istedik. Şizofren bir yaşamdı. Mitingde slogan atıp polisle kovalamaca oynadığımız günün ertesinde hayatın “öteki yüzüne” dönüyorduk. Jülide... haberleri okuyordu. Ben de... haberlerin peşinde koşuyordum.

592 Türk toplumunda kadının çalışması kabul edildikten ve bu alanda yıllar boyu mesafe alındıktan sonra “kadın çalışmalı mı çalışmamalı mı” konulu bir forum düzenlemek yasaların özüne ve sözüne aykırıdır... Gerçekte Türk kadınının çalışıp çalışmaması ve çalışan kadına kötü gözle bakıldığı iddiaları gibi subjektif görüşler, artık tartışılacak bir konu olmamalıdır. Belli bir konuda, daha ziyade Türk kadınının çalışma koşulları ele alınabilir, onun ıslahı üzerinde durulabilir ve varsa kadının çalışmasına karşı olan tepkiler eleştirilebilir. Toplumsal sorunları kapsayan forumlarla devrimlerle ilgili olarak yanılgılardan dikkatle kaçınılması gerekmektedir.

600 Bir profesör vardı Yalçıntaş isminde. Aydınlar Ocağı’nda milliyetçi nutuklar söyler, solun çanına ot tıkanmasını isterdi. Milliyetçi hükümetin kurulması için büyük bir gayret içinde çırpındığı izlenimini verirdi... İktidar büyük bir yanılgıya düştü. Daha evvel kadrolarını hazırlamadığı için Yalçıntaş’ın görüntüsüne kandı.

607 Biz programı yapmaya devam ettik. Ama tabii... bize bir hayli ters gelen müdahalelerle karşılaştık... Birinde mesela Hıfzı Topuz’dan sonra genel müdür yardımcılığına gelen Nahit Katlan’ın “Ben köy çocuğuyum, bilirim, köyde kadın çalışmaz” diyerek bir hanım milletvekilinin sözlerini programdan çıkarması gibi olaylar yaşadık... Birkaç defa bunun örneklerini gördük. Yalnız... bir ara dedik ki, “En sonunda biz bir kadın programı yapıyoruz. Önemli olan mevzilerimizi kaybetmemektir. Dolayısıyla biz bu kadın programı süresince aile ilişkileri, çocuk bakımı, yemek tarifleri vs. ile de götürebiliriz. Yeter ki biz burada bu işi sürdürüyor olalım.”

623 Kuruma acayip sınavlarla, atanmaları önceden kararlaştırılmış çok sayıda eleman alınıyordu. TRT’nin sınav yönetmeliğine göre sınav yapılacağı radyo,

TV ve basın yoluyla duyurulurdu. Oysa o dönemdeki sınav ilanları... gazetelerde yapılmıyor, *Resmi Gazete*'de yapılıyordu... Zaten sınav soruları da şifreliydi. Örneğin, 1917 tarihi size ne hatırlatıyor sorusuna “Sovyet Ekim Devrimi” diyenler kaybediyor, bir siyasal parti liderinin doğum tarihi olduğunu yazanlar ise kazanıyordu.

646 İki gün önce Toprak Reformu ile ilgili bir program gösterilmiştir. Bu, Anayasanın 3. maddesine göre suçtur. Dilini bilmediğimiz Türkçe konuşmayan bir kadının... bir tercüman aracılığıyla TV’de konuşturulduğunu gördük. TRT’nin buna hakkı yoktur, bu bölücülüktür. Türkçeyi bilmeyen köy kadını TV’de nasıl konuşturulur? ... TRT millilik vasfını kaybetmiştir.

649 Erkeğin karşısında ağzını açmaktan korkan kadınlar, *Mc Millan ve Karısı* dizisini seyrettikten sonra ne düşündüler? Sally kocasının her işine burnunu sokup durdu. *Vakıf*’ın Davinia’sı kocası öldükten sonra çok daha mutlu yaşamaya başladı. O güne kadar kocasının kişiliğinin gölgesinde yaşayan Davinia, kocası öldükten sonra dünyaya daha güvenle bakan başarılı bir iş kadını oldu. *Charlie’nin Melekleri* kadınları sadece saç modelleriyle mi etkilediler? Erkeğin üstesinden zor geleceği işleri beceren bu kadınlar, bir efsaneyi daha yıktılar. Filmin yönetmeni erkek olduğundan belki, yine de kadınların pek akıllı görünmesini istememişti... Ama Tatlı Sert’in Miss Peel’i bu işte Charlie’nin Melekleri’ni geçmişti. İş arkadaşı olan erkekle birlikte başarıyorlardı her şeyi. Hangisi daha güçlü diye bir soru takılmıyordu aklınıza.

CHAPTER 5

654 Mutlu Kadınlar... Çağımızın yarattığı yeni kadınlar bunlar. Ne kadar alçakgönüllü, ne kadar kolay, ne kadar uyumlu... Bir avuç deterjan yetiyor bazılarının “gerçekten mutlu olmasına.” Ya da bir çamaşır kurutucusu... Çikolatalar getiriyorlar bazen ailemizin mutluluğunu evimiz... Günümüzde biri çıkar da “Ben reklamlara inanmıyorum” derse herkes ona haklı olarak deli gözüyle bakacaktır. Ben böyle bir delilik alameti göstermiyorum. Ama gerçekten bazı yapımcıları uyarmak istiyorum. Mutluluğun bile fazlası fazla geliyor. Hele böyle gerçek mutlulukların damla damla yaşandığı günlerde... Demek ki ben o mutlu kadınlardan değilim, olamıyorum.

667 Bu üç kurulumuzun da bilhassa bu dönemde çok tarafsız bir yönetim altında bulunmaları gereğine inandık. Onun için de asker arkadaşlarımızı buraya vermekte büyük yarar gördük. Zannediyorum bunun böyle olması her zaman lehimize olur. Diğer sivil kesimden bulunamaz mıydı? Bulunurdu, belki ama şimdilik böyle olmasında daha büyük fayda var.

