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TYING THE KNOT: A COMPARISON OF MARRIAGE
SHOWS IN TWO CULTURES

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ONAYLAYANLAR:

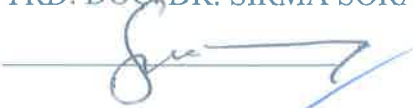YRD. DOÇ. DR. JEFFREY HOWLETT   (Danışman)(Kadir Has Üniv.)

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"Ben, Şenay Tanrıvermiş , bu Doktora Tezinde sunulan çalışmanın şahsıma ait olduğunu ve başka çalışmalardan yaptığım alıntıların kaynaklarını kurallara uygun biçimde tez içerisinde belirttiğimi onaylıyorum."

ŞENAY TANRIVERMİŞ & İMZASI

Özet

Bu tezin amacı, Türkiye'de yapılan *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* ile, ABD'de yapılan *The Bachelors* adlı, evlendirme temalı iki 'gerçeklik gösterisinin' (reality-show) geniş kapsamlı bir karşılaştırmasını sunmaktır. Analizde kullanılan yaklaşımda, medya, bilgi ve iletişim alanlarının hızla değişen dinamikleri dikkate alınarak, kişisel özellik ve mahremiyet kavramları gözetilerek hareket edilmiştir. Soruna, iki farklı kültürün penceresinden ve bu kültürlerin kendi sosyal normları ve adı konulmamış yasaları açısından bakılmıştır. Reality TV, kendini tanıtma amaçlı bir Yeni Çağ aracı olarak, yalnızca yayında kullanılmak üzere yaratılmış hipergerçek kimliklerle analiz edilmiştir. Araştırma sorularının incelenmesine iki nicel analiz hattı olarak içerik analizi ve kritik söylem analizi (CDA) kullanılmıştır. Bu bağlamda, *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*'nin sürekli dizginleme ve ketumiyet ilkelerine bağlı kalan, ve *The Bachelors*'ın özgürlük, özgür irade ve demokratik bir toplumun önkoşullarına dayanan değerleri destekleyen, bireycilik ve bağımsızlığı öne çıkaran senaryolarıyla, nasıl birbirinden çok farklı iki değerler sisteminin kurulduğunu görüyoruz. Ayrıca, bu analize göre, Türk programının katılımcıları, kendi hayatları hakkında daha fazla kişisel bilgi veriyor gibidirler. Amerikan programının katılımcıları ise, mali durumları, dini veya siyasi inançları gibi kişisel bilgilerini daha az açıklıyor gibi görünmekte, ancak duygularını ifade etme ve cinsellik bakımından belirli bir özgürlük sergilemektedirler.

Abstract

The objective of this thesis is to provide an extended comparison of two marriage-based reality shows, *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle,* produced in Turkey, and *The Bachelor*, produced in the USA. The approach used in the analysis operates through the notions of privacy and intimacy, taking into account the fast-changing dynamics of media, information and communications. The problem is seen through the prism of two different cultures and their respective social norms and unspoken laws. Reality TV as a New Age tool for self-promotion is analyzed together with hyperreal identities created only for the purposes of the broadcast. Content analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA) are used as two qualitative analytical guidelines to study the research questions. In this context, we see how two very different systems of values are established through the scripts of the two shows, *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* continuously complying with the principles of restraint and discretion, and *The Bachelor* promoting values based on freedom, free will and postulates of a democratic society, putting forward individualism and independence. Also, according to this analysis, participants of the Turkish show seem to reveal more personal information about their lives. The participants of the American show, on the other hand, seem to reveal less personal information, such as their financial status, religious or political beliefs, but exercise certain freedom in terms of expressing their feelings and sexuality.

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INTRODUCTION

Bringing the world into our homes, television represents one of the most important mass communication tools of the modern world. On television, images and sound work together to create programs and commercials (Butler, 2009, p. 5) and its broadcast made of harmonious sounds and images became the main element of its enormous success. It's a phenomenon that has always attracted and fascinated all world populations. What was at first simple combinations of moving pictures soon became complex coded messages with a vast variety of contents. Step by step it has become the most important source of information and entertainment along with technological and marketing developments. In countries where it is relatively new, such as Turkey, time spent in front of the TV takes away from other activities. For example, in Turkey 20% of the population spend more than five hours a day watching TV. Television is only one of many ways to enrich general knowledge, but due to its commonness it's taken very seriously even though it does not necessarily reflect reality or give relevant information.

There is no doubt that television has shaped and affected social culture in many ways. In the last 20-25 years, especially in terms of culture, we witnessed an acceleration of social changes, operated through technological and informational development. Television as the most common and cheapest mass media appliance

has become the main promoter of popular culture, participating in the reshaping of perspectives of whole generations. Kitsch takes an important place in the new order of things and values: a populace spoiled for choice returns to its primary instincts and indulges in uncontrollable spiritual and physical tantrums; rock and roll, the sexual revolution and the legitimization of more liberal points of view don't seem to satisfy the ever-curious human spirit reaching for more. Only this time, things seem to have gotten out of hand, while we witness ordinary people disguised as TV stars parading and selling their integrity for a piece of the audience's vain admiration. It calls into question the possibility of dignity, as one of the highest values of the human legacy built through the guidelines of civilization.

Among countless TV genres, Reality TV, as one that provoked absolute bewilderment among the audiences, has found its way to the top with skyrocketing ratings. Not only has it reached a vast audience, it has also actively participated in social changes bringing along considerable consequences. Reality television brought up a whole new concept of voyeurism to the world. According to Joe Jenkins (2002) in the book entitled *Contemporary moral issues*, reality-based programs seek to represent voyeuristic and exhibitionist behaviors as "normal." People participating in reality shows are exposing themselves on a voluntary basis and can be perceived as "exhibitionists." He also claims that what is called a "Reality show" (Jenkins, 2002, p.42) is a combination of voyeurism and exhibitionism becoming the new popular distraction. We can say that both of these phenomena have become the new normal, a standard that is easy to reach: all we need to do is strip in front of the crowd and claim our right to uniqueness, and suddenly, our deviant behavior becomes legitimate and approved. People starring in match-making reality shows become neighborhood heroes thanks to their unusual, extravagant or even socially unacceptable behavior. Revealing details concerning their private lives and exhibiting their intimacy provide them with the opportunity to become famous and join heavenly orders reserved for the happy few. Consisting of the banal everyday actions of rather ordinary individuals, and sometimes including tumultuous verbal or physical conflicts, emotional outbursts

and shocking behavior, Reality TV shows tend to promote a new cult thoroughly built on the principles of late capitalism: the cult of the individual. The values and ideas promoted by such ideology induce worship, and appear as one of the most prominent signs of the derailing modern society. The Reality industry, selling programs which have been running on almost every channel, seem to induce cultural corruption rather than cultural enrichment. One of the aspects of this corruption is a very thin, disappearing line between the boundaries of private life and public life, thus privacy happens to be one of the values put on the line in the era of the technological prosperity and ethical downfall. Developments in communication and technology, accompanied by socio-cultural, economic, and political changes were largely involved in the transformation of privacy. This process, at first giving the impression of creating more space for freedom, actually brought about voluntary restrictions on privacy. Therefore, individuals in the modern society look more flexible than ever before in terms of revealing their privacy and disclosing intimate details, which certainly seems like a phenomenon worth looking into.

Marriage reality shows, as a variety of reality TV, have rapidly come to occupy a place at the forefront of contemporary television culture. This study seeks to examine the complicated and often polemical terrain of marriage programs while considering their effects on the perceptions of privacy in two different societies: The United States of America and Turkey, in regards to two reality TV marriage shows: *The Bachelor* and *Esra Erol`da Evlen Benimle*. Although this study does not attempt to rectify or impose a standardized definition of the genre, it suggests that looking at the parts may help in better understanding the whole, especially for the case of privacy. (Barton 2013, p. 218) One of the subgenres of the reality show is the reality dating show or marriage show. (Ferris et al., 2007, p. 490) These shows portray non-actors in dating situations with the camera acting as an observer of real-time events. Because these shows are marketed as reality television and present real-life (although produced and edited) portrayals of dating situations and interactions, the content and possible effects of these shows deserve attention. (Ferris et al., p.491) Marriage shows as a

subgenre of reality television incorporate a dating or courtship system in the form of a game with clear rules. Couple matchmaking is involved only in selecting the game's contestants – usually for amusement value as opposed to any concern for the couple's happiness or compatibility. This study will attempt to discuss the notions of reality TV and privacy through the reality TV marriage shows.

Nowadays Reality TV shows are the main and most prevalent producer of popular culture, and represent what the prevailing concept of privacy is. On the other hand, privacy is also constructed via political and social relations. In that context, marriage programs on TV are the most appropriate example for understanding this two-way relationship. Television plays the role of matchmaker for marriages through this kind of programs both in Turkey and in the USA, just like in many other countries. Participants of marriage shows seem willing to reveal private feelings about marriage, which belongs rather to the most private spheres of one's life according to some traditional approaches. Generally speaking, we can say that weddings in particular offer a moment in an individual's life where a private experiences such as love and romance move into the public realm. Vows of love are spoken publicly and rituals like the reception celebrate the public announcement of the private emotion in a way that foregrounds consumption as the final normalizing rite. (Holmes & Jermyn, 2004, pp. 197-198) Historically, the match wasn't made public until an agreement was secured. Therefore, the process of selecting and evaluating potential partners, as well as attracting them, and seeking their mutual commitment, was a drama played out before a very limited number of parties. Thus, up to a certain point, individuals seem traditionally willing to expose some parts of their intimacy for sake of family/ society, in a very restricted and discrete kind of way. In contrast, what we witness on Reality TV shows evokes exhibitionism rather than the sharing of personal feelings and experiences. If people participating in this kind of program compete with each other to reveal more about themselves, isn't this evidence that they do not hold the traditional value of privacy? Volunteering and public exposure of participants in terms of their emotional, physical, spiritual and even financial details indicate that attitudes

about privacy are in the process of changing. It is possible to make a social analysis by observing what "private" represents in the first place throughout human history. The main objective of this study is to analyze two different cultures from the changing privacy perspective. It seems possible to analyze a society by identifying its approach to privacy and its definition of private space in all its aspects. Within that framework, this study takes into consideration the level of the process of production reached in public space, analyzing simultaneously how the social construction of privacy has changed with the development of technology and culture, especially in the media sector and television imposing itself so forcefully into our lives.

There have been communities both in Turkey and The United States of America using the services of matchmaking for quite some time and finally television has begun playing matchmaker using real people in recent years. Despite the fact that marriage is perceived to be a private decision, people need public approval of their marital decision process and ongoing ceremonies can be assessed as a public declaration and a spectacle. Within this context, the question that will be discussed is: "Do these shows effect the approach of "privacy/mahremiyet"(mahremiyet is the Turkish word for privacy and its meaning is closer to intimacy) towards marriage?" Moreover, the institution of marriage will be observed in order to gain better insight into its importance and value in both societies. In this light, it will be discussed from utilitarian, traditional and modern points of view. Strongly linked with the concepts of privacy, especially in the sense of intimacy, the meaning of marriage for the society constantly evolves within the perpetual changes that take place in every field of modern human life.

As previously mentioned, this study aims to analyze the relationship between the changing privacy perceptions of the society, based on the example of two different cultures: one being more individualistic – the culture of the USA and the other being rather collectivist – Turkish culture, by putting the main focus on two marriage shows, both produced in the aforementioned countries. Content analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA) are used as two qualitative analytical guidelines to study

our research questions. The driving research questions of this qualitative study are as follows: Why has TV been involved and actively participating in marriage institutions over the last decade? Why are such programs popular with their respective audiences? What are the main cultural differences about content for the same purpose? How is intimacy constructed differently in the two opposed cultures? How are the strategies for attracting a partner different? How is sexuality expressed differently during the courting process? How do the opposed cultures construct different meanings for the marriage relationship? Do these shows create a new kind of privacy, confidence and sincerity? Most importantly, do individuals really need privacy, or is it only less important than before? Is it possible to say people are changing by becoming more involved in exhibitionism and voyeurism? As a result, is the value or even definition of privacy eroding or just changing?

