

Evaluating Narrativization Practices in Turkish TV serials as a Venue of Popular Historiography

Popüler Tarihyazımı Mecrası olarak Türk TV Dizilerindeki Öykülendirme Pratiklerinin Değerlendirilmesi

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Abstract

This paper aims at constructing a bridge between narratives and morality, as represented in three selected TV dramas assumed to have symbolic power over Turkish audiences: *Resurrection*, *You are My Homeland*, and *Yunus Emre*. The storification of historical events and personalities through TV dramas is considered to increase understanding of how different moral argumentations are related with contestations over tradition and culture. The major assumption in this article is that understanding the basic rhetorical strategies in these programs has a major impact on the way in which we analyze current ideological tensions and tactics, which are positioned on a constantly shifting ground. In this paper, the voices used in the strategies of constructing a moral argumentation will be evaluated through a model based on discourses of divinity, community, and autonomy (Sheweder, Much, Mahapra, & Park, 1997). The role of narrative transactions in TV dramas is explicated so as to make an assessment on the significance of agency as well as the politics of interpretation.

Keywords: Narrative, Storytelling, TV Serials, Morality, Rhetorical Strategies.

Öz

Bu makale, Türk izleyicisi üzerinde sembolik bir güce sahip olduğu kabul edilen üç farklı televizyon dizisinde temsil edildiği şekliyle, öykülendirme ve ahlakilik arasında bir köprü kurmaya çalışmaktadır. Bu çalışma için seçilen diziler, Türkiye’de farklı televizyon kanallarında yayınlanan *Diriliş*, *Ertuğrul*, *Vatanım Sensin*, ve *Yunus Emre*’dir. Bu makalede, tarihsel olayların ve kişiliklerin öykülendirilmesi için kullanılan retorik stratejilerin aynı zamanda gelenek ve kültür üzerine olan savaşımmlarla ilişkisi üzerine analitik bir araç olduğu göz önünde tutulmaktadır. Buradaki temel ön kabul, söz konusu programlarda yer alan retorik stratejileri anlama girişiminin günümüzde ortaya çıkan son derece kaygan bir zeminde yer alan ideolojik

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gerilimleri ve taktikleri analiz etme biçimlerimiz üzerine etkisi olduğuna dair argümandır. Bu makalede, ahlaki bir iddia inşa etmede kullanılan üç strateji, kutsallık, topluluk ve özerklik üçlüsüne dayanan bir model yardımıyla ele alınacaktır (Sheweder, Much, Mahapra, ve Park, 1997). Bu makalede, popüler televizyon dizilerinde yer alan anlatı düzeneğinin rolü, faillik (agency) kavramının önemi ve yorumun siyaseti ile ilişkisi çerçevesinde irdelenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anlatı, Hikaye Anlatımı, Televizyon Dizileri, Ahlak, Retorik Stratejiler.

Introduction

This paper aims at constructing a bridge between narratives and morality, as represented in the selected TV dramas, which are assumed to have symbolic power over audiences in Turkey. It is considered that the storification of historical events and personalities through TV dramas helps us to understand how different moral argumentations are reproduced in the texts. Another assumption is that understanding the basic rhetorical strategies used in the formation of narratives in these programs also supports the analysis of current ideological tensions and tactics, which are positioned on a very uncertain and constantly shifting ground. The voices covered in these dramas and strategies of storification are related with codes of historical agency, an important aspect of the politics of interpretation. Accordingly, the paper aims at evaluating the power and the role of narratives in shaping the approaches to problematization of history and morality in the selected dramas. It is also emphasized that these Turkish TV dramas offer a new opportunity to investigate the intersections between narratives, morality, popular historiography, and identity.

The types and the forms of narratives vary dramatically according to social, political and cultural discourses in Turkish society. The crises and strains experienced at national level are reflected through the media genres of TV drama and serials, which reveal themselves as narrative forms, consisting of different layers and symbols, which can be explicated. Several different versions of this genre have been produced in the Turkish media sphere, all of which signify important sociological transformations, as well as a means of expressing social tensions and ambivalences. Since 1980's, there appears to have been two outstanding themes or formulae in the media: re-making of a gendered cultural sphere, and the rise of popular religion, both of which reveal a contested sphere of discourses and identity which are key issues in the cultural archive of Turkish society. In addition, the visibility of Islam and a gendered sphere in everyday life, the fault lines between the sacred and the profane, in the Durkheimian sense, have caused intense debates on identity politics and historiography in the popular media. This intensity underlines the need to delineate the configuration of moral argumentation strategies in the formation of TV dramas' worldviews and ideologies.