678 Moda firmaları birbirinden güzel pantolonları üretir, piyasaya arz eder, reklamını yaparken aynı firmaları türlü kredi, vergi iadesi, ihraç kolaylığı ile teşvik eden yönetimin bu pantolonların giyimini yasaklaması hangi mantığa sığar? Türkiye “çağdaş uygarlık deyine ulaşmak” istiyorsa kadınların pantolon giymesine, mini etek giymesine de alışmalıdır... Bir yandan harıl harıl liberal bir ekonomi düzenini yerleştirmeye uğraşır[uz]... Bir yandan da... herkesin gardırobuna müdürlerin, umum müdürlerin burnunu sokuyoruz. Liberal bir demokrasi başkasına zarar vermemek kaydıyla herkesin davranışlarında bağımsız ve özgür olduğu bir toplum demektir; bunu bir türlü anlayamadık gitti!

679 Darbe dönemi çok eğlenceliydi... Askeri disiplin vardı. Askeri disiplin demek, her yerin temiz olması demekti. Bir de saat 9'da orada olman gerekiyordu. Yani mesela 9'u 1 geçe geldin, soruşturma geliyordu... Bayağı komikti. Mesela yazın... Kadınlara çorap giyme zorunluluğu getirildi. Ben de yeşil soket çorap giyip, takunya giyip gitmişim TRT'ye. Takır takır yürüyordum. "Ne" dedikleri zaman "çorap zorunluluğu var" diyordum. O dönemle iyi eğleniyordum, diyelim.

680 Çok karanlık günlerdi gerçekten. İşte askerler, albaylar, generaller genel müdürlerimizdi. Bir anekdot anlatayım: Biz erkek arkadaşlarımıza mesela kravat atardık pencereden. Bir tane demirbaş kravat bulunurdu odada. Pencereden atardık. Çünkü kravatsız içeri alınmazdı o dönemde erkekler. Kadınlar da kolsuz alınmazdı, sandalet kabul edilmiyordu falan filan... Böyle komik komik birtakım dönemlerimiz oldu.

681 Bir gün subaylardan biri hışımla girdi, biz denetim odasında üç denetçi oturuyorduk... dedi ki "Akşam yayınlanan filmi kim denetledi?" ... Amerikan iç savaşına ait bir filmdi... Filmde Amerikalı bir yüzbaşı vardı bir de kabarık etekli, güzel, lüle saçlı bir sevgilisi ya da nişanlısı, iç savaşa gitmeden son defa samanlık gibi bir yerde buluşuyorlardı... Çok üzülüğünü söylüyor kadın nasıl özleyeceğini... O da diyor ki döneceğim bir gün bekle beni falan... sonra el ele tutuşuyorlar ve yerdeki samanların üstüne oturdular... ama kadının etekleri yere kadar boğazına kadar kapalı tuvalet gibi o yüzyılda giyilen giysi var. Sonra... savaş sahnesine geçiyor. "Durdurun" dedi. "Neden?" dedim... Dedi ki "Ne yaptılar?" "El ele tutuştular," dedim "adam kızı öpmek istedi, kız da ona doğru uzandı," "İşte" dedi, "bunu bir aile izliyor ondan sonrası ne olacağı belli," dedi. "Siz bu

görüntünün yayınına izin vermekle ailenin seyrettiği bir filmde aile kurumun ahlakına aykırı bir görüntüye izin vermiş oluyorsunuz,” dedi. “Halbuki, TRT yayın ilkelerinde aile kurumunun korunması gibi ilkeler var,” dedi. Hiçbir cevap veremedim dondum kaldım. “Bir daha böyle şey istemiyorum,” dedi. Kendimi o kadar kötü hissettim ki... Beynim durdu.

686 Bundan bir süre önce televizyonda gösterilen ve 8 yaşındaki kız torunumla beraber seyrettiğimiz bir randevuevindeki hayat kadınlarının bu işi hayatlarını kazanmak için nasıl – seve seve- yaptıklarını dehşetle gördükten sonra, Macit Paşa dostumuza bu açık şikayeti sunmayı zaruri buldum... Her kadın erkek karşılaşmalarında hemen birbirlerinin ağzına yapışıp öpüşüyorlar. Ve bunları bizim çocuklarımız görüyor. ... Bir randevuevindeki genç kızların nasıl müşteri alıp onları eğlendirdiklerini ve bir taraftan da üniversitedeki derslerine devam ettiklerini anlatan bu filmi gördünüz mü dostlarım? Bu filmi Türk gençlerine, Türk kadınlarına ve hele hele genç kızlarımıza nasıl gösterirsiniz?

697 Halkın zevk ve beğenisine gözlerini kapamak, halka dönük, gerçekçi bir yaklaşım olamaz. Yıllardır süren bu tutuculuk sonucu, TRT müzik olarak halktan büyük ölçüde kopmuş, Anadolu dinleyicisi kendi radyosundan çok yabancı radyoları dinler olmuştur. Bunun önüne geçmek öncelikle ulusal bir görevdir. İkincisi halkın eğlenmek için istediği müziği yasaklamanın bir faydası olmadığı da gözlemlenmiştir. O halde yapılması gereken... bu müzik türlerini de denetim ve gözetim altına almaktır.

705 Reklama kesinlikle hayır. Reklama giden arkadaşlarımı kınamıyorum; ama böyle bir çalışmayı kendim için düşünmüyorum. Ben yıllarca “devletin sesi” ve sonra da “yüzü” olarak haber okudum. O nedenle bu iki çalışmayı

birbiriyle bağdaştıramıyorum... Geçmişimi birkaç milyona değiştirmek istemiyorum.