The first chapter of this study presents the changing dynamics of marriage and family in the modern society. The second chapter presents and revisits the concept of privacy and its different historical constructions. In this context, issues such as the conceptual classification of privacy, the historical distinction between the public and private spheres, the modern boundaries of privacy and technology as a tool for deconstructing privacy will be addressed in this chapter. The third chapter discusses marriage culture and Marriage TV shows in Turkey and America. Chapter Four is dedicated to the comparison of both marriage shows and concepts of privacy in the two cultures. The next chapter illustrates the methods used in the study, while the last, sixth chapter presents a detailed analysis based on the comparison of *The Bachelor*, Season 16 and *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*.

CHAPTER 1

CHANGING DYNAMICS OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

All the ideas about the person we are going to marry, why we are going to get married, and whether we will have children or not change in parallel with social relations and battles that are enacted before marriage. In that sense, marriage rituals and the way marriage decisions are made reflect changing social relations and processes. It is possible to understand the social changes or the material and ideological platforms of the society by observing in which conditions and in what type of personal preferences the marriage took shape. (Özbay, 1998)

Even though a heterosexual woman and man are supposed to love each other, their marriage is tied to the principal of law. In both countries observed in this thesis, homosexuals are often ignored by the mainstream media and both programs treated them as if they do not exist. Marriage programs secure themselves on the foundation of dominant ideology and by supporting the prevalent norms of marriage, such as heterosexuality, they perfectly strengthen their own production, the civil society, and hegemonic powers. Whereas they are irrelevant in law, they are infinitely relevant for TV marriage programs. Property sharing, legal guardianship of the children, as well as marriage responsibilities, are the issues determined by the principal of law. In

this sense, even if marriage – like any other social relationship – is considered to be a private, sacred relationship between two people, a condition of the continuation of social order means it is also a type of social interaction. According to Raducanu and Gatica-Perez, social interaction can be defined as a dynamic sequence of social actions between individuals who modify and adapt their behavior according to those of their partners. Social action is a concept that refers to the interaction between individuals in society and it is used to observe how certain behaviors are modified in certain conditions. The behavioral patterns have neither a universal nor an isolated character, but a circumstantial and relational one. On the one hand, our behavior has an individual component, specific to each person, and characteristic of one's personality. On the other hand, behavior has a relational component, defined by the interaction with other people. (Raducanu & Gatica-Perez, 2012, p. 208)

A very important variable used in psychology and sociology to characterize social interaction is the *role*. The term role is associated with a person's position in a group (status), with the obligations and rights it implies. Some roles are ascribed and others achieved. In this latter case, roles can be seen as an emergent property of the interaction with other people. It is worth clarifying that role is not synonymous with behavior, although both are interrelated. There are several other variables that influence and define our role in a group meeting: the type of the meeting (informal or competitive), our position in the group, the structure of the group (if the hierarchy is well-defined or if the group is more homogenous), the degree of familiarity between the people in the group, and the emotional load (reflected in the mood) of each participant. Consequently, the same person can play different roles in different situations. (Raducanu &Gatica-Perez, 2012, p. 208) As a social identity, the self itself becomes an object that can classify or name itself through different roles in society. Being married, or at least being in a couple, as a role is a marker of prestige and a personal achievement. What it means to be a wife, husband, girlfriend or boyfriend have connotative significations which brings to mind being good or better in terms of economic, moral and legal roles. We can distinguish two different perspectives in

this light: our role within the marriage/relationship and our role in the society as a married person/person in a romantic relationship. Our primary roles, or even better, the most intimate ones are defined through the family or family-like relationships. By being a member of the family, we are given a specific status, based on gender roles defined both by our perceived character and by the society. The family starts with the marriage and our natural predispositions to certain roles that later on shape the society itself, which Rouse explained synthetically in *Marital and Sexual Lifestyles in the U.S. Attitudes, Behaviors, and Relationships in Social Context:*

> To appreciate how society influences men and women in marital relationships consider the concepts of sex roles and gender. Sex simply denotes the biological fact of a person's being male or female. Sex roles are shared social expectations concerning appropriate conduct for men and for women; learned expectations that define the ways members of each sex should think, feel, and behave. Sex role analysis emphasizes our social identities as men and women as distinct from the biological fact of being a man or a woman. Sex roles are not innate, not "natural", not directly determined by our biology – though they do reflect a social interpretation of biological differences. Social roles in general define the rights and obligations that are understood in a given society or social group to accompany particular social positions and serve to guide a person's interaction with others with reference to these positions. (Rouse, 2002, p. 199)

In modern society, there are certain implications that come with marriage and romantic relationships; if we are engaged in one of them, it automatically means that we have been chosen by someone, that someone recognizes and acknowledges our values. People who are in a marital union carry their commitment and responsibilities attached to their social role like a badge, for they have chosen this role, inasmuch as the society granted it to them. The Civil solidarity pact (called PACS in France and SAMBO in Sweden) allows partners to engage in a romantic relationship recognized by the law, offering numerous benefits and facilitating couples' civil duties. It is similar type of role that again invokes certain restrictions and responsibilities. If a person is in a romantic relationship, according to general unwritten social codes, it implies this person is sexually or romantically unavailable. Although these roles dictate certain behavior or attitude and set our status in the society, they mainly stay only superficially

exposed to the latter. Our roles within a family, relationship or a marriage are a part of our personal space.

1.1 CAPITALISM AND FAMILY

With a capitalistic society, each social process is considered as a whole – where production of relations takes place in public as well as private space where the reproduction process is determined. The society's dominant relations appear during the production and the reproduction process. The "private space" as the place of the reproduction process is institutionally called "family". The capitalist process of production is identified as salary in return for labor of the free workers in factories and could continue its existence with the process of reproduction that can be defined as the physical and psychological regeneration of all individuals in the society (daily regeneration of labor power) and the regeneration of human being via new births (regeneration of labor power generation). While the institutional superstructure of the capitalist process of production is the nation state, the institutional superstructure of the process of reproduction is the "nuclear family". (Mitchel & Oakley 1984, p. 27-37) The marriage of a heterosexual woman and man (a secular, or in other words, a civil marriage in modern societies) is the prerequisite of the foundation of a nuclear family. The process of reproduction, indispensable for the uninterrupted continuation of the process of production, has legal relevancy just as the production process. In other words, just as the labor law identifies how many hours, at which minimum wage, and for how many years and with which type of rest period a worker should work, family law identifies different topics too. "Family" – which became "the nuclear family" within capitalist relations - has been subject to a series of changes and qualitative transformations as was the case for the worker-employer or even state-democracy relationships. The working class, exposed to heavy exploitation since the 1700s, succeeded in obtaining many rights such as the reduction of working hours,

union rights, voting rights, pensions, and other social aids. Those achievements, many of which were obtained after uphill bloody struggles, enabled the working class to transform life in public. The decisiveness of the transformations within the public sphere has triggered a transformation within the private space – in other words, the nuclear family. For example, women started to take part in the paid labor force and thereby the fact that men were breadwinners was not a norm anymore, and it became a legal status over time. But these transformations did not take place in parallel with what took place in public. The transformation between men and women within a family was shaped in concordance with the battle between them. This battle was going on at home but at the same time was led against capitalist class and the state. Women were entitled to education, to wages, to property rights, to inheritance rights, and to higher education rights over centuries. These rights were obtained at the beginning of the modern era by women in different periods in different countries. The right to vote that enabled women to express themselves at the "state level" – so to say – was only gained in the 20th century. (Mitchel & Oakley, 1984, p. 25)

The right to vote for women in America was established by the 19th amendment, passed by Congress on June 4, 1919, and ratified on August 18, 1920. It guarantees all American women the right to vote. This milestone was finally achieved after a very long and difficult struggle and decades of agitation and protest. This amendment, considered by many Americans a radical change of the Constitution, was a result of almost one century of woman suffrage supporters' lectures, marches, writing, lobbying and civil disobedience. (The US National Archives and Record Administration. n.d.) Turkish Women acquired this right when Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish Republic initiated reforms involved in modernization of the country; Turkey adopted a new civil code regulating civil and political rights of women that became equal to that of men, except in suffrage. After a short struggle women achieved voting rights in local elections by Act N° 1580 on 3 April 1930. Four years later, this right was implemented and starting from 5 December 1934, women in Turkey gained full universal suffrage, earlier than most other countries. (Akşin, 2011, p.188.; 1998,

p.48,59,250) The acquisition of voting rights allowed women into citizenship and a position of legal respect. Facilitation of women to vote changed the value position and meaning of women socially. The long, slow process of attaining voting rights changed the very fabric of societies positively. To qualify for voting is one of the crucial points for women's visibility in the public space which is interlinked to enjoy civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

1.2 WOMEN'S VISIBILITY IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

Women continue to experience significant discrimination associated with their participation in public and political life in most domains of the public sphere and in all geographical regions. For example, The European Commission recently acknowledged that "Across the European Union, women are still largely outnumbered by men in positions of responsibility in all areas. The reasons for the under-representation of women in power and decision-making are multifaceted and complex" (European Commission. n.d.). There are significant barriers to women's participation in public and political life that stem from economic, social and cultural issues, as well as from negative stereotypes about women and entrenched gender roles.

One major issue, when conceptualizing gender discrimination within the public sphere, is the issue of how public and private spaces are differently gendered, finds MacKinnon (1989). According to her, for over two decades, feminist scholars have been working to dismantle the divide between public and private space. A 2005 IDEA report underlines how the public sphere has traditionally been a domain for men, stating that "[m]en, across virtually all cultures, are socialized to see politics as a legitimate sphere for them to act in" (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance [IDEA], 2005). While at the international level, there is increasing consensus about the obligations of States to address the barriers to

women's full and active participation in the public sphere; at the domestic level, there is still progress to be made in advancing women's equality in this domain. National legislation and constitutions adversely affect women's participation in public and political life in some states by limiting women's participation through exclusionary or discriminatory clauses, thus restricting women's ability to fully engage in the public sphere (Bond, 2007). Women started to step out of their private space in order to be seen in the public space, including the political domain. The proliferation of women in the public arena has transformed what was previously private – in other words, the family and the relationship between men and women. Marriage rituals had their own changes within families and family relations. To give an example from Turkish society, especially in cities where capitalist production processes and modern rituals are visible, the marriage process and rituals underwent a change first in middle-class families then in working class families. Nowadays, even though these rituals include diamond rings among engaged couples, it is also possible to mention a revolutionary internal transformation. The onetime arranged marriages are mainly substituted by free will attachments. Second marriages are henceforth legitimate for women too. Flirting is as legitimate as being engaged. The change in the prenuptial process does not necessarily bring a change in marital or family relations. The "love in a cottage" notion before the marriage does not end the "house, car, diamond ring, furniture, and a summerhouse with a pool" demands. In other words, with all these legal and property connotations, the family institution that starts to burgeon with nuptial preparations leading to marriage is not subject to a radical transformation. The content is the same even if there are some differences in form. The family institution is still identified in a conservative way that would prevent social relations from derailing. Regardless of how couples reached the "happy end" by getting into a marriage, the family institution allows the continuity of the social structure (as a matter of fact, the continuity of social relations, in other words, the production and reproduction process).