Narrating history and identity has always been a problematic area, encompassing diverse disciplines. The rise of identity politics, and the struggle over defining the boundaries of discourses of legitimacy are two issues that brought about the need to re-examine complex issues in story forms. The narrativization in and through popular religion became so clearly manifest that TV serials commonly construct their historiographies a la mythical figures, who draw on various interpretations of the Islamic tradition. A range of strategies are employed to construct a popular historiography, so

as to create a venue of contest, in which the major features of TV aesthetics are defined through a series of moral lessons.

The publicly-owned Turkish Radio and Television (TRT), was dominant in the sector until the year 1990, which marks an important historical moment for the impact of media on mass audiences. Although it has since lost its dominance, the TRT period witnessed the production of historical TV drama and adaptation of fiction which symbolized an effort to narrativize the past. Most of the TV drama forms which are considered to have unique genre characteristics are, ironically, labelled as a series of narratives based on 'real life situations'. The purpose, apparently, is to engender a sense of 'authenticity', expressed through masculine/feminine, pre-modern, nostalgic, and moral aesthetics. This continuing dominant influence of realism on television corresponds to the strong human inclination to try to make sense of the world through the use of narratives.

The storification of TV drama productions is important in terms of characterizing people and cultures, traumatized history, mastermind narrative styles, and practices of popular and collective memory. It thus offers a moral laboratory for understanding major sociological cleavages, as well as ideological preferences. TV dramas are built on various different multilayered narratives, which serve the politics of remembrance, as another heavily contested area. Themes include the lives of Ottoman sultans, tensions between different ideological markers such as Islamism and laicism, and love stories as symbols of societal unity as a panacea against fragile relationships. All these seemed to have been narrated through a series of mediatized acts in Turkish society. Once a master narrative is constructed (traditional vs. modern), the audiences tend to identify it with themselves and their own actions.

Why is Narrativity and Morality Linkage Important?

The ways in which TV serials are investigated in this paper require us to position the concept of narrative (storytelling) as well as morality, which is related to one of the research objectives. Narratives, which are ubiquitous in the cultural sphere, are heavily reproduced by the media and configure identity markers embedded in rhetorical and narrative features. On the other hand, as discussed below, morality can be entrenched in narrative discourses, which are characterized by interpretations on moral dimension of understanding the selected purpose in each moral claim. As will be discussed, the temporal order leads to a specific outcome in each narrative, and this also serves to present and prioritize a historical event.

Positioning narratives in humanities and social sciences has been evaluated in various different studies¹. This paper accepts narratives as the object of inquiry, which can also be understood as a sociology of narrative which implies the role and significance of narrative as a type of social act. The various approaches to the celebration of narrative analysis have been studied in a wide range of works, one of which is exemplified by Somers (1994), who argues against the view that narrative is a form of the social world imposed on social life. Narratives have the capacity to reveal truths

1 A thorough evaluation on the conceptual history of narrative is analyzed by Hyvärinen. Please see: Hyvärinen, M. (2006), Merrill, (2007).

about the social world that are weakened or silenced by an insistence on more traditional methods of social science. Somers (1994) refers to the ways in which social life is storied, and also argues that “narrative is an ontological condition of social life” (p. 614). One of the major reasons for focusing on TV dramas is to reveal how characters, events and ‘emplotment’ provide an ontological security, while the narratives may also be articulated and distorted by ideologies.

As John Pier and José Angel Garcia Landa (2011) point out very clearly, narrative is a rearrangement of previous narratives in order to articulate a new one. Narrativization is therefore a remaking of previously narrativized events, and can be exemplified through media texts in general, and TV serials in particular. Storytelling in TV serials comprises multi-layered narrative discourses, which rely on forms of selective appropriation of events and characters. Thus, using narratives and morality in relation to an analysis of TV serials would illuminate temporally ordered events with a beginning, a middle, and an end. It can also reveal the relationship between these events in the context of an opposition or struggle. These characteristics of narratives, referred as the ‘relationality of parts’ or ‘emplotment’, offer countable or uncountable assembly of events (Somers, 1994), and can highlight moral and epistemic consequences of TV serials.