712 TRT’de çalışan, benimle birlikte toplam 101 kişi, 9 Kasım 1981 sabahı bağlı bulunduğumuz müdürlerin odalarına çağrıldık ve bir sarı zarfla başka kurumlara atandık. Hiçbir neden, hiçbir yasal gerekçe gösterilmeden... TRT Genel Müdürü, olayın kendisini aştığını, Başbakan bunun bir “devlet tasarrufu olduğunu, yorum yapılamayacağını” söylüyorlar... TRT’de... radyo programcısı, ... ve [denetçi] olarak toplam 11 yıl çalıştım... Ben ve arkadaşlarım mesleğimizi bir çiçek gibi özenle büyütüp geliştirmeye çalıştık. Yolsuz, elektriksiz, okulsuz, sağlık ocaksız yörelerimizin sorunlarını mikrofondan, ekrandan aktarabildiğimizde en mutlu uykularımızı uyumuştuk. Başka kurumlara atanma nedenlerimiz olarak şunlar düşünülüyor: TRT-DER (Tüm Radyo ve Televizyon Çalışanları Derneği) üyesi olmak. Ancak üye sayısı 2000’e yakın bir derneğin üyeleri arasından neden bizler? ... Derneğin çalışmaları nedeniyle hiçbir adli kovuşturmaya uğramadık.... TRT’de çalıştığım 11 yıl içinde yazdığım, ürettiğim hiçbir programım için idari, adli soruşturma geçirmedi, ceza almadım. TRT yayın ilkelerine aykırı tek bir satır yazmadım. Yalnız Ankara Televizyonunda denetçilik görevimin son aylarında okuduğum program metinlerinde “ulus,” “ulusal” sözcüklerini “millet” ve “milli” yapmam için baskı yapıyorlardı... Yasal yollarla bizi görevimizden alamadılar... Olağanüstü dönemin koşullarından yararlanılarak kim bilir ne korkunç ve gerçek dışı eylemlerle suçlandık? En korkuncu da ne ile suçlandığımızı bilememek ve kendimizi savunamamaktır. Atama kararlarımız Devlet Başkanı, Başbakan ve ilgili bakanın imzalarıyla gerçekleştiği için, Danıştay yolu da kapalı.

728 Sözcüklere tepeden inme gelen yasaklar beni çok şaşırttı. Bu şaşkınlıkla, önce sorgu sual etmeden sözcüklerimi isteğe göre değiştirerek İKİ program yaptım ve birden uyandım... Çağdaş kadın yerine asri kadın demenin benim için kolay olmaması gerektiğine karar verdim. Ve şimdi bu anlamsız (belki de pek anlamlı) yasağa hayır diyorum. Ve üzülerek TRT'deki programına son veriyorum.

729 Bunca yıl birkaç kez zor, mantıksız sansür dönemleri yaşadık. Ancak son zamanlarda yaşamakta olduğumuz yozlaşma ve cehalete prim veren süreç örneği ile daha önce karşılaşmamıştık. Vaktiyle sayfalarca döktürdüğüm program metinlerinin son zamanlarda bir daktilo sayfasına indiğini fark ettim geçenlerde. Dilimin ucuna gelen sözcükleri otosansürden geçirerek TRTceye çevirme zorunluluğundan kaynaklanan düşündüğün gibi yazamama sorunu, düşünmeyi ve düşündüğünü aktarmayı da olanaksızlaştırıyordu... 25 yılı bulan radyoculuğumun gümüş jübilesini kutlamak yerine Ocak 1988 itibariyle sona erdirmeye karar verdim.

732 Türkiye'ye geldiklerinde daha sınırdan (Suriye) girer girmez “rap rap” yürüyen askerlerimizi görüntüleyip “İşte burası Türkiye. Ne kadar gergin ve sıkı. Kaygı gözleniyor” diyorlardı. Böyle bir şeyi Sovyetler Birliği'ndeki çekimlerde bile yapmamışlardı. Daha sonra da Doğu Anadolu'yu tanıtırken vurguladılar. Kürtlerle ilgili yerlerde Kürt kelimesini “Doğu Anadolu Türkmenleri” diye değiştirdik. Ama Kütlerin giysisi diye tanıtılan şeyi kesmek zorunda kaldık. Bu yalnızca sakıncalı değil kıyafet devrimine de aykırı.

733 Söz konusu program, Erzurum'da Ramazan günlerinin nasıl geçtiğini, ananevi özellikleriyle görüntülemeyi amaçlamış olsa gerekir. Ancak

kadınlarla erkeklerin apayrı dünyalarda yaşadığı ... 5 yaşındaki erkek çocukların babaları ile gece kahveye gittiği, kadın kadına, erkek erkeğe eğlencelerin masasız sandalyesiz mekanlarda yer aldığı, bağdaş kurularak oturulan bir Erzurum sergilenmektedir. Erzurum'da böyle yaşayan kişiler elbette vardır. Her Erzurumlunun böyle yaşadığını, Ramazanı böyle geçirdiğini iddia etmek ise yanlıştır. Böylesine çağdışı bir hayat tarzını bütün Erzurumlulara mal ederek objektiviteden uzaklaşmış, tek yönlü yayın yapılmış olmaktadır.

735 Bir sabah kendimi yeni görev yerimde – aslında hiçbir iş yapmamak anlamında- yeni bir odada buldum. Burası büyük, güzel bir odaydı. Pencere önünde karşılıklı iki masa vardı... Odanın sakini olan hanım... burayı kendince düzenlemişti. Kapıdan girince evinin bir odasına girmişçesine özür dilemek ihtiyacı duyardınız... Bu hanımın her gün burun buruna oturduğu daktilo makinesi ile hiç arası yoktu... Radyo dairesinde herkesin bir daktilosu zaten vardı, herkes kendi yazısını yazmalıydı! ... Örgü örer, dikiş dikerdi... Hiçbir işim yoktu. Sabah gelişte... ve akşam çıkışta imza atmak zorundaydım... İmzayı attıktan sonra odaya geçerdim. Ya kitap okur ya bilmece çözerdim.