Marriage equals a household, a structure which dictates roles and responsibilities to each of its members, thus it is an entity that requires a certain organization. According

to Jameson (1991), the family and the household can be seen as organizational units: " Similar to the typical firm analyzed in standard production theory, the household invests in capital assets (savings), capital equipment (durable goods), and capital embodied in its "labor force" (human capital of family members)" (p.267). Throughout history women had specific roles in the framework of a household, dictated by their natural predispositions, being physically inferior in terms of strength. They would stay in the abode and provide food that didn't require going hunting, such as picking berries, herbs or mushrooms. Women were gatherers, collectors that put things in order, take care of the dwelling and bring up the offspring. However, in today's society, women take active part in what was once defined by "hunting"; thus they are directly engaged in the production process: their participation in the post-industrial society is constructed not only through bringing up new generations who will take over and continue the legacy chain of labor, production and consumption; they produce capital assets and invest in them. Therefore, their role in marriage has now two different dimensions that still don't exclude each other. The concept of marriage and roles of the spouses have dramatically changed throughout history, and still continue to take different shapes and meanings. However, it seems to have kept the idea of its primary purpose: human survival, seen through its perpetuation and need for protection. In this spirit, it would be convenient to quote Michel Foucault's reference to marriage/household according to Ancient Greece in order to illustrate the continuity, strength and utilitarian nature of the institution of marriage through history: " In order to define the respective functions of the two spouses in the household, Xenophon starts from the notion of the "shelter" *(stegos)*: it seems that when gods created the human couple, they were thinking of offspring and of the perpetuation of the race, of the support one needs in old age, and of the necessity 'not to live in the open air, like beasts' – humans 'obviously need shelter'" (1992, p. 157)

1.3 LOVE AND SOCIETY

Taking into consideration the utilitarian approach to marriage and relationship between two people in the context imposed by the Society, where can we place feelings, sensation of love? Thus, it would mean separating completely the individual from its traditional environment and placing it on a purely human level in order to inspect how love is perceived by both sides. Is what we call "love" pure instinct for a shelter, rooted deep inside every one of us? Is this feeling just a mean to acquire the naturally desired state of safety?

The discipline of love and relationships has acquired a strong experimental grip within social science study. Love is a significant subject within the landscape of intimate relationship research, and it is a feature in marriage and more generally, couple contentment. Early research regarding love, such as distinguishing love and liking, and formulating notions of passionate and compassionate love, has been extensively explored. The latest study has paid more attention to multidimensional characteristics of love – for instance, the notions that passion, closeness, and loyalty, in diverse blends, make up almost all of intimate love relationship (Furman & Hand, 2006, p. 172). This research is meant to strengthen our understanding of love, particularly in terms of Americans' attitudes about love. It seems necessary to take reality television shows into account and determine whether love is the main motivation for the participants in these competitions. The research will additionally examine the understanding of the term culture with respect to love and relationship attitudes. In terms of love as a scientific research subject, one of the most important names in the world of the social psychology is definitely Zick Rubin, psychologist and one of the pioneers in proposing an instrument that could empirically measure love. According to Rubin, romantic love is made up of three elements: Attachment – the need to be cared for and be with the other person. Physical contact and approval are also important components of attachment; Caring – valuing the other person's happiness and needs as much as your own, and Intimacy – sharing private thoughts, feelings and desires

with the other person. Based upon this perspective on romantic love, he designed a questionnaire called Rubin's liking and loving scales, used to measure these two variables. (Zick, 1970). Moreover, psychologist Harry F. Harlow, best known for his controversial experiments on monkeys, dedicated a great deal of his research to the phenomenon of love. According to Harlow, the initial love responses of the human being are exclusively those made to the mother. He therefore states:

> The word "love" has the highest reference frequency of any word cited in Bartlett's book of *Familiar Quotations*. It would appear that this emotion has long had a vast interest and fascination for human beings, regardless of the attitude taken by psychologists; but the quotations cited, even by famous and normal people, have a mundane redundancy. These authors and authorities have stolen love from the child and infant and made it the exclusive property of the adolescent and adult. (1958, para. 2)

Moreover, Gary Chapman (1995), author of *The Five Love Languages* theorized that there were five broad classes of behaviors that people would engage in to express love: words of affirmation, spending quality time, giving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. Goff, Goddard, Pointer and Jackson (2007) developed a survey instrument to measure *expressions of love*, in which series of questions were created in order to measure only one of the 5 elements that Chapman proposes. The main goal of the survey was to look into whether Chapman's expressions of love matched the behaviors that the survey participants wanted in a romantic partner. The survey was administrated to a few hundred people, and proved Chapman to have created a highly reliable set of model behaviors.

The English term "love" denotes an array of diverse emotions, states, and feelings that varies from social friendliness (loving a relative – for instance, a mother) to satisfaction (enjoying a certain meal every time). Love can also be a virtue, signifying human compassion, kindness, and liking – the selfless, steadfast, and compassionate concern for the wellbeing of someone else. It may also portray considerate and friendly actions to other people, oneself, or other creatures. Prehistoric Greeks acknowledged four types of love: familiarity friendship, intimate love, romantic love, and divine love.

Contemporary writers have differentiated additional types of romantic love. Non-western cultures have also differentiated variations of these states (Furman & Hand, 2006). This multitude of applications, merged with the intricacy of emotions involved, makes love uncommonly complicated to describe, in contrast with other emotional states. Love, with all of its diversity, acts as a main catalyst of social relationships, and due to its fundamental emotional significance, it is among the universal themes in the imaginative arts.

Even though the character or essence of love is a matter of regular contest, different characteristics of the word can be elucidated by finding out what love is not. Love as a broad term of positive attitude (a powerful form of like) is frequently differentiated with hate (or impersonal apathy); like a minor sexual and more psychologically close form of romantic affection, love is normally counterpointed with desire; and as a social relationship with romantic undertones, love is at times contrasted with friendship. Theoretically discussed, love typically denotes an experience someone feels for another. Love is at times described as an intercontinental language that dominates cultural and linguistic dissections. Love can be defined in various bases: Psychological, Evolutionary, Cultural, Religious, and Philosophical basis. In setting a definition of romantic love, we could start from a myth evoked by Aristophanes in the Plato's *Symposium*: " The mysterious fatefulness of love experientially has its source in the radical rearrangement man underwent in altering from a being of cosmic origins to a being who must submit to the Olympian gods. This alternation is presented entirely in terms of the body, but it gains its significance only if it is translated into the soul" (Plato, 1993, p.185) According to the myth, human beings were spherical, with two heads "that faced in opposite directions", two sets of reproductive organs, four arms and four legs. Zeus split those beings in two as a punishment inflicted to humans for their arrogance and greed. This division is, according to ancient interpretations of love, what seems to be the origin of human need to be a part of a couple: "Everyone seeks his other half, but he is condemned never to find it;(…)" (Plato, 1993, p.185)

Humans' urge to belong and contribute to a union is indisputable and what

we call love could be our necessity to be understood and accepted. The other in the couple would be the one who witnesses our existence, gives it certain value. Some will choose to believe the theory of a biological basis of love (put forward by evolutionary psychology, evolutionary biology and anthropology) which considers this phenomenon a series of chemical reactions, based on humans' sexual motivation. Religious conceptions of romantic love are mainly constructed through the image of Adam and Eve, commonly accepted archetype of love and/or lovers. Seen through literature and art, love is the supreme purpose of life, a cosmic force that equals good and gives meaning to all things. As Adorno explains, "In Romeo and Juliet Shakespeare was not promoting love without familial guardianship; but without the longing for a situation in which love would no longer be mutilated and condemned by patriarchal or any other powers…"(1997, p. 335). This is one of the possible acceptations: romantic love is a quest for freedom, as an ultimate value, in which love becomes a paradigm of liberty and free will. Being free and being loved for the right reasons is, in this context, a way to self-fulfillment. According to Carroll (2012, p.297), humans' tendency to search for love might be, on the other hand, entangled into the notion of "human nature" they use even in a casual conversation, in which "[people] usually have in mind basic human motives : survival, mating, parenting, favoring kin, and acting as members of a social group." Carroll also argues that these human emotions and motives are what build stories' guidelines which always focus on "struggling to survive, seeking romantic love, maintaining family relationships, satisfying ambitions, making friends, forming coalitions, and striving against enemies" (p.298). He also stresses that humans mostly follow these models as prescriptions, delivered to them indirectly through art, as a vivid representation of realistic actions. Love can be seen from many different angles, but where does love stand in society in terms of everyday life? We might say that some societies (where the institution of marriage is based on mutual feeling of love) understand, acknowledge and use this human need in order to establish better control of its members. Thus, family is a unit easier to control than individuals, given that its structure already comprises some sort of inner control.

What the producers of *The Bachelor* are after is a narrative that involves all of the mentioned notions to a point where "love" becomes idealized like in fairy tales including the inevitable "happily ever after." Love in this reality show is represented as a patchwork of different feelings and attitudes that should participate in a "perfect love." The contestants are idealized and expected to be understanding friends, nurturing and protective partners and passionate lovers, all at the same time. Their thoughts on marriage are highly romanticized and put into a context of comfort and wealth where anything seems possible, even a "true love." Is what we see in reality shows revolving around marriage even close to one of the possible interpretations of the word "love" in reality? Chances are not very high, given that the notion of love created by the post-capitalist entertainment industry resembles more closely an instant love from one of those practical, mini-packages that we can pick from a rack in any supermarket. Various layers and the complex structure of a romantic relationship are narrowed to basic lines and simplified to a point where only symbols and other semiotic tools are utilized in order to describe the feeling that is still a mystery to both social and natural sciences. It seems that TV love and marriage are deprived of their genuine complexity comprising so many different aspects, including financial problems, ideological discrepancies and other possible obstacles that affect a couple.

1.4 EVOLUTION OF COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

Societies and social relations change, even though it is not a radical and system demolishing transformation. This is the case in the marriage decision process before starting a family. Each heterosexual woman and man considers marriage as his/her exclusively private space, but it is now social change that determines what is private. While virginity was a pre-condition in the past, nowadays, especially among the educated middle and upper class, virginity loses its significance. This is also valid for "asking the girl's hand in marriage" rituals. However, although people use the

terms "dating" and "courtship" interchangeably in everyday conversation, they are technically not synonymous. Courtship is when two people get to know each other with the objective being marriage; dating is the same process of getting to know one another, but does not necessarily include the intent on either partner's behalf to get married.(Morton, 2011) According to Kaufman (2012), being single is like being unemployed. Extended unemployment is an issue that causes great concern; being single is the same. According to this statement, for a better self-image, marriage is almost necessary.

Today, proposing marriage with a diamond ring is considered a social transformation; a sign of modernization and westernization. Within that framework, the decision to marry, the factors affecting the choice of spouse, and/or the time and place of the marriage can be considered facts representing the social transformation. (Peplau & Campell, 1989) In fact, one cannot separate the increase or decrease of the significance of family or the conjugal union from social changes, social battles, or sovereignty relations. The lines that determine the frontiers of privacy are redrawn with the impact of social processes and other material, ideological, and cultural factors. Not only have the means for engaging in an intimate relationship changed, but the media has become a dominant social influence on society's perception of the marriage process. According to many social theorists, the media does not "mirror reality" anymore; rather, it maintains an industry position, which is producer, inventor, ruler, and as a result, the creator of what is considered real. Louis Althusser has grouped the media with the family, the church, and the education system under the heading of "ideological state apparatuses" (Gurevitch, Curran & Woollacott, 1995, p. 31). For instance, the process of marriage or matchmaking in Turkey has changed dramatically over the past decades and contemporary Turkish marriages mostly follow modern lifestyle norms and are conducted in compliance with modern dating habits. Previously, matchmaking or family advice was more common, especially in the rural areas of Turkey. However, with the increasing number of private television channels since the early 1990s, and with the development of communication technologies, people tend to look for partners via social media and other similar alternatives.