The narratives and morality linkage, therefore, derives from the core characteristic of narratives, which is a moral impulse. The nature of the narrative form is considered to be moral because stories make events intelligible by imposing a temporal order that leads to some end that defines the moral frame of the story, and because the nature of the characters and events are defined with reference to that purpose (Lewis, 1987, p. 290). Media texts, which employ contestations over tradition and culture, accordingly, would offer a rich data set, in which stories are told in the process of moral direction. Narrative transactions, as is exemplified through three different TV serials below, have a moral impact because characters and events are placed within a context where moral judgment is a necessary part of rendering certain acts meaningful.

Such contentious discourses as stories, with their different moral directions, can be used as narrative examples, as social acts which can highlight the very core of collective consciousness, identity markers, as well as popular memory as ideology. The struggle over who we are, for example, can be considered as one of the major markers of the identity problem in a society, and this problem can be analyzed through various different claims embedded in narratives, with their empowering and disempowering role in the cultural sphere. As Amelie Rorty (2012) succinctly notes, claims to morality can, however, be misused, reflected as sanctimonious self-righteousness, self-centered moral narcissism, and deflecting, misleading justification, and thus present an abusive mask of morality.

“Rather than providing formulae that anybody can follow step by step without the hard work of thinking, moral convictions and conventions direct us to refining and applying the questions that turn attention to the many different dimensions of what make choice, character and action admirably worthy or despicably wrong” (Rorty, 2012, p. 7).

If narratives provide indications about how we organize the world, then, correspondingly, the ways in which media texts prioritize a purpose over others would illuminate use and abuse of moral claims embedded in narratives.

The Role of Storification and Moralized Historical Agency

It seems reasonable to argue that a society in transition from a long-established empire to an embryonic Republic would reveal crises or conflicts over meaning-making practices. The intersection of politics and culture is a sphere where different meanings are negotiated to clarify complex moral reflections. The moral imagination created by narratives, then, is a sociological and a linguistic tool for the understanding of the positioning and definition of human agency. “Narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news items, conversations” (Barthes, 1977, p.79). According to Kenneth Burke (1969, p. 8), most actions are motivated by processes beyond rational persuasion; in other words, these processes identify with some form of idea, worldview, image or a tonality (p.8). The role of non-cognitive elements in using rhetorical tools has been widely discussed in the literature². Narratives function as a moral laboratory, providing an excellent opportunity to exercise a capacity for moral imagination, for they provide an opportunity to deliberate, explore and reflect upon moral issues without having to endure the consequences of everyday moral decisions (Hakemulder, 2000; Widdershoven, 1993). As Hayden White vividly argues, story forms not only permit us to judge the moral significance of human projects, they also provide the means by which to judge, even while we pretend to be merely describing. Narrative has the power to demonstrate what it means to be *moral* beings (rather than machines endowed with consciousness), more or less capable, and shrewd enough to carry out our intentions as we conceive them. What can be learned from narratives is what it means to have intentions, the desire and the courage attempt to carry them out (White, 1973, p.16). In addition, narratives are perceived as a moral laboratory for the reader to experiment with imagined moral decisions and their consequences (Nussbaum, 2003; Rorty, 1989).

Moral imagination reflects this notion of morality, and is understood as “an ability to [envisage] various possibilities for acting within a given situation and to envision the potential help and harm that are likely to result from a given action” (Johnson, 1994, p. 202). Thus, the potential for television dramas to become the venue of politics of interpretation stems from their power to narrate and storify individuals’ options about intentions. Popular historiography offers rich resources, presented as having the privilege of direct relations with real life events. The moral imagination is constituted by stories and discourses, which complement one another in terms of serializing and representing events.