739 Anlayamadığımız bir yerlerden bir takım insanların farklı farklı kadrolara girişi yapılmıştı kuruma. Sonra bir takım acayip görevlere getiriliverdiler. Arşiv çalışanı birden denetleme kurulu üyesi oluverir. Bunlar iktidarın elinde rezerv olarak tuttuğu kadrolardı. Ve birden bire karşınızda bunları muhatap olarak görmeye başlarsınız. Tabii onların yönettiği bir kurumun çalışanı haline gelirsiniz.

741 Kurul, 30 – 35 kişiden oluşuyordu. İdari işlere bakan bir ünite, bir de sekreteryaya vardı. Sekreteri de erkek olan kurul üyelerinin tamamı erkeklerden oluşan bir başkanlıktı. Atatürk Bulvarı’ndaki bir binanın altıncı katındaydı. En dipteki odada oturan arkadaşlar orayı mescit gibi kullanırlardı. Cuma günleri yerlere gazete yayıp namaz kılanlar oluyordu. Kurul Üyesi arkadaşlardan bir kısmı için kadın eli sıkamak günah sayılıyordu. Kadın görünce yakışsız bir görüntü ile karşılaşmış gibi baş çevirmeyi gerektiren kültüre yatkın kişiler de vardı. Onlarla aynı heyecanı paylaşarak iş yapmak çok da kolay olmadı... Özünde hepsi de iyi insanlardı. Bir süre sonra kadromuza hanımlar da katıldı... Devlette bir göreve gelmek belki tercihleriydi, ama yayının o kademesinde görev almak akıllarına bile gelmemiş olabilirdi. Gelmişlerdi işte. Otuz yıllık yayıncıların programlarını denetliyorlardı. Hem de son söz sahibi kişi olarak... İşleri zordu. Kimi balet kostümünü müstehcen bulup bale resitali programını yayından kaldırmaya kalkıyor; kimi şarkı sözlerinde asla kastedilmemiş anlamlar bulup çıkarıyordu. Bir şekilde orta yolu bulmaya çalışıyorduk.

742 İçlerinde ağır dindarlar vardı, kadın eli bile sıkmayan cinsinden. Ben bunları sıkıştırıp “öpçem seni” diyordum, “imdat” diye bağıyorlardı. “Sen utanmıyor musun, ben bütün arkadaşlarımı öpüyorum, bir tek sen mi tahrik oluyorsun bu işten?” diyordum... Mesela o dönem bize program yaptırtmıyorlardı, ben de sürekli “memur gibi” örgü örüyordum. Beni memur kılığına soktuklarından o halimle dalga geçmek için örgü örüyordum. Sonra diyordum ki, “Yok mu sizin orada bana göre adam? Becerikliyim, namusluyum, bana da koca bulsanıza” falan filan. Böyle eğleniyordum.

746 Mesela Yücel Çakmaklı daha MHP'ye yakın bir kanattandı. O *Osmancık* dizisini çekti. Bizim Ziya Öztan 68'li... SBF' de Mahirlerin ve Abdullah Öcalan'ın sınıf arkadaşı olduğu dönem bunlar. Öyle bir kuşaktan olan Ziya Öztan'la yan odada biz şeyi montajlardık: Kurtuluş Savaşı'nın, milli mücadelenin tarihini anlatan bir üçlemesi vardır Ziya Öztan'ın: *Ateşten Günler* onun ilk yapımıdır. Orda *Osmancık* montajlanıyor, burada Kurtuluş Savaşı'nın, milli mücadelenin filmi montajlanıyor aynı koridorda yan yana montaj odalarında.

757 Nezihe Araz'ın yazdığı ve İstanbul Televizyonu'na hazırlanan programda evde oturan kadınları ilgilendiren birbirinden ilginç köşeler, müzik ve filmlerle birlikte, anne, kız ve büyükanneden oluşan bir aile de sürekli ekranlarımıza konuk olacak. Salı sabahları yayınlanacak olan programlarda ev içi konulara yer verilirken, Cuma sabahları ise hanımların evin dışındaki ilgilendikleri değişik konular ve kültür sanat ağırlıklı bir program ekranlarımıza gelecek... Programın “Güzel Olmak Hakkımız” köşesinde tiyatro oyuncusu Gülriz Sururi bir kadının güzel görünmesi için gerekli olanları anlatacak. Defne Yalnız Sezer ise “Yalnız Değilsiniz” köşesinde izleyicilerden gelen mektupları okuyup bir hanım izleyiciyle söyleşecek. Her türden altı şarkının yer aldığı programda ayrıca eski bir atlet kadının öyküsünü anlatan “Bakın Nasıl Koşuyor” adlı öyküyü de izleyeceğiz. “Çocuğumun Sorunları” adlı köşede bir hanım izleyici çocuğunun sorunlarını dile getirip bir uzmanla tartışacak ve programda çocuklar için bir film olacak. Kadınların yaptığı yün örme, gündelik terzicilik, manikürcülük gibi diplomasız meslekler ve bu mesleklerle ilgili bilgilerin yer aldığı köşe “Benim Mesleğim” adını taşıyor. “Avukat Hanım” köşesinde Avukat İnci

Atlı, kanunlarımızda yer alan ve kadınlarımızı ilgilendiren kısımları açıklayacak. “Evin Kitapları” bölümünde bir evde bulunması gereken kitaplardan söz edilip bilgiler verilecek. Bir tablonun nasıl asılması gerektiği, bir çiçeğin yeri, koltukların yerleştirilmesi gibi konularda ise “Evimiz” köşesinde yer alan bir dekoratör, hanım izleyicileri aydınlatacak.

765 Bilmem hafta içindeki günlerde, saat 20.30’dan önce yayınlanan TV izlencelerini, filmlerini izliyor musunuz? Tüm bu yapımların ortak bir yanı var. Çeşitli eksiklikler ve yetersizliklerle dolu olsalar bile, adı geçen yayınlarla, TRT Televizyonu’nun saat 20.30’dan önce küçüklere ve yetişkinlere belli öğretiler çerçevesinde bir şeyler öğretmek istediği... kesindir. Ne var ki, saat 20.30’da yayınlanan [haber bülteninden] sonra gösterilen yerli ve yabancı izlenceler, filmler ve dizilerle iş değişiyor... TRT Televizyonu gece ayı görünce görünümü bozulan “maymun adam” gibi bambaşka bir kişiliğe bürünüyor. Korkunçlaşıyor, gaddarlaşıyor, sertleşiyor, ürkütüyor...