1.5 THEORIZING THE MEDIA EFFECTS ON SOCIETY

The mainstream and dominant theories with regards to societal analysis are based upon the Critical and Liberal Pluralists theories. Critical theory, differ from the Liberal Pluralist studies, composed of diverse level hermeneutics against the societal changes and their paradigm shifts. Both approaches' main motive is the changes of political, social, economic and cultural situations and their effects on the society. These shifts brought along new set of activities, functions and needs, which directly reflect upon the groups, classes or interests of the given society. This process has also influenced the dynamics of the media and power relations, and heatedly let the academy interrogate the degree of independency of the media from any kind of power. There is a thin line between power, media and society and it is hard to designate a singular aspect of this liaison, however in order to grasp the circumstances better, considering the media's increasing occupational role on individuals' lives, it is an inevitable aspect. In critical thinking, Poststructuralists and Post-Modernist occupy a special place and they are posed into a different vein, rather than grounded the approaches of Marxist interpretation; however under the "critical" analysis, they are believed to be interrelated. According to the classical Marxist approach, the departure of this relationship could be best identified as long as the importance of the class struggle, how the ruling class shapes the mass communication and their effects on public, is centered in the debates. In the last decades, the Marxist explication challenged with the new categories, like the differentiation of the ethical and sexual identities and their alienation in the neoliberal world, caused new interpretation and became one of the subjects of the Post-Marxists approach. On the other hand, Liberal Pluralists, as one of the orthodoxy researchers since the mid1950s, emphasized the empirical studies as data and accepted the media as a mirror, which reflects the reality of real people. However, in line with the changing political circumstances in the following decades, the liberal pluralists' attitude on media and media's role on public view has been deadlocked in many respects. poststructuralism reformulated

these traditional thoughts and their influence from different perspective and included ideological and verbal basis and deconstructing technics on the existing reading. In terms of the poststructuralist thought and Derrida, according to which the meaning cannot be grasped as a fixed and stable unit, but rather perceived as a dispersed flow of meanings, creating a heterogeneous flux, the focus is rather on the polysemic nature of cultural texts and "the range of possible meanings available to readers" (Calvert, Casey B., Casey N., French & Lewis, 2008, p. 276). Post-structuralism also takes into consideration the reader's background, such as class, gender or race, as well as his/her social role. In that light, it is highly important to mention Hall's Encoding/ Decoding model of communication, putting into focus the audience defined through the messages that it decodes in different ways. Hall gives the audience an active role comprising interpretation based on different social and personal contexts. Foucault, on the other hand, concentrates on exploring "how particular discourses are cited and developed to confirm (or undermine) specific forms of public knowledge and general "truths" (Thornham, Bassett & Marris, 2010, p.13). The nature of communication between the sender and the receiver of the message in the context of television, can thus be seen through many different aspects, for example, according to Foucault, as a relation of force and conflict: "I believe one's point of reference should not be to the great model of language and signs, but to that of war and battle… relations of power, not relations of meaning" (Thornham et al., 2010, p.13). In our attempt to better understand the position of the poststructuralists towards television as means of communication, we can evoke Barthes and his notion of "death of the author", implying not only an active role of the audience, but a total suppression of the author's identity, in order to liberate the text of an "interpretative tyranny of the author". Jean Baudrillard (2010) goes even a step further, evoking a suppression of the object itself: "While the mirror and screen of alienation was a mode of production (the imaginary subject), this new screen is simply its mode of disappearance. But disappearance is a very complex mode, the object, the individual, is not only condemned to disappearance, but *disappearance is also its strategy*; it is its way of response to this device for

capture, for networking, and for forced identification"(p.57). Baudrillard underlines the tendency of the reader to get lost in a web of interconnected meanings, which he defines as a subject's seduction, leading to the state of "hyperreality", a reality that changes its shape, misleads the reader into delusion and perplexity. To sum up, it is clear that the elusive nature of the message and its ability to control are in the very center of the poststructuralist discourse analysis of the television.

1.5.1. Liberal Pluralists

In terms of elaborating the mass communication relation with the mass society or more specifically media effects from the Liberal Pluralists narrative, the interpretation of media and its relations with public analysis is totally different than the Critical theories. The main discourse of the liberal pluralists' on mass media is media is the sine qua non part of the democracy, which disseminates information to the public and includes the public as a part of the media, such as creating platforms, and allowing pluralist views. Since the 1980s, neoliberal policies have come into being and promulgated a new political ideology with neoliberal economic policies, in which both breed a new concept called privatization. This new era's new dynamics revealed itself on the Media through the proliferation of Mass Communication tools, where the numbers of the private television and radio channels showed a heavy increase. Media companies have conglomerated in due course and gained an important portion from the market capital. In this new environment the rules of the game are to survive and to produce new innovations to strengthen their position. On the other hand, in order to proceed, public interference should be minimized and gradually take their hands off the media. Hence, this public purged media would create a free environment for investment of transnational companies. In the Liberal Pluralist account, it is also important where to position the media. As they argue media informs, educates/trains, entertains the public, it enables a platform for the individuals to participate in the public debates, it inspects any management and the government mechanism on behalf

of the public. Considering these features of the media, in the democratic political systems Media is accepted as the fourth power of the separation of powers (Özer, 2006) after legislature, executive and judiciary. Concerning these traits, inevitably media takes a great and necessary place in the academic debate and the American School with its quantitative research techniques, consolidate the liberal pluralist view. The main focus in these researches is based upon behavioral analysis and case studies that are observable and measurable with the numbers. In these quantitative methods of behavioral surveys, the core aim is to unfold the media and individual relations, and their cyclical structure. As a result, they argue that the institutional basis of the media, broadcasting policies, the content's construction are determined by taking into account general knowledge potential, expectations and tendencies of the society. Given these assumptions, the liberal pluralist thesis based upon media is reflected by the public, it is a mirror of the society and independent from any political ideology or political party, government and interest group. For instance, as television is one of the media organs, according to the liberal pluralists it possesses a democratic structure and reflects what the people want to see. Besides, television has a monitoring responsibility and is an ideational market (Özer, 2006) that transmits the objective and clear reality, treats everything equally and guarantees the democratic system (Süleyman, 2003). It unveils the problems and needs of the society, besides gives opportunities for the individuals to verbalize their needs, or let them think and be a part of the solutions. The main goal is to serve the public better, and make their voices heard.

Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet (1944) conducted research analyzing 1940s and 1948's public opinion on the Presidential election, and as they underlined, there is no heavy and concrete evidence demonstrating that mass communication and its tools have an influence and create shifts in public opinion. According to them, mass communication has a restricted impact on voter behaviors; it just consolidates and represents what is happening on the radio or television. Rather, the voters consider what the leaders tell them about the political situations, because face to face dialogue seems more influential in voters' choices. Gerbner also analyzed the culture by using

the media and its messages, and he observed that what is transmitted by media and is a result of the consensus of the society. The sentence "media is a mirror of the society" is derived from his studies and he identified "these message systems as the common culture through which communities cultivate shared and public notions about facts, values, and contingencies of human existence" (Gerbner, 1969, p. 138). After his cultivation resolution related to the same research, he stressed that media sows and cultivates the cultural values and attitudes, but does not create new ones, just consolidates the consensus among the individuals in the society. McLuhan also occupied a similar position with Gerbner, emphasizing the importance of mass communication media. According to McLuhan (1964), the main determinant of the societal system is the technology and as well as the mass communication as a part of technology. He used the term "global village" in which he tried to refer to how the development of mass communications creates a global village in the world, and now people from remote cultural contexts can know each other better. He also used the statement "the medium is the message" to identify the importance of the medium rather than inner meanings of it. If a person learns information, it is because the progress of the mass communication, so no need to put some specific meanings on what it transmitted, because the "formal properties of the media determined their use and significance" (Bolter, 2003, p. 18).

Neoliberals' media perspective acknowledges the media as a helping tool that increases the pluralist aspect on the one hand, disseminates information to the public, enables the public to share their opinions and secures the rights of the citizens, on the other. Media provide opportunities for pluralism and democracy by offering alternatives to the consumers. This is a prerequisite for the private media organs where the media independence is associated with the market economy. It has a consumer representation role, and considers the potentially demanding programs as to survive at this operating marketplace and within this competitive economic environment or gained advertising revenue or both. The content of the programs and the audience reflection should overlap. The content of the programs is supposed to be conspicuous ideas,

such as real life stories, soap operas, live political debates, sport and entertainment, and screening those kinds of programs it is expected to attract the audience, where "attracting the attention of the audience" is the key phrase in the commercial models of the media. On the other hand, why should the audience's attention be attracted, or even better, why should it be *distracted* from its everyday chores or pleasures? Why does watching television today necessarily fall under the term of leisure and relaxation? The notion of seduction that Baudrillard uses seems to be a lot closer to the actual intention hidden behind the means of communication that is television and the media in general. Is what he calls "the evil genius" carved into its core? This seduction doesn't only comprehend ideological purposes, but also ones that are purely lucrative. The media found its ways to generate interest and convert it into profit a long time ago; it's impossible to take into consideration only its democratizing effect, while there is such a thing as tabloids, gossip magazines and reality shows. It tends to cast the human suffering and humiliation into the focus of interest, and exploits the naïve human urge to be in control. It has its ways of empowering audience, creating an illusionary sense of dominion. It has its ways to convince the audience of its own freedom to break the rules and decide for itself. The media accordingly offers hedonistic escapades and little pleasures that *distract* our attention from the actual state of things – maintenance of a social atmosphere that allows further exploitation and consumption, assuring at the same time the contentment of the capitalism's subordinates: "As Marx saw it, then, the owners of the new communications companies were members of the general capitalist class and used their control over cultural production to ensure that the dominant images and representations supported the existing social arrangements" (Murdock, 1982, p. 126).

The message sent by the contemporary culture is that it's all about freedom and breaking rules; it is now legitimate to judge, take sides, gloat, and throw sticks and stones. However, isn't that just one of the ways of keeping the crowd docile and under control? Isn't the secret of exercising political and economic power strictly linked to ability of gagging the masses with little or no use of violence? In that sense *Panem*

et circences is a formula that has been working for centuries, allowing dominating classes to rule without fear of revolutions and coups. The actual power, the lack of it or the illusion of it is what has been determining societies for ages. Communication and media are the ones who decide our fate in the modern kingdom. They are the right hand of the king. They decide who lives and who dies on screen, who is to be judged and who is to become a popular hero. They are the reflection of what we should believe in, an instant recipe for the masses to follow. "By providing accounts of the contemporary world and images of the 'good life', they play a pivotal role in shaping social consciousness, and it is this 'special relationship' between economic and cultural power that has made the issue of their control a continuing focus of academic and political concern", argues Murdock (1982, p.118). This social consciousness is thus shaped on illusions at times of prosperity and progress, at times of power, but mostly of feeling of freedom. Television gives us just enough of sex, pleasure and violence to make us think that we are the ones breaking the rules and being free to decide on what to watch or what kind of lifestyle to practice.

On the other hand, the main argument of the neo-liberal media is to see the significance of diversity among the society. According to this theory, what is missing in public media organs is a multiplicity of perspectives. It would be imperfect to acknowledge the societies and their needs as single and certain; there are rather diverse level preferences of the individuals, and the multi-level platform offered to these claims. Complementary to this assertion, the neoliberal thinkers believe that what is screened on the media organs, or more specifically television, is the reflection of the society and their predilections. In their thesis, they argue that "democratization is enormously strengthened by the development of the modern mass media"(Curran, 2002, p. 4). With this statement, they reference the rise of the press and its undeniable importance on people and their reactions, where the free media is empowered by the people. In that point, Curran, in his book *Media and the Power* (2002) looks at the issue from a political economy perspective intended to analyze the relationship between the state, media and corporations. As he argues, in transition to liberal democratic policies,

what the member of many heterogeneous groups has "in common is that they distrust professional and state power and they stress the importance of social respect and view the media primarily as a source of consumer pleasure" (p 4). In the aftermath of the Soviet demise, the speedy rise of neoliberal politics and its products in the 1980s and 1990s were headed by the Thatcher and Reagan hegemonic partnership. In *their quest* to consolidate their economic policies, among their tools were the media organs and the key was to underline the value of cultural democracy. Ironically, Neoliberal's cultural democracy discourse gained grounds in the mass populist narrative and then, as an affirmative to the dialectic, this populist mass democracy turns the gun on neoliberals by criticizing them.