Therefore, television narrativity can be analyzed within the framework of making, narrating and configuring stories and discourses, which are assumed to have linguistic power over society as moral order. In other words, in order to understand how different voices and values are integrated into texts to offer construct meaning for audiences, one needs to evaluate the positioning of actors, roles, hierarchies, intentions, and preferences. Revealing these elements would provide insight into

2 Jerome S. Bruner describes “two modes of cognitive functioning, two modes of thought, each providing distinctive ways of ordering experience, by constructing reality.” One mode he calls logico-scientific or paradigmatic. This mode includes arguments that make truth claims which are falsifiable through either formal logic or empirical evidence. The second mode of cognition, Bruner identifies as stories or narratives. Rather than truth, narratives seek lifelikeness and verisimilitude (Bruner, 1986, p. 11).

the moral imagination of actors, which include different understandings about a given situation. The conceptual model formulated by Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, and Park, (1997) provides a tool to analyze the moral configuration of television the selected dramas. It is accepted that these dramas represent different types of ethical discourses, which allow an interpretation of the ways in which people negotiate their different values and ends in Turkish society. The links between morality and narrative constructed through discursive tools in these productions can be understood using the themes, stories, actions, and events described below.

Society As Moral Order³

Autonomy	Community	Divinity
Harm, Rights, Justice	Duty, Hierarchy, Interdependence	Sacred Order, Natural Order, Tradition
Individual as a Preference Structure	Actor in a Play	Way of Life
Obligations come from being a person	Obligations come from being part of a community	Displaying dignity by showing ultimate concerns
Free agent	Social, not selfish	Human
Agency	Community	Heroic enchantment
Free contact	Sacrifice	Angelic side of human nature

The major sociological tensions revealed by the narratives also point out certain didacticism in which political and historical lessons are taught. A certain pattern of an ambivalent practices may glamourize or de-glamourize key characters, functioning as a major strategy of seriality, which serves as a powerful marker for constructing a sphere in terms of portraying a sense of authenticity. Turkish TV drama practices have re-produced reworked legends through a gendered discourse that combines a quasi-theological world with a myth making agenda, highlighting the ability of television aesthetics to mediate between the past and the present. Approaches to the readjustment of certain narratives provides discursive evidence which enables the understanding of the incorporation of various components into a master narrative. This understanding, it is assumed, functions as a political act.

The paper will assess the storification practices by exemplifying three TV serials: 1) *Diriliş* (The Resurrection: Ertuğrul, 2014), a production based on a story of the Ottomans' tribal ancestors. The serial offers narratives of a history which seek to trace the roots of the Ottomans through legendary configurations characterized by highly masculine and didactic myth-making strategies. 2) *Vatanım Sensin* (2016) (You are my Homeland), the story of a Turkish soldier and his family in the 1920's, set in Greece and Turkey. The invasion of Turkish lands by Greek forces leads to a struggle at different levels; different protagonists in the narrative represent interpretations of heroic virtuosities, providing cases for understanding the complex array of narrativization. 3) *Yunus Emre* (2015) is based

3 Adapted from: Shweder, R. A., Much, N. C., Mahapatra, M., & Park, L.(1997). The "big three"of moral frame (autonomy, community, divinity) and the "big three"explanations of suffering. In A. M. Brandt & P. Rozin (Eds.), *Morality and health* (p. 119-169). NewYork: Routledge. The researchers use the model to explain and categorize the moral discourses of individuals. In this paper, it is assumed that the positioning of actors, discourses, and values provides us with the patterns and characterizations in the formation of a typology.

on the life of Sufi poet in 13th century Anatolia. According to his philosophy, everyone has a piece of God within; the body alone dies, while the soul reaches God if it has loved mankind and forgiven faults, endured pains and endeavored to learn the secrets, the reasons, and the aspects of being. In Sufi Islam, parables (*menkıbe*) are used as a linguistic tool which enables people/disciples to make inferences, and thus serve as moral guidance. The engagement of mentors in a dialogue with their disciples is able to reveal partial truth, because such a dialogical inquiry operates as a mental strategy, connecting the sacred book (Qur'an) with the spectator and the tradition.