774 Bir kadın özellikle Türkiye’de yalnız yaşıyorsa evlenmesi için çevresinden sık sık öğütler alır. Yalnız yaşamakta yine de diretirse, geçimsiz olduğu ya da şanssız gibi birbirine zıt iki değerlendirme ile karşılaşılır. Bu değerlendirmeler, kadın güzelse yapılır. Eğer çirkinse... susulur, pek bir şey denmez. Nasıl bir önyargılı bakış kadınlara bu, şaşılacak şey! Erkeksiz bir kadını tamamlanmamış bir kişilik saymak, yalnız yaşamakta asıl zorluk budur... Başarılı kadınların, hayatlarını tek başına götüren kadınların örnek alınmasıysa onları genelin içinde tekil sayarak yapıyor

777 Nejla aslında intihar etmek istemiyor... amacı intihar etmek değil. İntihar etmek istese o damın tepesine çıkıp da 24 saat zaman tanımazdı zaten.

Zannediyorum ki ya hemen kendini bir arabanın altına atardı, ya da başka bir şey yapardı. Hemen uygulardı bunu... Nejla orada intihar olgusunu kendi haklarını savunabilmek adına şantaj olarak kullanıyor... Sanki intiharı teşvik edici gibi gösterildi. Bizim filmimiz asla intihar olgusunu vermek isteyen bir film değildir. En azından baş kaldırma felsefesini uygulamak istedik biz. Kadın haklarını savunmak, kadının toplumda erkek kadar haklara sahip olduğunu, ikisinin de insan olduğunu anlatmak istedik. Bu tarafı belirtilmedi [basında]. Dama çıkma bir direnme aslında... Direnmenin tek nedeni de budur.

779 Toskay TRT'si Türk-İslam sentezine bağlılığını her bakımdan kanıtlamıştı.

Artık bu yolu izliyormuş görünmek gerekmiyor. Çünkü Türkiye Batı Avrupa'ya açılmanın gerekliliğini anladı, AT'a (Avrupa Topluluğu) üyelik için başvurdu. Çeşitli konularda ve kurumlarda değişiklik başlıca koşul oldu. Toskay ve ekibinin görevden alınması da aynı koşul nedeniyle gerekliydi. Artık TRT'nin daha "Avrupalı" ve daha "çağdaş" görünmesini sağlamaktan kaçınılamazdı... Sözün kısası Avrupa'ya hoş görünmek amacıyla bir "makyaj"a başvuruluyor.

786 Gelmiş geçmiş TV yöneticileri... bu sunuculara giyim ve saç biçimi

konusunda yol göstermemişlerdir. Yeni TRT yönetimi yaz dönemi yayınlarının başlangıcıyla bu işe el attı. TV haber sunucularındaki değişikliği sezmemiş olamazsınız. Şimdi bu sunucular eskisine kıyasla gerçekten çok şık... Bayan sunucuların giysileri kendilerine adamakıllı yakışıyor. Baylar ise iki dirhem bir çekirdek... Kim yaptı bunları? Türkiye'de "fark edilen" modayı getirmekle görevli büyük bir mağaza... TV haber sunucularını ücretsiz olarak giydirecek, giydirmekle de kalmayıp onlara hangi giysilerin

yakıştığına da karar verecektir... Peki TV sunucularını ücretsiz olarak giydiren mağaza bu işten ne elde ediyor? ...Milyonlarca, hatta belki de milyarlarca liralık ücretsiz reklam... TV haber sunucuları her gün defalarca ekranda görünüyorlar. Hem de TRT Televizyonu'nun en önemli yayınları sayılan haber bültenlerinde... İşte bu büyük mağaza kendi giysilerini, bu giysilerle ilgili "aksesuarı" ve kendi yerleştirmek istediği moda anlayışını her gün, her saat, her mevsim... tüm Türkiye'ye devletin TRT'sini tepe tepe kullanarak ve TRT'ye tek kuruş ödmeden tanıtılabilecektir, tanıtmaya da başlamıştır.

789 Rekabeti şimdilik erkek buluyorum. Çünkü kimin eline televizyon verirsiniz, yayın hakkı verirsiniz, ona çok güç verirsiniz. O bir anlayış meselesi. Yayın ahlakı gibi birtakım şeyler var. O seviyeye geldik mi, orada yanlışlık yapmayalım. Ama Türkiye o seviyeye geldikten sonra korkmadan özel televizyona geçebiliriz.

805 Ben İngiltere'ye '91'de gittim. '94'te döndüm üç yıl sonra. Ufak ufak değişmeye başlamıştı. O zamanlar hissetmeye başladım. Mesela röportaj için kapısını çaldığımız zaman reddedilebiliyorduk ara sıra.... Ama o zamanlar TRT'de prodüktör olmak, yardımcı prodüktör olmak hakikaten büyük bir prestijdi. Büyük bir onurdu.

806 Kendimi çok şanslı görüyordum o açıdan. Ayrıcalıklı görüyordum. Kadın olarak hiçbir sıkıntı yaşamadık. Her yerde belediyeler, valilikler bize, ordu evleri, hep kapılarını açardı. Yardımcı olmaya çalışırdı bir mekana, bir köye, bir kasabaya gittiğimizde. Mesela Diyarbakır'da çekimler yapılacaktı. Hiç unutmam onu. '88'de. Çok genç ve çok idealistim o günlerde. İşte bu GAP kanalı yeni kuruldu. Bizim o zamanki program müdürümüz de "Artık," dedi,

“Bütün röportajlarınızı, doktorunuzu, uzmanınızı Güneydoğu’da bulacaksınız. Orada çekim yapacaksınız.” Orada nasıl yapacağız? Çatışmalar ağır bir şekilde devam ediyor. Nasıl gideceğiz oraya? Olmaz ki, falan filan... Böyle itirazlar olunca “Yok” dedi, “gideceksiniz.” Ve ben de gidenlerden biriydim... Dağda bayırda, Lice’de çekimler yaptık ki, yani çatışmaların çok ağır olduğu yerler... Yani kadın olduğum için orada hiç sıkıntı çekmedim. Yani “Sen kadın başına buraya niye geldin?” falan... Öyle bir şey hiç görmedim. Bilakis herkes yardımcı olmaya çalışıyordu.