Liberal Pluralists contend that the media "plays an important part in the democratic process in constituting a source of information that is independent of the government" (Bennett, 1982, p. 31). However the media and politics are woven with each other in many realms but, more specifically, it can be said that they are directly related when the "media extended the political nation by making information about the public affairs more widely available" and led politicians to be aware of their society. (Curran, 2002, p. 7) As they argue, the diversity and variety in the media consolidate the democratic process, where this multiplicity would prevent any monopoly's control over people. In Klapper's (1960) and Curran's empirical studies, it is suggested that since the 1940s, while people were witnessing the speedy rise and global effects of the industrialization and urbanization, they use and tend to manipulate the mass media. According to these empirical results, "audience members are active rather than passive and bring to the media a variety of different needs" (Curran, Gurevitch & Woollacott 1982, p. 12) and social role of media was not based on hierarchical process. Curran et al. further referenced to dissonance theory which illustrates how "people seek to minimize the psychological discomfort of having incompatible values and beliefs, which seemed to explain people's deliberative avoidance and unconscious decoding of uncongenial media messages" (p.12). Given this new orthodoxy that arises from empirical thesis, it is suggested that media power is nourished by the public and their

different needs. In recent times, especially in the last decades, it is hard to support the former and latter approach exclusively, where it can be envisioned that there is a bottom up and top down relationship between the media and the public, which can be elaborated separately. According to Katz, Gurevitch & Haas (1973, p. 165), individuals select certain kind of media, as a citizen or as a customer or as any kind of job member, to gratify their needs. In this point, as they argue, people try to satisfy a variety of needs concerning their social roles and psychological disposition and this is why they "bend the media to their needs more readily". This led them not to even criticize the malign, if there is such, intention of the media or to fail to consider whether the media overpowers them.

1.5.2. Critical Theory

The critical theory that will support this analysis of matrimonial television programs is composed of theories that are grounded in the Marxist tradition and that criticize the liberal positivist discourse, in addition to behaviorist and quantitative findings, as well as empirical studies into the cognitive, emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral effects of media on children and adults (Potter & Riddle, 2007). Critical theory does not isolate any societal processes and structures in its analysis. According to the critical theorists, all social relations are determined by power relations, and mass communication is the medium of this power and reifies individuals. They look at the power and the mass communication relation medium through the lens of critical thinking and redefine the producer and consumer relations. They believe that there is a symbolic violence and hierarchic structure in the communication media. Especially for recent decades, critical thinking applied in the media effect analysis, by using magazines, newspapers, radio, film, television and social media as the medium of the mass communication and they sought "to expose and explore the ideological frameworks that control media to show how dominant (capitalist) ideologies informs the purposes and messages" (Bolter, 2003, p. 21). Feminists, post-Marxists, cultural

studies, poststructuralists and postmodernists, and the Frankfurt school are the main critical thinkers, although they conduct their research from a common viewpoint which is shaded by fine distinctions, their common point is to evaluate the effects of the media as far less innocent than the liberal pluralists claim.

According to Debord (1967), reality is fragmented and all fragments create a pseudo integrity, and this integrated unreality represents itself as reality, besides "[t]he spectacle is not a collection of images; it is a social relation between people that is mediated by images" (fragment 4 of the book). He assumed that in the globalized system, the individuals are the commodities and due to the pseudo spectacle, each commodity is a part of blind struggle by pursuing a passion, which is unconsciously generating something beyond itself (fragment 66). He touched upon the *material faddism* and the role of media which act as a subservient to the sway of the market economy, in this process:

> Consumers are filled with religious fervor for the sovereign freedom of commodities whose use has become an end in itself. Waves of enthusiasm for particular products are propagated by all the communications media. A film sparks a fashion craze; a magazine publicizes night spots which in turn spin off different lines of products. The proliferation of faddish gadgets reflects the fact that as the mass of commodities becomes increasingly absurd, absurdity itself becomes a commodity. (Fragment 67).

He designates media as the reinforcing mechanism of this pseudo spectacle and states that it isolates the population and makes them passive in any situation. Moreover in terms of the media's position, he indicated that "the spectacle cannot be understood as a mere visual deception produced by mass-media" (fragment 5), it is rather a materialized version of the worldview. Media transforms these worldview images and represents them as "real" images. The society of the spectacle chooses its own technological content and the apparatus of the media has been developed in accordance with the spectacles' own dynamics. The media is not impartial in that point and it concentrates "in the hands of the administrators of the existing system the means that enable them to carry on this particular form of administration" (Fragment 24).

1.6 THEORIZING TWO MARRIAGE PROGRAMS IN TWO SOCIETIES

In terms of comparing both marriage programs, which are *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* in Turkey and *The Bachelor* in the USA, on theoretical grounds, it can be said that to some degree all of the Critical theory approaches overlap with the case study and are helpful to comprehend the detailed parts of the comparison. However in order to clarify the relationship between privacy and the gaze or voyeurism within the context of "marriage reality shows", the poststructuralist reading, and more specifically a Foucauldian approach, correspond much more closely to the case study. The aim of the research is to grasp the role of reality TV shows and to investigate how they create a platform for self-exhibitionism and the power of the gaze. Without any doubt in modern societies, television, television channels and TV programs have become a powerful medium for communication and information within the peoples' own territories, such as the home, and within their self-established physical boundaries. In the first years of the use of television, it was an important tool for spare time activity, information, entertainment and learning the situation about the whole world via news broadcasts. The content of the programs was made by considering the interest of viewers and including educational and entertaining activities in an unobtrusive way. If one asks a question such as what happened from these times up to now, the more distinct answer would be capitalism and its productions such as neoliberal doctrine and consumer society with its relentless consumption and extra needs. This answer is common in all critical theories. The rise of capitalism with its transforming effects can be observed and justified in the proceeding subgenres of the television channels and their consequences among the people. Although liberal pluralist theory demonstrates a pure and innocent portrayal regarding these situations, the neoliberal doctrine and its embedded competitiveness proliferated in all realms of the individuals' daily life.

Consciously or unconsciously, neoliberalism constitutes a dual structure within the system; imperious in the system that holds the power, on the one hand, and conformist, in who obeys the rules of this power and lives within the boundaries of the system, on the other. The result is neoliberalism and the imperious impulse, which is a product of neoliberalism, and transforms the people into passive and subservient subjects. This determining power, which is called imperious, can be the state, society, a ruling class or any individual or institutions that manipulate the power considering their interests. The critical theorists tackled this process and dual structure that creates deterioration in different veins, but there is a common terrain which all of them agreed upon: the analysis of capitalism, neoliberal doctrine and its derivations, specifically looking at the ways "market imperatives" commoditizes individuals. However, if we look at the circumstances by just degrading market economy, it would be clear also in Marxist thought, on which the Frankfurt School and Socialist Feminists agree. The point that needs to be evaluated is how power can reify individuals and to what extent individuals consent to this power. It is certain that television as a medium plays a significant role in this process, and in specific terms, reality TV shows forms a basis for this reification. In the past, people were not explicitly televised themselves nor did they share their privacy; the audiences were contended with just watching. However, today being an object on TV becomes important and does not bother people when compared with the previous years. It is obvious that many people are willing to be watched; on the other hand, again many people are willing to gaze upon the other's intimate space. This phenomenon has started especially since the 2000s, when the reality TV programs became popular with their specific content. One of them was *Big Brother* that aired in 2000 first in the USA and then spread beyond the Atlantic. The basic premise of the program "is to sequester a group of strangers for a lengthy period of time" (Wong, 2001, p. 491), watching them 24 hours a day via candid cameras. In many contexts, this show and succeeding formatted programs created debates not only in society but also within academic groups. From academic terrain, two main questions were raised; why the idea of televising the behavior of ordinary individuals in various staged

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situations is used by the production companies, and why ordinary individuals want to exhibit their privacy. From the network's point of view, telecasting one's everyday life and privacy with every detail benefits the channels, where the ratings of the programs provide a continuance for the production company. From a liberal pluralist view, showing these kinds of programs is a reflection of the society's need and it is the media's duty to service these needs. Therefore, everybody who is included is satisfied; the producer and channel earn money, the one who is being watched earns fame and fortune, the audience watches and learns secrets and enjoys time in front of the TV. Liberal pluralists analyzed this process by opinion polls and exclusively considered the value and results of their quantitative research, and if the ratings of the program are high, which means the society favors these kinds of programs over others. However the liberal pluralists cannot explicitly answer the question: why people want to exhibit themselves and why the audiences want to get into their private space.

Before the 1980s, Debord in 1967 emphasized this upcoming process in his studies, especially in his book the *Society of the Spectacle*. He evaluated these gradual changes, and gave signals of the future processes and anticipated the social shift. Debord, rather than minimizing the issues onto Marxist ruling class discourse, made an overview on what is happening all around and claimed that there is an illusion surrounding the societies, that people live in an unreal world consolidated by television as a medium which serves not the peoples' need but rather a ruling authority. Ironically, in reality TV shows the main discourse is the "real" life of "real" people that seem to consolidate the concept of reality, which can be acknowledged as a perception made to convince people everything is real. The media's effort to convince the audience everything is "real" is a selling technique to mobilize the consumers. According to Kaufmann, what is presented in the marriage programs are "the consumerist illusions, {which} sooner or later would lead us to believe that we can choose our mate in the same way we choose yoghurt in the hypermarket" (Kaufmann, 2012, p. 6). Debord's approach gives us a glance into the general panorama but yet it is not enough to comprehend the reasons of the privacy and power of gaze, and there is a need to answer these questions

beyond the illusions viewpoint.

According toBaudrillard, *dissumuler*, which means undisclosed, is what is own and presented as not one's own; *simuler* is when not own is represented as own. In the world of *simulacra*, it is hard to separate reality from imitation and imaginary, as it can be observed in the reality TV shows, and marriage programs. In marriage programs, despite the presenters' "real life" of "real people" discourse, it is hard to understand whether it is a fiction story of the participants or Baudrillardian simulation. The well-known fact is that reality-based programs yield profit for the production companies and therefore, except for the audiences, the presenter, the participants, the participant's stories, their will to get married, their privacy and the marriage program as a whole can be acknowledged as a pseudo reality, and as a part of a simulation. Baudrillard's approach supports Debord's way of analysis and both of the thinkers created a basement for the case study. By considering their approaches as grounds for this theoretical study, there are still unknown parts in need of answers: how to conceptualize the exhibitionism of one's privacy and the power of the gaze in detail.

CHAPTER 2

PRIVACY

2.1. CONCEPTUAL CLASSIFICATIONS OF PRIVACY

The term "privacy" is traditionally derived from the term "private" and specifically refers the non-disclosure of personal and legal information or the state of isolating information. It has an extensive usage not only including the vocabulary of daily life, but also in philosophical and legal literature, where privacy is interpreted and has been deeply described in both realms. As privacy is a part of legal and philosophical debates, we encounter problems to frame the term in a unique description. Within this context, Inness(1992) pointed out that "the content of the legal literature seems disparate from that of the philosophical literature; this leaves us wondering whether the issues at stake in tort and constitutional privacy debates are related to the conceptual debates in the philosophical literature" (p.15). Thereby this confusion put a strain on determining whether there is a consensus between legal and philosophical descriptions and, if so, how to articulate one to another, or moreover, should privacy rather be acknowledged as a construct of both. There is a vast body of definitions in both disciplines in order to elucidate what privacy is, and the philosophical richness (Solove, 2008) stands as a remedy for this immense complexity. However Beaney finds this richness

insufficient and argues that "even the most strenuous advocate of a right to privacy must confess that there are serious problems of defining the essence and scope of this right"(Beaney, 1966, p. 255). From philosophical account, there are distinct problems with regards to its function; first, privacy functions through a mechanism of control and secondly, privacy is entangled by focusing on its content, and herein privacy is seen as a tool for restricting access to the agent or information about an agent. Westin, one of the best known thinkers of control of information about oneself (Parent, 1983), conceptualized privacy as a control of one person, and characterized it when a person opens and closes his/her information to the other.(Westin, 1967). According to DeCew (1997), Westin's approach is too narrow, because "we often lose control over information in ways that do not involve an invasion of our privacy"; besides "privacy is not reducible to personal information" (p. 53). DeCew finds that Westin notably considers privacy as "the claim of individuals, groups, or institutions to determine for themselves when, how and to what extent information about them is communicated to others"(p.7). This claim is now "commonly referred to as the "'self-determination'" of one's personal information" (Klitou, 2014, p. 15). This formulation is important in deciphering privacy's domain and its mechanism, especially while taking into account the informational control. According to this idea, an individual has a right to decide what degree of his/her information should be a part of communication with others.