The ethics of divinity: Yunus Emre: the path to love⁴

An example of a TV drama in which the ethics of divinity is an essential part is a portrayal of Yunus Emre, a Sufi poet in 12th century Anatolia, known as one of the most important figures of Alevi-Bektashi sect within the world of Heterodox Islam. Yunus Emre is a member of a local religious community led by Taptuk Emre, who becomes his mentor. The narrative begins simply; after meeting his mentor, he decides to join a (mainly male) community, where he begins soul-searching. The serial focuses on the lead character, Yunus Emre, who is guided by his mentor's stories and rituals in his quest to discover the path to love, that is, the path to becoming a dervish. Another character, Molla Kasım, less spiritually inclined than Yunus Emre, and forces him out of the compound by spreading rumors against him. In every episode, the camera focuses on daily lives of dervishes, as well as the leader of the community, who provides moral support and prescriptions through his parables told after the daily evening prayer (Halman, 1968; Tatçı, 2013).

The serial articulates various parables in different situations, where participants seek a mystical reconciliation after being exposed to conflicts at different levels. One interesting characteristic of these storytelling rituals is that both the narrator and the listeners are invited to self-evaluate, and to assess their own deeds, feelings and beliefs. The narratives, often based on Sufism, mystical teachings of Islam, are led by a member of a hereditary priestly caste (*dede*) or a dervish. Uttered in the form of religious stories and hymns, they are constructed as spiritual and ethical guidelines for participants. During these ceremonies, the leader of ritual invites the listeners to think about the spiritual meaning of the story, to evaluate themselves and others, so as to form an ethical stance towards life, and to feel God's revelation at that moment.

Therefore, these stories are assumed to have an enlightening power, offering hearers a lexical and a semantic package specifically for this purpose. In contrast, the storification of a narrative in the TV drama Yunus Emre has no such capacity to allow audiences to open up a web of different meanings, thus permitting individuals make their own interpretations according to needs. Instead, the serial presents itself as a glorifier of Anatolian mysticism, and the vernacular offers a series of scripts, in which the stories, as parables, celebrate the process of storification. Each episode includes various different stories and aphorisms, whereby the revelation of meanings is achieved through different discursive markers. The speaker, the leader of the community, is allowed to talk and transmit the

4 The production company: Tekden film; Producer: Mehmet Bozdağ; Director: Emre Konuk-Kamil Aydın; The release period: 2015-2016. The serial was broadcasted on TRT.

messages, whereas the followers are always assigned as the role of listeners. Even Yunus Emre, one of T. Emre's most important disciples, is forbidden to express his own interpretation of the elements in the stories. This is in direct contrast to the Alevi tradition, which regards the status of dervish as one of the key conditions for understanding reality, and thus holds that for those with this status, there are many possible "spiritual paths" by which followers can find ways to reach the "truth".

In recent years, due to the role of increasing visibility of Islam in Turkish society, the TV dramas adopted a wider range of characters as storytellers in order to strengthen the viability of narratives (Erol Işık, 2013). The device of integrating a storytelling mentor is used to encourage audiences to recall and revisit their spiritual and/or existential troubles, which is an essential component in developing awareness of one's wounded self. The folkloric baggage of Turkish culture offers a wide array of folk stories, parables and poetry (Işık, 2011) by which drama writers are able to use to mediate memory within a rhetorical framework.

The ethics of divinity relies on regulative concepts, such as sacred order, natural order, tradition, sanctity, and sin. It aims to protect the soul, the spirit, and the spiritual aspects of the human agent. Presupposed by this type of ethical standing is a conceptualization of the self as a transcendental entity connected to some sacred or natural order of things, and as a responsible bearer of a legacy that is elevated and divine.

These ethical codes may co-exist in terms of providing a narrative on morality. The TV drama examples cited in this article portray a wide variety of experiences and discourses. Some of these, it is true, overlap with both the ethics of community and ethics of autonomy; however, in general, the patterns of narratives, agents and roles depicted reveal a clear cut crystallization of the main tenets of different types of moral imagination, which become legitimized through TV aesthetics.