808 Gerçekten büyük bir elemeydi. Bu arada televizyonda uzun süre staj yapmış veya gönüllü çalışmış insanlar vardı. Pek çok meşhurlar vardı. Onlar dahi elendi. Yani elenenler arasında onlar da vardı. Bizim girdiğimiz dönemde, 87’de girdim ben, kaç bayan kaç erkek vardı, onu hesaplamaya çalışıyorum. Ama herhalde eşit oranlardaydı. Yani çok erkek yoğunluklu değildi.... Hatta daha sonra başladığında gördüm ki, kadınlar daha çoktu. Özellikle program yapım grubunda kadın ağırlıklıydı.

809 Hiç şaşırtmadı. Belki Ankara’da büyümüş olmamdan dolayı. Belki televizyonda hep... spikerlerin çoğu bayan, programcılarının çoğu bayan... onu görmüş olmamızdan dolayı. 80’lerden sonra liseyi okudum ben. ‘82’de bitirdim. Sonra işte üniversitede yani bayanlar hep vardı. Ve bir gariplik yoktu. Çok normaldi. Onun için hiç tuhafıma gitmedi. Hatta ağabeyim de benimle birlikte o sınavlara girmişti. Mesela o kazanamadı.

814 Bu kadroyla çalışanların her sene sözleşmesinin yenilenmemesi gibi bir tehdit kafalarının üzerinde olduğu için öyle kadrolu çalışanların sesini yükselttiği her konuya bizler ses yükseltmezdik...Sözleşme denilen çalışma akdi insanların epeyce elini, dilini, kolunu bağlayan bir şeydi. Siz bilirsiniz ki

önümüzdeki sene geldiğinde o sene yaptığınız bütün günah ve sevaplar orda toplanıyordu. Dolayısıyla işverenin gerçek bir neden ileri sürmeden ama mutlaka görünürde bir kılıf uydurarak “bu sene yenilemiyorum sözleşmeni” deme hakkı vardı.

817 Programların her aşamasında bu insanlar çok ciddi biçimde...“çalıştırıldı” demeyeceğim...“kullanıldılar”. Çünkü mesai diye bir kavram yoktu... Günlük çalışma saatleri içinde istihdam edildiğinizi biliyorsunuz. Ama karşınıza şey dikiliyor: “Yayıncılık böyle bir şeydir, gecesi gündüzü yoktur” filan gibi bir etik dayatma, sözde etik dayatma... “Böyle saatine bakarak yayıncılık olmaz,” gece yarısı montaja kalırsın... Ya da ben drama programlarında çalışıyordum ki, film setlerinin başlangıç ve bitişi asla önceden öngörülemez.

818 ...O denetleme kurulu üyeleriyle çok yüz yüze gelirdim. O odalara girdiğimde şeyin rahatsızlığını alırdım. Bunlar bizim kadromuzda çalışan oradaki bayan personele “küçük çaylak kızlar” muamelesi yapmaya çok hazır, ama bir yandan da “bıyık buran” adamlardı...O odaya girdiğiniz anda tepeden tırnağa bir bakış... “Hadi bakalım düştün elime ne isteyeceksen iste bakalım, hatta şöyle bir otur sana bir çay söyleyelim...” Bir hukuk kurmaya çalışan, o arada programla ya da yönetmeninle ilgili birtakım şeyleri senin ağzından alan bir tavır. Dolayısıyla kadın personele bu anlamda her an yerine bir başkası konulabilir... hissini veriyorlardı. Çok büyük yetkiler vermeden her işe koşturulabilir ve de “ortalıkta cinsi latif olarak dolaşsın” şeklinde bakan bir kafaydı.

724 Kocam şey isterdi: O, eski kocam olduğu için çok rahatlıkla konuşabiliyorum. Tencere yemeği isterdi. Saat 7’de yemek isterdi. Ama bu

meslekte gece yarıları çalışmak vardı. Saati yoktu. Bakmazlardı işte erkek mi kadın mı... Çünkü ne de olsa “kuştuk” yani. “Hayır, kalamayız” diyemezdik. Ve o zaman... “ikinci sınıf insanlar” da vardı ve ne olduğunu biliyorduk. “İkinci sınıf insanlar” derken şunu kastediyorum: Aile değerlerini daha ön planda tutup da mesleğini keyfe keder olarak götüren insanlar da vardı... Ve onların da görüyorduk durumunu...

726 Evlenip çok fazla çekime gittiğim için Televizyon Müdürü beni çağırdı, “Evliliğinde bir problem mi var?” dedi. “Yok,” dedim, “ben mesleğimi çok seviyorum. Mesleğimi çok sevdiğim için kocam bana çok saygı duyuyor, ben de ona çok saygı duyuyorum.” “Peki, tamam, git” demişti o zaman. Normal olarak “evlenince oturursun” mantığı vardı yöneticide.

729 Bir kere ben sinema filmi de çektim. TRT için, ama sinemalarda da gösterilen 35 mm’lik bir film... TRT dışında doğrudan set işçisi vesaire onlarla çalışıyorsun. Herkesin de bir iş isteme dili var. Yeşilçam’ın dili daha sert, daha saldırgan. Ben set amirine mesela “Lütfen alıp şunu şuraya koyar mısınız, şaryo döşer misiniz?” vesaire dediğim zaman bir gün biri bana geldi... “Hocam, biz buna, böyle davranmaya alışkın değiliz,” dedi. Benden rica etti, kendisinden öyle rica ederek bir şey istemememi. Bunu benim kadın olmamın getirdiği bir şey olarak düşündüm.