Parker (1974) and Altman (1976) prefer to describe privacy as a control of access to oneself. With regards to Altman's view, privacy has an interpersonal boundary control, and there is a selective control of access to the self or to one group. According to them, within privacy exist a variety of the social unit interactions, a bidirectional process and an active, and a dynamic regulatory process. This leads us to understand that privacy is a permanent changing mechanism and has a dynamic nature. In this context, Parker suggests there are times when loss of control over information does not mean loss of privacy, but similar to Altman, Parker adds that "the core concept of privacy is the control over when and by whom the various parts of us can be sensed by others" (1974, p. 280). Parker gives an example of an astronaut, whose actions in

a spaceship are entirely monitored by electrodes that feed data to a control desk, so that people at the control desk can observe the astronaut through a camera. Therefore, a "prohibition against switching off the camera would result in further loss of privacy for the astronaut, even though the camera provides no additional information" (p.281). Hence according to him, the definition of privacy is engaged with the control of who senses us. In that sense Parker's argument may be significant, although, as Gavison specified, "Parker's suggestion as 'not necessarily' because loss of control over sensing is involved, and the camera may provide people with the control desk with an additional, qualitatively different way to obtain the same information, and this may be equivalent to additional information" (Gavison, 1980, p. 430).

Besides these definitions, Altman (1976) additionally grouped privacy under several important headings to verify the privacy's dynamic mechanism and its several features. The first feature is *units of privacy*; this heading is the social derivation of Westin's state of privacy and conceived of interpersonal events. The second is the *dialectic nature of privacy*; if there is a social interaction, there is a continuing dialectic between the forces that drive people to come together and induced upon an interpersonal contract. The third is the *non-monotonic nature of privacy* referring that too much or too little privacy is unsatisfactory, where afterward people need to find a level of new social interaction. The fourth is *privacy as a boundary regulation process* meaning that there is a flexible barrier between self and non-self and any intrusion would create a tension or discomfort. The fifth feature is *desired and achieved privacy*; this feature, on the one hand, examines a subjectively defined ideal social interaction that a person desires; on the other hand, achieved privacy refers to the outcome of social input and output.

Gavison indicated that many philosophers and legal theorists "have lamented the great difficulty in reaching a satisfactory conception of privacy"(1980, p.421). However, as the advocacy of limitation access to oneself, Gavison contended that our limited accessions to the others shape privacy; therefore the concept of privacy should

be tackled by concerning the limited accessibility, which enables us to identify when losses of privacy occur. (p. 424) There are reasons for these limitations, all of which are related to "the functions privacy has in our lives, such as the promotion of liberty, autonomy, self-hood, human relations, and furthering the existence of free society" (p.423). Gavison in that sense grouped privacy's meaning as twofold; one concerns the status of the term that analyzes whether privacy is a situation, a right, a claim, a form of control or a value. The second covers the characteristics of privacy that stem from information, autonomy, personal identity, and physical access.

Parent, in these debates claimed that the term "privacy" desperately needs a precise definition in order to make clear the distinction between the values of autonomy, solitude, and secrecy, which are directly and indirectly a part of legal and philosophical literature. He analyzed privacy in his optimal way and argued that "privacy is the condition of a person's not having undocumented personal information about himself known by others" (Parent, 1983, p. 346). More specifically he touched upon an absence of an undocumented knowledge about a person, in which there is a confidentiality of individual's belongings. Parent also emphasized that this confidentiality is a part of strict function of cultural norms and practices, where all of them form the scope and the value of privacy. He offered taxonomy as a methodology, illustrating specific concepts by virtue of individuals' communal nature concepts, which cannot be studied apart from the individual's relatives or neighbors. Each of these concepts belongs to the privacy of the family and each has a unique identity and role; (p.347)

- *Privacy is the absence of undocumented personal knowledge about a person.*
- *Liberty is the absence of coercion or externally imposed restraints. It is the value imperiled by any legislation that preempts individual choice.*
- *Autonomy is self-determination, the faculty (or capacity) of making one's own choices. The exercise of autonomy constitutes one way to use liberty.*
- *Peace (or peace and quiet, repose) is the absence of offensive,*

annoying, or disturbing noises, clamor, and confusion. It is a necessary prerequisite for peace of mind, a mental condition marked by tranquility or calmness

- *Health is the absence of disease. It is the value endangered by foul air, noxious fumes, etc.*

- *Property is the exclusive ownership of the attendant capacity to enjoy a home and other material goods. Loud noises, unwanted solicitation, and foul odors arguably infringe one's right to private property.*

- *Solitude is the state of being physically alone, of not being in the company of anyone. Since invasions of privacy do not require the physical presence of the investigator, snooper, etc., they can occur without any infringement of solitude.*

- *Seclusion is the state of being hidden away from sight. It, therefore, requires the presence of walls, fences, cliffs, or some similar physical barrier. Obviously seclusion is not necessary for privacy*

- *Secrecy is the withholding or concealment of impersonal information, that is, facts consisting of plans, formulas, codes, programs, rules, etc. as opposed to personal facts about individuals. The concept of secrecy is most at home in discussing the status of things like official papers, documents, meetings, sensitive negotiations, and communications.*

Gavison's and Parent's claims are based upon the idea that an individual's experiences of privacy and this experienced private life are not accessed by others. Gerstein (1978) argues that privacy cannot be analyzed merely concerning applicable and specific control of accession formula. In other respects, privacy is a control of information and necessary for and related to intimacy, where intimacy in communication and interpersonal relationships is important requirement for our lives. Gerstein further insisted on the importance and deeper relation of privacy and intimacy. As he argued, intimacy without intrusion or observation is required for us

to have experiences with spontaneity and without shame and "to allow outsiders for coming in and find out about every detail of intimacy would seriously impoverish the 'moral capital', which the relationship can draw for its sustenance"(p. 76). He had used a very simple formulation; if the people have the opportunity of entering one's privacy, then intimacy could not exist. But we cannot get rid of the observation of the outsiders; they would try to involve in our privacy, although we are completely alone. Then in this case self-consciousness is "something we must get rid of for a time if we are to lose ourselves in intimacy, and we cannot do that unless we can have privacy" (p.81).

DeCew (1997), in a different way, collates all these clear cut debates into some specific clusters and tackles the issue within these contexts. He proposes three clusters of privacy, which are *informational privacy*, *accessibility privacy*, and *expressive privacy*. Informational privacy concerns the control over information about oneself, and specifically refers to protection of personal information relating to daily activities, finances and lifestyle. Accessibility privacy, on the other hand, concerns the limited-access conception and "focuses not merely on information or knowledge but more centrally on observations and physical proximity" (p.76). Lastly, expressive privacy "is the desire to protect oneself from the influence of peer pressure or ridicule and to be free to express one's own identity" (p.77); more precisely, it is the ability to control what is said about you and this type of privacy also belongs to informational privacy. Moreover, this type of privacy "protests a realm for expressing one's self-identity or personhood through speech or activity" (p.77). Hence we can summarize three types of privacy: the first is the control over information, the second is limited access and third is the personhood, according to Solove (2008), which does have a similarity with Wittgenstein's family resemblances formula.

Yet another important philosophical perspective is examined by Thomson, who argued that there is not a unique designation of the right to privacy. Thomson touched on the right to privacy by elaborating specific cases to reach the answer of

what private is and what it is not, on an ethical basis. In her article "The right to privacy", she focused on the possession of rights and how these rights are violated intentionally and unintentionally, and in what account can we argue that there is a right to violate one's privacy. As she exemplified:

> To own a picture is to have a cluster of rights in respect of it. The cluster includes, for example, the right to sell it to whomever you like the right to give it away, the right to tear it, the right to look at it. These rights are all "positive rights": rights to do certain things to or in respect of the picture. To own a picture is also to have certain "negative rights" in respect of it, that is, rights that others shall not do certain things to it-thus, for example, the right that others shall not sell it or give it away or tear it (1975, p. 299).

In her study on *privacy*, *intimacy* and *isolation*, Julie Inness entangled the privacy issue articulated with the notion of intimacy, where there is a need to recognize privacy within the context of intimacy, especially on two grounds; by looking at behavior or motivation. Julie Inness argued the similar approaches from legal grounds finding that "privacy law fails to produce a unified account of privacy" (1992, p. 17), although it seems to clarify and best frame the explanation of the value of privacy by referencing a number of legal cases that are justified. The main problem of privacy law is it did not restrict the access of others to the agents, where it mostly lays the stress on agent's private sphere such as "the harm an agent can sustain if her liberty with respect to her own intimate actions is undermined"(p. 16). Inness has identified intimacy as the defining feature of intrusions and, according to her, intimacy is based not on behavior, but on motivation. As she indicated, intimate information or activity is that which draws its meaning from love, liking, or care. It is the privacy that protects one's ability to retain intimate information and activity so that one can fulfill one's needs of loving and caring. (p.17) She criticized the unclear approach of tort law and constitutional law, which both determine privacy law in a different vein. According to tort law the main concern is separating the agent's access to others; constitutional law, on the other hand, conceptualizes privacy as "the state of an agent having personal information or experience separated from the senses of others" (p. 17), such as family life, sexual life etc. Thereby, given this incompatible structure and content of the legal basis, the

term "privacy" is issued in various ways and a specific legal explanation cannot be reached. Besides, she also has identified intimacy as the defining feature of intrusions which are called invasions of privacy. Since, according to her, intimacy is based not on behavior, thereby the intimate information or activity draws its meaning from love, liking, or care.

It is generally compelling to delimit the context of privacy. It is vague to understand whether something important and belonging to an individual is solely subject to private or accessible to the public. This circumstance led one to see that it is hard to conceptualize a philosophical single meaning of privacy due to the term's complexity and sweeping dimensions. The value of privacy can make different sense and preserved in various cultural perceptions, and "[d]efinitions of privacy can be couched in descriptive or normative terms, where we can view privacy as a condition or as a moral claim on others to refrain from certain activities (Moore, 2008, p. 411). More specifically descriptive privacy means what is in fact protected as private, normative privacy, on the other, concern the values that are protected by law (DeCew,1997). Hence, privacy is characterized as an interest with moral value, and a legal right that is protected by law. The widespread de-conceptualizing or developing the scope of privacy under one frame persists multifacetedly even in the legal grounds. As Solove (2008) argues "although the domain of relating to privacy has made significant strides in dealing with privacy problems, it has thus far suffered numerous failures and difficulties in resolving them" (p. 1089), because by just considering some specific cases would not lead one to the whole understanding of the value of the privacy. In the USA, for instance, the federal and state laws collide with one another and addressing privacy concerns in a different way and matters are tackled in diverse ways, which reflects that the protections employed are not well articulated (Solove, 2008, 1089). In legal issues, in the early years privacy was acknowledged as a condition of being let alone and equated to rights to be let alone. Warren and Brandeis are the most important and eminent thinkers of this approach, when they published their article called "The right to property" in 1890. Warren and Brandeis were two attorneys in Boston and they

had an extraordinary influence on conceptualizing privacy jurisprudence. However, according to Schoeman (1984), "the seclusion of the individual, or their right to be let alone, is an uncharacteristic, incomplete and misleading part of privacy, a right which actually emphasizes our connection and facilitates our association with others" (p. 8). According to Parent these two attorneys "strike for eloquence and through the use of brilliant analogical reasoning argued for the explicit legal recognition of privacy as a necessary means of protecting citizens against irresponsible newspaper gossip" (1983, p. 341).Warren and Brandeis compare the early times and modern time's privacy perception and the term has been refigured and the context of it expanded. In the early times, the scope of privacy was associated with a judicial remedy for physical interference with one's life and property, but in due course various forms of concepts and the scope of the privacy was enlarged regarding their security:

> (...) liberty meant freedom from actual restraint; and the right to property secured the individual his land and his castle. Later there came recognition of man's spiritual nature, of his feelings and his intellect. Gradually the scope of these legal rights broadened; and now the right to life has come to mean the life of enjoy life,-the right to be let alone; the right to liberty secures the exercise of extensive civil privileges; and the term "property" has grown to comprise every form of possession – intangible, as well as tangible. (Warren & Brandeis, 1890, p.193)

Therefore, the process widened the scale of privacy through experiences, as well as thoughts; emotions, beliefs, and sensations became a subject of legal law as they became demanded rights encompassed by the new privacy. The latitude which "characterizes the common law enabled the judges to afford to requisite protection, without the interposition of the legislature" (Warren & Brandeis, 1890, p. 195). Warren and Brandeis not only determined the extent of thoughts, sentiments, and emotions that shall be communicated to others where this right was an aspect of the general right to property, but also "carefully located the right to privacy within the context of the highly schematic jurisprudence of late nineteenth-century American law" (Glancy, 1979, p. 3), where, on the one hand, the right to be let alone is a part of general law; however enjoyment of life, on the other hand, was formulated as a part of an

individual's fundamental right. They analyzed many cases, which were composed of trespass, defamation, confidence and common law copyright, in order to identify the principles of privacy. By doing this, they had figured that these principles expressed as a right to be let alone and "anchored in the more fundamental interest of an inviolate personality". They used the term "inviolate personality" which refers "to the harm caused by intrusion as 'spiritual' rather than 'material' because it involves "an effect upon… [a man's] estimate of himself"(Hunt, 2011, p. 43). Gavison(1980) criticized Warren and Brandeis's studies and their conceptualizations as being vague and lacking guidance, where according to him the phrases were not scrutinized explicitly and defined clearly. In a similar vein, the approach of Warren and Brandeis has been criticized by Parent as well, for not being clear about the assertion of liberty. (Parent, 1983)

Another approach to privacy was elaborated by Gerety (1977), who argued that privacy "has a protean capacity to be all things to all lawyers" (p. 233), and if there is a need to refer to privacy in specific terms, it is related to sexual autonomy and information, but only if "private" is directly related to intimacy, identity, and autonomy. As he argued, the broad explanation of privacy is "lack any meaningful limitation in scope" (Solove, 2008, p. 1123) and when we narrow down the meaning of privacy we can use the word "intimacy" to define privacy; because intimacy is "a consciousness of mind in its access to its own and other bodies and minds, insofar, at least, as these are generally or specifically secluded from the access of uninvited" (p. 268). According to Hunt (2011), Gerety tried to conceptualize privacy as "the point at which certainty [based on intuition] is felt, it might be argued, is subjective, but shared certainties are at least [inter-subjective]: if enough people share them – and act on them – we say we know them to be so"(Hunt, 2011, p. 178). In simple definition, he defined privacy as a "claim to control the intimacies of personal identity," (p. 277) and by saying so he used intimacy as a guideline for analyzing privacy. As he examined, any intimate information is a part of private information and they have a conceptual similarity, however he never neglected the necessary intuition and said "[t]here must

be intuition here, as in any value judgment, but a limiting and necessary intuition: at some point we have to say just what parts of our physical and mental lives are intimate and so private" (p. 269). Heretofore, various types of discourses were demonstrated, and there have been many other approaches but there is a need to delimit the debate, and in this study some specific and mostly mentioned discussions and perspectives have been examined. The term "privacy" is elaborated in ordinary language as well as in philosophical and legal discussions, yet there is no single definition or analysis or meaning of the term. All debates contain countless insights that paved the way for immense complex, where "many philosophers and legal theorists have frequently lamented the great difficulty in reaching a satisfying conception of privacy"(Solove, 2008, p.1). In order to correctly conceptualize the term "privacy" in this study, it would be convenient to draw a line between the concepts of privacy and intimacy, since they are closely related to each other and their respective meanings are sometimes not strictly delimited. While anatomizing privacy, the commentators of some perspectives sometimes were found too narrow and these commentators, who were designated as reductionists, addressed privacy as reducible to the other concepts and rights. On the other hand, some others' definitions were found too broad or unclear; where in their analysis of privacy is lost among many other phrases. But yet all the definitions do have a common feature that they are overarching the nature of the concepts with specific approaches. They encompass "freedom of thought, control over one's body, solitude in one's home, control over information about oneself, freedom from surveillance, protection of one's reputation, and protection from searches and interrogation" (Solove, 2008, p. 1). There is a sort of chaos (Inness, 1992), evanescence and vagueness in conceptualizing the term, which is uniquely undefined, or as Gross (1967) indicated, it is infected with pernicious ambiguities. These discussions led the existing traditional methods, especially in the literature before the 1990s, which were problematic and unsatisfactory in denominating the term in specific common and certain keywords.

2.2. THE HISTORICAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPHERE

Many of the theorists, who identified privacy, have not explicitly considered the historical construction of privacy. According to Fuchs (2011), they do not take into account the relationship to capitalism or only stress its positive role. According to him, this can be characterized as privacy fetishism. In order to place the particular importance of the "private", there is a need to dissociate privacy, from what is a part of public life. Thereby, the discussions and studies regarding sphere analysis between public and private is a transit point to identify and crystallize what is under the domain of private. Privacy and public sphere discussions and the issues related to them trace back to Classical Greece's philosophical debates, and tackled in line with the difference between what was designated as public and what was a part of private (Fuchs, 2011, pp: 140-165). According to DeCew (1997), in order to define when the term "privacy" first occurred, it would be valid to look behind to Classical Greece and how the people in this age had contemplated the distinction between the private and the public. In Aristotle's differentiation, for instance, he concentrated on the public sphere of political activity and the private sphere associated with family and domestic life. Since then, the issues belonging to privacy, in conjunction with the terms liberty and freedom, have become one of the essential issues in the Western liberal tradition in individuals' self-definition and development (Kahn, 2003). In other words, the term private has been enshrined by western philosophy and "[t]he distinction between public and private has been a central and characteristic preoccupation of western thought since classical antiquity and has long served as a point of entry for many of the key issues of political and social analysis, of moral and political debate and of the ordering of everyday life" (Weintraub and Kumar, 1997).

The Classical Greek *polis*, has become a focal point of many academic debates, and the scholars who were concentrated on the public and private dichotomy, Hannah Arendt for instance, had used the polis as the departure point for her studies. Then

it would be right to pursue this tradition and start from the classical Greek period and articulate this period's discourse in regard to the modern debates. During these ages, in the Greek city-states there were two domains at the core of the debates; one is *koine*, in which Greek citizens were actualizing the political activities in the polis (Greek city-state) and the term corresponded to the public sphere, and *oikos*, the other, refers to the individuals and their private and family life (Habermas, 1991). The oikos was a sphere where the individuals were living in households and connotes their zone of privacy. The prior concern in their households was their necessities, which were squashed into the house, non-political, and consisting of work and responsibilities. These responsibilities hinged upon an unequal structure, that is, men were the head of the household and women were responsible for fertility. The weaker members of the house were dependent on the head of the household and his decisions (Arendt, 1993), and the common interests were driven by the hunter and fabricating man, who was the leader. One of the specific features of the private sphere was symbolized by a life in privacy or in confidence, and "the human capacity for political organization is not only different from but stands in direct opposition to that natural association whose center is the home (*oikiri*) and the family" (Arendt, 1998, p. 24). However, privacy was acknowledged as deprivation and ideas with regards to privacy were not welcomed by the society. The individuals, who were enthusiastic to live their life in the private sphere, were held in contempt and criticized by the public. On the other hand, in the public sphere, koine, there was a political platform for debates and all of the activities in front of the public were necessary for human communications. The public sphere was composed of a talkative body of politics, in which "[t]he emphasis shifted from action to speech, and to speech as a means of persuasion rather than the specifically human way of answering, talking back and measuring up to whatever happened or was done" (Arendt, 1998, 26). As Habermas (1991) indicated, during these ages, public life was practiced within the boundaries of the cities and specifically in the *agora*, where the wars, Olympic Games, and judicial issues were discussed. In the agora, citizens were revealing themselves in political actions through speeches; they

did have concerns on expressing themselves in front of the public and differentiating themselves from others. It was a place where all the citizens were exclusive from their private life. The existence of these kinds of activities and debates led one to experiment real life from different dimensions. As Arendt stated in her book *The Human Condition*, in the public sphere the world was based solely on men's activities and "[t]his special relationship between action and being together seems fully to justify the early translation of Aristotle's *zoonpolitikon* by *animal socialis*" (Arendt, 1998, p. 23). In koine, individuals could find a chance to expose their unique identity and their differential sides through discourses or performances they demonstrated. Besides, these conversations among the people in the polis led them to figure out and overcome mortality and the vanity of life in an equally based platform. According to Arendt (1993/1998), the equal nature of the public sphere is also an important variable when comparing the public with the private sphere, because in the private sphere there used to be a ruler-ruled relationship. Women, slaves, and foreigners had not been recognized by the citizens and they were a part of the ruled category, however, as the men were the citizens of Greece, in their private life they were the rulers. According to Aristotle, the private sphere, oikos, was the first societal union and a realm of necessity. In this sphere people breed and this area was characterized by subjection and oppression. When we look at the exact differentiation between the terms "private" and "public", Aristotle explicitly spared these two concepts from one pot. He used to designate these terms as, "the relationship between citizens, between citizens and political society as a whole and between citizens and state" (Koçan, 2008, p.1). There is an ontological difference between these spheres and it would be a mistake to assume them as homogeneous structures in a unified manner, or a constituting unity. Aristotle had examined the private as a particular sphere of Greek individuals in their family, on the other hand, public, according to him, was associated with common life, community dialogs, and relationships. But that does not mean that the oikos was solely eliminated from the koine, rather it was a part of it and it enabled individuals both as a member of the family and the community (Aristotle, 1976). Aristotle had touched upon the

importance of oikos, the private sphere, and argued it was not explicitly independent upon the community or polis. Oikos was a realm of common life within a family, but also strengthens the relation within the community. Besides, as he argued, the state starts in the household.

The public sphere, in the historical terrain, is another contested concept from the historical background, where it is socially, politically and culturally constructed in a particular space with the active involvement of the people. It refers to the sharing of traditions or the ideas of political concepts and social practices. It has certain values and norms that are articulated with and created by a given society. The private sphere is a social construction in natural ties and the communication in the household reflected the public dialogue in the community, although, to some extent, individuals are separated from the state, or independent from the public autonomy. Within this context, we can observe that privacy and public life are both interwoven, on the one hand, and distinctive concepts on the other. From past to present, sociability and backstage life have always been argued from many contexts in order to decipher to what extent exactly are the public and private boundaries blurred. Moreover, the question also arises whether there is interdependence or a mutual constitutiveness of these two realms, and, if so, what are the consequences of this circumstance? In some cultures, including political and social cultures, there may be a need to demarcate privacy from public life or in other words, demarcate the private from the intrusions of the public, because "these intrusions are often construed to the extent to which they affect the right to exercise control or restrict access, either in terms of personal information, decisional autonomy or an abstract or physical notion of space" (Dawes, 2011; Roessler, 2005). These constraints have compressed an individual's privacy into a really small space. The private sphere could be observed also in architectural structures; for example, ancient houses in England had only one room and all the activities like sleeping, cooking, or eating were performed in that room with all the members of the family(Habernas, 1991). Afterward, first bedrooms, then the living rooms were built. These separated living spaces occurred in line with the necessity of

privacy of the family members in living area. However, a major evolution had been taking place in the era of the Enlightenment, when individuals discover their value as human beings. Therefore, privacy rights were limited to social rules. But after the Renaissance humanism, the phenomenon of the individual, the space for the individual and privacy of an individual emerged. The idea of capitalism or its practice liberalism was also a big step in the evolution of privacy. After the Industrial Revolution, opportunities like specialization, differentiation, and division of work emerged. These opportunities lead people to live in smaller groups and even alone. Individuals had to say "I" instead of "we" according to the system which was spreading all over the world. Therefore, privacy became a benefit for individuals. The main goal now consisted in being better than the competition and winning the market. It is absolutely logical that these new values led to a higher level of secrecy among individuals, in order to protect themselves and their own ideas or inventions from the competition. Also, after the Industrial Revolution and urbanization, people owned more and more valuable things. Before modernity, they had nothing to hide and they never locked their doors. With the rise of individualism, people felt more insecure and threatened in terms of their private lives and started to lock their doors. Jürgen Habermas (1991) has specifically indicated the distinction between public and private sphere since the Enlightenment era, and his work on public sphere, which is called *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society* deserves to be referenced. In his book he argued that a "public passionately concerned with itself sought agreement and enlightenment through the rational-critical public debate of private persons with one another flowed from the wellspring of a specific subjectivity" (p. 43). This subjectivity he referred to is the private sphere and family life of an individual, where he/she metaphorically closes the door to the public. But this "family" is composed of crowded families rather than conjugal ones. In turn, the private space had stratified and while the crowded family independent of the society was a layer, individuals' own space was another layer inside of it or a subset of it, because free individuals had become enthusiastic to emancipate themselves from the

coercion of their crowded families. The concept of privacy not only opposes the idea of public life, but is also needed to distinguish intimacy from privacy.