The Ethics of Community: 'Resurrection: Ertuğrul'⁵

The TV drama called 'Resurrection: Ertuğrul' is set in the 13th century, and portrays the great Seljuck Empire during the reign of the Sultan Aladdin. In this TV serial, the roots of a grand imperial project are identified through a grand moral mission reflected through storification and mystification. The main focus is the transformation of the nomadic dwelling, or 'yurt', into a homeland, emphasizing the birth of Turkic identity. The Kayı is tribe of Oghuz Turkic people, led by the strong Ertuğrul, whose father (Süleyman Shah) migrated into Anatolia from Halep (Syria) (Köprülü, 1999). The preliminary episodes of the first season cover the Turks' fight for a homeland against the (Catholic) Temple Knights, the invaders of Jerusalem. Their leader, Titus, prepares ambushes for the Turks, including Ertuğrul, who inherited the leadership of the tribe from his father.

5 The production and the broadcast of 'Resurrection: Ertuğrul' has been widely publicized nationally and internationally. The State Radio and Television corporation (TRT) released the TV drama, which was produced by Tekden Film. The producer is Mehmet Bozdağ; the production date is 2014; directed by Metin Günay. Recently, the formation of a new political party, 'İyi Parti' (Good Party) led to a claim about the letter of Y, which is considered as a very important historical symbol for the Kayı tribe, portrayed in 'Resurrection'. The symbol is seen in the flag of Kayı tribe, which signifies a hawk in historical records. The semantic content of İYİ means 'Powerful' or 'Empowered'. Such a symbolic contest reveals the ways in which mythological figures are capable of transmitting symbols into popular imagery.

After defeating the knights in various wars, he is recognized as leader by a secret council of elders (White Beards), presented as being a well-established institution among Turkic people. Ertugrul falls in love with Halime, another Seljuq sultan. His love for her is narrated along with his conquest of the lands in Anatolia. An important role is played by Ibn-i Arabi, a mystical figure, who appears to Ertugrul in times of trouble, sometimes in dreams, with messages of support, and at other times, face to face, to give advice about difficulties, and encouragement to act according to his own sense of morality. During these meetings, his mentor narrates parables as mystical maps, asking him to deduce conclusions about his worldly and mundane troubles. When Ertugrul prays deeply to his mentor, he receives pious messages, reflecting the linkage between a strong will and faith.

The second season covers the Kayı and Dodurga tribes' struggle with the Moguls. The Moguls are represented by the leader of their warriors, Baycu Noyan, who kidnaps Ertugrul and attacks his yurt, in revenge for his support for the second-in-command of Seljuq government, Saadedin. Their struggle is depicted in a lengthy fight scenes showing bravado and violence associated with masculinity. The epic nature of the master narrative on the Turkic struggle is complemented by poetic descriptions of bravery and masculinity. The soldiers in Ertugrul's tribe are known as 'Alps', committed to their mission to 'conquer the Moguls' lands, after their power was weakened by war. The faith and the moral strength of Ertugrul and his warriors in the struggle for a new homeland are always the main focus of the narration. At the end of the season, Ertugrul decides to leave the East, and migrates into Western Anatolia, taking his companions, and dividing the tribes. His tribe settles at İznik, which will become the center of his homeland.

The story of Ertugrul represents a transformation from a small tribe into an empire. The warriors in Anatolia have the reputation for supernatural powers which derive from a faith based on war (*gaza*), as well as Islamic beliefs. Therefore, the serial brings to life the formation of a glorified and potentially unconquerable Empire, spreading outwards. The title 'resurrection' has a connotation of 'rebirth from the ashes', which refers to a lost past; the past-ness of a lost tradition becomes the focus of the narrative of morality in the text. Although the scenario is based on fictional interpretations, the role of such a grandiose project, and its 'reflection of history' constructs validity claims about popular memory, defined as "a form of story-telling through which people make sense of their lives and culture" (Spigel, 2001, p. 363). The intense media discussions about 'what actually happened in history' after each episode show TV drama's symbolic power to influence interpretations of history, and the role of different ideologies in this. For example, the lack of unambiguous and verified historical sources about Ertugrul's father allows the writers to construct the text based on the demands of political trajectories.