830 Kadın olarak nazik de olsan, mesela daha “sokak çocuğu” gibi olmayı seçiyorsun. Çünkü, ister istemez, erkek egemen bir sistemin içinde... bir şekilde kadın olarak var olmaya çalışıyorsun. Diyelim ki, bir kokteyle gidiyorsun. Kokteylde bir takım “karılar” var. Onun karısı, bunun karısı... Ben kimsenin karısı olmayacağım, tek başına ayakta duracağım sistemiyle yaşadım. Tabii ki, çok sevdiğim bir kocam var, ama onun gölgesi olarak

yokum hayatta. Her zaman ikimiz de birer bireyiz. Öyle olduğu zaman o toplumda yer almak için, “hadi lan” falan demek, kafasına vurmak, küfretmek vesaire gerekiyor. Mesela benim annem hanım kadındı. Ben hiçbir zaman hanım kadın olmadım. O, o mesleğin içinde kendime yer edinebilmek için oldu... Hem de o yaşam biçimini de seviyordum. Yani akşam meyhaneye gitmeyi de seviyordum. Ama... zarif bir kadın tek başına meyhaneye gidemez... O şeyi giyinerek benim istediğim yaşam biçiminin içinde yer aldım... Bu yüzden de ben birey olarak hiçbir sorun yaşamadım... Dikkat çeken de bir fiziğim var aynı zamanda. Ona rağmen her zaman rahat ettim.

833 Kapıdan düzine düzine otobüsler, otobüsler, otobüsler geldi. Orada güvenlik görevlisinin yanında duruyordum kapıda ve dedim ki, “Bu kadar çalışan mı var burada? Biz İstanbul’da çalışan bir avuç insanız.” ... “Abla,” dedi, “dört bin kişi var burada sırf büro hizmeti gören.” Sonra o gelen insanlar çocuklarıyla otobüslerden indiler. Çocuklar servislere bindirilip TRT’nin kendi yuvasına götürüldü.

834 Ben... bir kadın çalışan olarak İstanbul’da bütün bu hizmetlerden ne kadar habersiz olduğumu ve ne kadar yoksun olduğumu fark ettim... Neredeyse bütün biz İstanbul çalışanları Ankara’daki dört bin kişiye bakar haldeydik... Bizler koşturarak yayının devamlılığını sağlamaya çalışırken onlar orada kendilerine bayağı konforlu bir hayat kurmuşlar... Memur olmanın bütün avantajlarından yararlanabilenler... Dolayısıyla o kadınlar için çocuk sahibi olmak bir sorun değildi. Ama bizim İstanbul’da.. gece gündüz çalışan kadın prodüktörler ya da programda çalışan kadınlar için çoluk çocuk sahibi olmak hayalden öte hayaldi. Ne zaman, hangi arada yapıp nerede baktıracaksın

çocuğunu? Böyle bir sorunla orada yüz yüze çalışıyorduk ve pek çoğumuz da
çoluk çocuk sahibi olmadı. Ben de olmadım.

CHAPTER 6

850 *TV'de 7 Gün* dergisi çok zor koşullarda dünyaya geldi, çünkü 1975'te
televizyon bu kadar gelişmemişti. Ayrıca *Günaydın* ve *Milliyet* televizyon
dergileri çıkarmışlar ve her ikisi de tutulmamıştı. O günlerde *Hürriyet*'in
Haftasonu vardı. Bu üniteyi genişletmek için bir televizyon dergisi
kurulmasına karar vermişlerdi. Bir de bizim şansımızı denememiz istendi.
Ancak üst kademedede bir endişe vardı. Bütün sayfaları televizyon konularıyla
dolu olan bir derginin tutulmayacağına inanıyorlardı. ...Çok küçük ve amatör
bir kadro ile provalar yapıldı ve bunlar beğenilince Şubat ayında çıkmasına
karar verildi. ... İlk sayı (90,000 bin basılmıştı sanıyorum) o gün tükendi.
Birkaç hafta sonra dergi oturmuş, tiraj almaya başlamıştı bile. ... *TV'de 7
Gün* çıktığı zaman, gazetelerde bugünkü gibi televizyon sayfalarını bırakın,
televizyon köşeleri bile yoktu. Ama dergi tutulunca hemen başka televizyon
dergileri çıkmaya başladı. Gazeteler televizyona geniş yer verdiler.

851 Hep düşünürüz... Her Pazartesi sabahı neden gazetecinize gidip bu dergiyi
alırsınız? Bir hafta süreyle ekrana yansıyacak televizyon programlarını en
ayrıntılı biçimde verdiği için mi? Yoksa siyah beyaz ekranın ardındaki o
rengarenk dünyayı... dedikodularıyla evinize getirdiği için olmasın? Belki de
televizyonda izlediğiniz ve hayranı olduğunuz yıldızları en ilginç yönleriyle
tanıttığımız için bizi okuyorsunuz. Ya da alışkanlık...