The story narrated in this serial includes acts and discourses which indicate the glorification of "the ethics of community", a discourse of obligations in relation to other members of community. The major themes associated with this cluster are duty, hierarchy, and the 'soul'. The identity of the person is defined in terms of community status. The satisfaction of individual desires are most often considered as another's responsibility because the person in the highest hierarchical position is obligated to protect and satisfy the wants of subordinates in specified ways. Presupposed by the ethics of community is a conceptualization of the self as office holder. The implied moral obligation

of the interdependent 'other' in such a relationship is sensitive responsiveness to the perceived needs of one's interdependent self. Sons and daughters should be obedient to their parents; parents in turn should be sensitive to their wishes, feelings and inclinations. Similarly, wives should be obedient to their husbands, and husbands should be sensitive to their wives' needs and desires. This type of moral imagination may be described as "feudal ethics" (Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, Park, 1997, p.120). The moral quest of the main character described earlier verifies these characteristics, emphasizing the formation of community for a particular mission defined and legitimized by a glorified purpose. Such a mission of state/empire building is a traumatic process involving decisions and negotiations; however, the recovery of a nation from such a trauma is represented through the aforementioned constructions of historical narratives and discourses. The popular historiography in the storytelling practices of the Resurrection depends on the "ethics of community", which is introduced as a panacea for those experiencing extreme identity loss. In some instances, nationalistic sentiments arise out of such a void, leading to the reconstruction and the recovery of the past.

The Ethics of Autonomy: *Vatanım Sensin* (You Are My Homeland)⁶

Vatanım Sensin (You are my Homeland), a dramatic story of a Turkish family which migrated from Balkans to Smirni in the 1920's, is set in Greece and Turkey. The story covers the organization of an Ottoman-Turk resistance movement in Smyrna (Greek name for Izmir) on the Aegean coast. Different protagonists in the narrative represent interpretations of heroic virtuosities, which provide cases for understanding the complex array of narrativization and rhetorical strategies.

The main character is Cevdet, a Turkish soldier, supposedly working for the Greek army, but in fact secretly helping the militia groups (Kuvay-ı Milliye) supporting Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk). After emigrating with his family from Greece to Smyrna, Cevdet becomes a commander in the Greek army, much to the resentment of his patriotic family (his wife, Azize, his two daughters, Hilal and Yıldız, and his adopted son, Ali Kemal). Two members of his family are engaged in acts of resistance; his wife, a nurse, collaborates with the underground resistance movement in the city, while his daughter, Hilal, writes propaganda bulletins in poetic forms under the name of Halit İkbâl. Cevdet has a rival, his former closest and oldest friend, Tevfik, now an Ottoman army officer. Tevfik is selfish, insidious, ambitious, unreliable, and self-serving, and who cooperates with foreign agents to strengthen his own position in the army. Cevdet's daughter, Hilal falls in love with Leon, the son of a Greek army general, bringing another family into the story. Thus, the plot is interwoven with love stories, rivalries among heroic characters, Greek-Turkish identity claims, secret missions of British spies, the evolution of patriotic and nationalist sentiments, and the desire of men and women to liberate their homelands and their own selves. The plot also includes the story, with an actual historical basis, of Cevdet's adopted son, revealed later as the son of the Greek commander. In this production, a Turkish and a Greek family are represented as trying to negotiate their way through these traumatic experiences at micro and macro levels.

6 The production company: 03 Medya, Producer: Onur Güvenatam, Director: Yağmur Taylan-Durul Taylan-Burak Arlıel, The release date: 2016-2018.

The second season introduces new characters, including local bandits, some of whom collaborate with the Greek army. The heads of these militia groups confront different foreign forces; Cevdet receives news that his wife has been killed; his daughter, Azize, raped by Greek soldiers while caught smuggling medicine, is kidnapped and forced to live with bandits. Tevfik, after an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Mustafa Kemal, joins one of the bandit groups; in his role as a British spy, Mr. Hamilton's personal involvement leads to his decision to support the independence movement. The characters' choices in negotiating moral and immoral deeds, their traumatic experiences, and the resulting coping mechanisms via religion, affection, gender, and/or ideological mission, are all based on the facticity of historical events and actions. The period covered is one of the most sensitive historical periods of the nation-state building, which was to become a cognitive resource for the formation of identity making practices. The female characters' strong personalities, and the will-formation processes during times of crises highlight the role of agency, a crucial aspect of the discourse of autonomy. A woman's struggle for personal independence reflects the strength of the independence movement that she contributes to. The homeland can be said to be a metaphor for a woman declaring autonomy from the enemies, just as the fight for the homeland is opposed to those who orchestrate treachery and sabotage in Anatolia. The only way to escape from slavery is to rebel against those trying to conquer these lands, the rightful homeland of Turks. Cevdet's daughter, Hilal, expresses her resentment and resistance in following ways:

How much more will you bend?

Your sons were frozen in Caucasian mountains, and did not surrender.

Their livers were scarred because of thirst, they could not breath in the heat of Arabia, at the Suez Canal, did not bend.

How long will you keep submitting to all these?

"The ethics of autonomy" is associated with on regulative concepts, such as harm, rights, and justice, and aims to protect the zone of discretionary choice of 'individuals', and to promote the exercise of individual will in the pursuit of personal preferences. It is assumed that 'self' has an individual preference structure, and therefore, the point of moral regulation is to increase choice and liberty.

Conclusion

Narratives offer us a rich moral laboratory. In the pursuit of expressing and confessing their coping mechanisms, individuals use moral guidelines as well as strategies to construct distorted memories. In the process of becoming part of society, individuals feel obligations at three levels as a person (autonomy), as part of a community, and as people with a need to live with dignity. Three TV serials selected for this article portray a series of historical events and characters, and constitute a narrative of their own due to a temporal order which leads to a particular end; in these cases, agency, community, and heroic enchantment. Although the exemplified narrative transactions depict some overlapping themes regarding these three forms of moral order, it can be argued that the dramas'

use of narratives are intertwined with social acts, some of which reflect the misuse of moral claims. *The Resurrection: Ertugrul*, for example, has been characterized by unnegotiable maxims, which do not allow us to acknowledge our vulnerability, and thus, the re-evaluation of our aggression, and therefore prevent us respecting each other's integrity and identity. In addition, The above examples of televised historiography configure different aspects of pasts, showing them as existing in the same time period, and so the act of remembering itself becomes a political act.

In all TV serials, the past-ness is celebrated via ideological markers which are characterized by emplotment, that is, an assembly of a series of historical events. Covering the imperial past requires a mediatization process for delineating the contested past in Turkish society. History, duration and memory are highly emphasized in theoretical understanding of television's discursive operations as liveness (Anderson, 2000). Such a complicated process is reconstructed through a narrative approach specifically in order to explicate the boundaries and interactions between different codes of ethics, rather than to reveal the various representations of the past in different texts. The core storytelling practice, seriality, represents a potentially powerful symbolic code, stemming from the long history of Turkish folklore, and has been adopted into different genres in television productions. The future research, thus, can direct us to study the ways in which these practices are purposefully articulated with other identity markers.

In addition, television narrativity, then, uses rhetorical tools which lexically retrieve accounts from the past. These rhetorical patterns help the viewers to relate to their own choices between the moral and immoral, through the characters' decisions, identities, values, and actions. Understanding the positioning these elements also helps determine the boundaries between choices about human agency. The 'epideictic narrative', for example, embedded in the ethics of community reveals, demystifies, and disempowers outsiders to that group (Black, 1988). The heroic achievements of the leading character, Ertugrul, are outcomes of a myth-making power at a powerful moment in history. The ethics of divinity, exemplified in the life of a mystic and his power to tell parables, constructs an aesthetized area of absolute self-affirmation. Yunus Emre and his disciples signify a world where meaning-making practices rest on a divine division of labor between preacher and followers, an interaction which is not depicted as a dialogical process. The ethics of autonomy, revealed to some extent in *You are my Homeland*, aims at defining human agency and collective will formation, which are the core factors in challenging current ethical standings.

Human collaborative practice is precisely the type of realm that implies that the world is not constituted by anything other than incarnate answerable deeds, united in one unceasing process of 'ideological becoming' (Bakhtin, 1993) in pursuit of a meaningful world. This paper attempted to offer a way for contextualizing storytelling practices within the realm of ethics, which helps us to re-define themes for further study, that is, the sociology of rhetoric. Our bringing together of language and society would enlighten the world of utterances as great acts; television narratives are, however, a very minor part of such an intriguing world.

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