870 Bildiğimiz bir şey var ki, dizideki Gazeteci Ümir'in birçok çevreyi,
davranışları, gece kuşluğu, sokaktaki sigara içişi, pek alışamadığımız özgür

- davranışları, komiserle olan laubaliliği ile çok kızdırdığı... Türkiye’de nerede bu Gazeteci Ümit’in benzeri kadın gazeteci? Haber alabilmek için tüm değerleri hiçe sayan kadınlar... Nasıl bu Türk toplumundan soyutlanış? Hele hele bizim yokuşun kadın gazetecileri pek üzüldüler bu yanlış yansıtmaya... Dahası birkaçı *Paranın Kiri*’ni protesto etmesi için Gazeteciler Sendikası’na başvurdular... *Paranın Kiri* kadın gazetecinin kiri olup çıktı ekrana çünkü
- 885 Hayır hiç korkmuyorum... TV’de görüntümün güzel olması ya da olmaması beni ne heyecanlandırıyor ne de korkutuyor. Ben ekrana güzelliğimi göstermek için çıkmıyorum. Ekranda dikkat ettiğim konu düzgün konuşabilmektir. Uzun yıllar Ankara Radyosu’nda spikerlik yaptığım için bu konuda bir zorluk duymuyorum.
- 888 Arkadaşlarımızla bu konuyu tartıştık. Vardığımız sonuca göre TV’nin hanım spikerleri haberleri gayet güzel okumaktadırlar. Onlar şov yapmıyorlar ve defileye çıkmıyorlar. Şık ve gösterişli giyinmelerine gerek yoktur. Yaptıkları göreve göre kıyafetleri normaldir.
- 891 Seçil Heper’in sahneye çıkmasını henüz erken buluyorum. Erken bulmamdaki sebep de onun eğitiminin yetersiz olmasıdır. Seçil Heper önce radyoda başarıya ulaştıktan sonra sahneye çıkmalıydı... Bir radyo sanatçısının radyoyu bırakıp sahneye gitmesi nankörlüktür. Çünkü radyo o sanatçıyı büyük emek harcayarak yetiştiriyor. Devlet kendisine maaş bağlıyor ve sanatçı bütün bunları bırakıp sahneye çıkıyor. Bu olacak iş değildir.
- 907 Etiler yakınlarında zevkle döşenmiş bir ev... Perdeleri sımsıkı kapatılmış küçük sade bir çalışma odası... Odanın içinde ilk göze çarpanlar bir piyano, çalışma masası ve duvarları çevreleyen kitaplar... Bir de çalışma masasının üzerindeki daktilo ile makara teyp... Ufak tefek sevimli bir hanım oturmuş

daktilosunun başına harıl harıl çalışıyor. Yanındaki çöp tenekesi daktilodan çıkan okunup da beğenilmeyen kağıtlarla masasının üstü kitaplar dosyalar bantlarla dolu.

920 Çocukları seviyorum. Bence çocukları sevmekle iş bitmiyor. O çocuğu iyi yetiştirmek, topluma yararlı bir insan yapmak önemli. Bizim şartlarımızda çocuk sahibi olmak bencillik. Bir çocuğumuz olsaydı analı babalı bir yetim olarak büyüyecekti.

921 Fakülteyi bitirir bitirmez çalışmaya başladım. Yani hiç ev kadını olmadım. Sosyal yanım ağır basıyor. Bu nedenle vaktim olursa hayır derneklerinde çalışmak istiyorum. Birilerine yardım etmenin hazzı çok güzel. Evde oturup toplantılara giderek dedikodu yapıp birilerini çekiştirerek pastalar börekler yiyip şişmanlayarak konkende kaybetmenin üzüntüsünü yaşayarak zaman geçirmek çok anlamsız.

923 Yeni yaşamım mı? Elbette evde oturup kalmayacağım. Bu benim ölümüm demek olur. Bazı yüksek öğrenim kurumlarından teklifler var. Bazıları ile de ben gidip konuştum. Gazetecilik de düşüncelerim arasında.

933 Yerine göre bir etek bluz, yerine göre bir pardösüye, yerine göre de kürküne bürünür Kumbasar. Ve şıklığını yine yerine göre bir eşarp siyah bir fötr şapka ve bir çift eldiven gibi aksesuarlarla birleştirir. İşte şıklığının en önemi sırları da burada, “yerine göreliğindedir” güzel sunucunun.... Belli bir stil hakimdir giyiminde... Canan Kumbasar’ın giysilerindeki ortak özellik de değişik bir klasisizm, asil bir tarz ve zengin görünüm.

937 Şimdi anladık Sevinç Yemişçi’deki o büyük değişikliğin nedenini... Ekrana çıktığı ilk günlerde dikkatsiz makyajı, gelişigüzel giyimi ile hayli tenkit edilmişti. Ama onca tenkide rağmen, ne makyajına ne de giyimine özen

göstermemiştir. Derken... çiçek misali açılıverdi Yemişçi. Saç şeklinden yürüyüşüne, makyajından giyimine kadar her şeyini değiştirdi. Hatta kendine ‘estetik ameliyat’ bile yaptırdı. Neden böylesine değişmek gereğini duymuştu, bir türlü çözemiyorduk. Meğer gizli evlilik hazırlığındaymış.

943 Bu işin üstüne basın gitti. Benim yaptığım işle değil de elbisemle küpemle ilgilenildi. Oysa yaptığım iş hiç de küçümsenecek bir iş değil. Benim 40-45 dakikalık bir programa hazırlanmam yaklaşık 25 günümü alıyor. Program metinlerini ben yazıyorum... Kamera karşısına geçmek için hazırlanmam ise ancak 25 dakikamı alıyor. İnsanların 25 günü bir kenara itip 45 dakikanın ve bir küpenin peşine düşmeleri bana ters geliyor.

953 Menajerim sayesinde Ramazan Bakkal’la görüşmek için İstanbul

Televizyonu’na gittim. Bana senaryoyu verdi. Adresimi ve telefon numaramı aldı. Senaryoyu okudum ve rolü kabul ettim. “Ben size haber veririm,” dedi. Aradan üç gün geçti, çekim haberi geldi. Ramazan Bey bana akşam evime gelmek istediğini söyledi. Aynı akşam saat sekizde evime geldi. Evde kız arkadaşım vardı, içeriye almak istemedim. “Çok önemli bir konu” dedi ve içeriye girdi. Bana aynen “Çok hoşuma gidiyorsun, bana bir iyilik yap” diyor başka bir şey demiyordu. Kabul etmedim, tabii. Sinirlendi ve hırs içinde gitti. Ertesi günü yardımcısı beni telefonla aradı ve “Ramazan Bey sizinle başka bir dizide çalışmak istiyor. Siz bu dizi için çok güzelsiniz. Bize Anadolu tipli bir kadın lazım,” dedi.

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