2.3. MODERN BOUNDARIES OF PRIVACY

Although private and public spheres are prominently dissociated in the historical past, especially during 18th, 19th and at the first half of 20th century, today the contemporary boundaries of privacy are somehow ambiguous. Gumbert and Drucker (2001, p.115) recognize that "(…) public and private life is being shifted increasingly, and privacy becomes illusion and surveillance becomes reality" (Gumbert & Drucker, 2001, p. 115). It is certain that with the process of modernization, the values and designations like "individual", "individualism", "individual identity" and "individual territory" have been rising while at the same time the personal rights like the right to privacy are legalized. By the help of these developments, individuals have gained the right to identify themselves legally and this circumstance consolidates their citizenship. In the modern era, the right to privacy, as mentioned, has been concretized by the legal rules, rather than religious and traditional rules. Therefore, the purport of privacy basically refers to the decision of an individual, in which an individual has the ability to control his/her own scope, allows the access of others and all these are guaranteed juristically. Roessler and Mokrosinska (2013, p.771) touched upon the description and boundary of modern privacy in terms of norms of informational privacy that protect the individuals' own space or individual interest. Besides, as they argued, there is also another component that privacy "is an integral element of dynamics of all social relationships."(p. 771). By saying so, they refer to privacy as a concept that can be observed in intimate relationships, professional relationships and social interactions between strangers in public. Hence there are two types of privacy in a contemporary reading; in terms of individual interest and in terms of interest of the society. In this

thesis we will be observing how the right to privacy is sacrificed to the interest, not of the society, but of the audience, spectators being a new kind of virtual society, with its own rules and codes. It might be wrong to use the term "sacrificed"; we can rather employ "sold", since it is this dimension of human existence that is widely exploited in reality shows, where participants eventually get rewarded by fame and possibly acclaimed by the audience. Employing the word "sold" implies that the privacy has value, and it is therefore used as a commodity. It is an individual possession that can be manipulated by its owner for lucrative or other purposes.

To understand the domain of traditional, modern privacy and the privacy rights of an individual, the socio-historical developments are important. For instance, Western society has long stressed property rights as fundamental for living and this stage has induced the development of self, through individual possession, and through any gained individual rights. All these led to the emergence of the individualistic society. However, other more collective and non-western societies have demonstrated that the right to property is in no way inherent to the human condition, nor a prerequisite for every society to function smoothly. More specifically, in non-western societies, there is a sort of misidentification of an individual where some specific rights are disregarded. It is hard to imagine a reality show produced in countries such as North Korea, maybe not only due to its very tight political structure imposing limitations on privacy among other things, but also because the values engraved into its society wouldn't recognize the "values" offered by the reality TV industry. In other words, privacy might not be viewed as a commodity or possession. On the other hand, if in some countries it is not recognized as fundamental right, it is indisputable that privacy is a fundamental need that led the human race to build separate habitations throughout history. We can connect it to humans' need for independence and the ability to make decisions on their own, or even to an innate urge for the development of self in the context of a group/ tribe/society. Furthermore, if we consider the development of the self from historical grounds, in the ancient ages for instance, we can see privacy existed, but in a primitive manner. The most certain evidence is seen in the spaces in which people lived, the

habits and the life styles of ancient people as they used to actualize. In these ages, people's freedom and independence were related with neighbors', families' and life and death's constraints.

In modern societies, staying and being single in a collective life is somehow an important challenge, especially as different types of circumstances sometimes give no room for solitude and do not allow the individual to live their intimacy alone. This is very prominent in the collective societies. Obviously, today's privacy is the result of evolution, which has its origin when people started to live together in socialized civilizations. In the modern debates on privacy, by taking account of the role of technological advancements, the distinction between the public and private is based upon what is hidden and what is visible. In addition, the public sphere in modern times is an ideal realm for the construction a democratic society and "acts as a critical resource for legitimization of these policies, integrating citizens into political community as a whole, protecting individual's freedom and equality" (Koçan, 2008, p.2). Yet establishing a definition or framework for the right to privacy is also shaped through the society. For instance, people live in a sort of commune life in the non-western societies that delimit the scope of their privacy. The evolution of modern family life does not show a clean break with tradition; the family today still retains some residual habits from its earlier history. For instance, in some areas of Turkey, after the wedding night, the relatives of the bride and the groom check whether the sheet they slept on is bloody or not. This tradition is claimed to be an attack on privacy in modern and secular families and societies. Moreover, the same women, who were checked after the wedding night, must wear head scarves to ensure their privacy according to their beliefs. Therefore, we can say that the traditional privacy limitation conflicts with modern privacy ideas. For traditional privacy it can be easily said that the decisive facts for the frame of privacy were religious rules and traditional social habits. Accordingly, we can say that urbanization, industrialization and secularization were the major events causing the modern privacy phenomenon; privacy is a concept which seems to be valued more and more in contemporary society: "The economic,

cultural and political destabilization of traditional community values coincide with the ascendance of intimacy, privacy and the project of the self" (Martos, 2013, p. 10). Hitherto descriptions are mostly concentrated on the general acknowledgement of the modern and traditional differentiation. However, modern society has generated new realms for privacy, which are informational technology on the one hand, media and its tools for inducing exhibitionism, on the other. These new realms play an important role in unfolding *the private* to *the public*. This argument needs extra concern, because it is the breaking point of the exposure of privacy, or it is rather the moment in which privacy became a subject for public. It is obvious that there is an overt dialectic between private and modern times. Concepts of privacy and intimacy have been generated by the process of modernity, especially when considering the Western countries and their individualistic societies. However, the same words, "privacy" and "intimacy", have become publicized along with modernity.

New kinds of voyeuristic pleasures started popping up and taking over the public space, via television and computer screens. Simulations of intimate moments between couples carrying the name of "romance" became sensational material on TV and in cinema, then, eventually it became completely normal, for some, even boring. Disappointed spectators now long for something else, something more. Joy and pain are both "real" and purifying experiences, testing the audiences' aptitudes to empathy. Now, in the reality TV era they are able to judge and assess, compare their reality to someone else's. The modern era and late capitalism bring along the notion of competition, more than ever before. In the western world, people compete to be better, wealthier, healthier, and more successful on any level. However, achievement itself is not enough, it has to be displayed and commercialized thus it seeks acknowledgement; social networks are flooded with photographs of happy families and romantic couples madly in love. This new-age online boast could be defined as visual sadism by some, while on the other hand some would justify it taking into consideration humans' innate urge for recognition. Love and marriage seem to have become a luxury in the epoch of loneliness, where the roads to success are bumpy and steady relationships or marriage

are viewed as redundant or even restraining. People find it more difficult to make decisions as a couple; being single is a new kind of rebellion against the society and its norms, or at least expectations. It is as if the institution of society begins to fail its subjects, lose its values and perish a little bit more every year. The lack of trust sowed by capitalism undermined already delicate relationship between the society and citizens: people are becoming alienated, running away from any kind of established order or power. Collective welfare is no longer the ultimate goal of being member of a society and performing civic duties. Living alone or travelling alone becomes a new challenge for the generations to come. The race for money is fierce and competition is ruthless, thus having money in the modern era equals freedom. Freedom is another notion that has a special place in this context. We are free to choose our spouses and free to separate from them when we feel like it. Divorce rates have been climbing with incredible speed ever since the economy allowed such arrangements and the world population became spoiled for choice, finally being given the freedom to decide. In modern countries arranged marriages started being a matter of the past, and in the meritocratic era where only the best succeed and love is the matter of choice, being loved means being chosen, having the right predispositions and qualities, gaining the competition, or at least, being one step ahead. The modern society seems to start turning back to the past and its values: marriage once more becomes a status symbol. On reality TV the romantic relationship and marriage slowly developed into tools for self-promotion and displays of worthiness.

2.4. TECHNOLOGY AS A TOOL FOR DECONSTRUCTING PRIVACY

One of the most clear-cut developments of the modern ages is information technology. We are in an information oriented society and witnessing drastic changes of the world, especially in the recent decades. In terms of privacy, modernity has

been bringing along new information through technology and mass media, and the term "privacy" got lost within this context. The core point is how the private becomes very public. Technological advancements and the dissemination of information have been cause of "renewed concern on privacy rights and a reappraisal of the importance or value of privacy, and for a fundamental rethink about the very meaning of term" (Dawes, 2011, p. 116). In that sense, it is important to figure out how others manipulate the individual's privacy through the use of information technology. For some scholars (Tunick, 2013), for people who do have something to hide, such as any type of criminal case, information technology or informational privacy is useful, protecting them from any unjust or disproportional judgment. The same is valid for the people who have nothing to hide. For some other scholars,"[t]he profound proliferation of new information technologies during the 20th century in line with the rise of computer usage, made privacy erupt into a front line issue around the world" (Solove, 2008, p. 4). The discourse of privacy ranges from gossip to the extensive surveillance or to data mining, which all have become subjects of academic literature and applied to incorrect and correct purposes. Developments in informational technology, arbitrary or not, reveal the individual's confidential living space. The important point is, there may be willingness to expose this privacy or there may be covert monitoring or listening without permission; it depends on the circumstances and the dimension of the privacy. But information technology is in this regard facilitating any kind of gaze through the flow of information. Information technology plays a dual role; one is the use of information technology, for instance, for criminal cases, where the data or information that is hidden and seems private should be infringed in favor of the healthy functioning of the investigation. For harassment, on the other hand, people make use of information technology to gaze with the intent of committing an intrusion into one's private affairs and processing of personal and private information. The modernity, in line with technology is characterized by "a rise in the number of knowledge workers, a world that has become more open – in the sense of communication with global village metaphor and internationalization with trans-border flow of data" (Britz, 1996, p.

175). Therefore, privacy and intimacy are centrally located issues in the information technology debate. The broad action space of the technology displays the appearance of people and latently records their privacy, through accessing their bank record information, their political views, their ethnic roots, and lastly their intimate life. This dialectic of technology produced different kinds of side effects. Tape scandals and candid camera recordings, for instance, can be given as one of the best examples for the intrusion into one's privacy. On the one hand, they can serve in favor of the public, but, on the other hand, these recordings may be manipulated or used for blackmail, which would lead to political, ethical and judicial consequences. At this point judicial precautions seem to be less powerful and insufficient for avoiding any invasion of individual privacy. Then, there is the fact that privacy as a concept is closely related to how the information is retrieved and through which sources.

Rather than invasion of privacy, we might say renouncement of it: in the great Reality TV industry, privacy and intimacy are a cheap price to pay for the fame that can potentially be the outcome. Andy Warhol's prophecy about everyone's "15 minutes of fame" seem to come true as the modern age progresses bringing more tools and reasons for exposure. Being completely anonymous is like an offence in the modern era where "the cult of self-esteem" (Poniewozik, 2003) is thriving. Everybody wants to be a role model, approved by the masses, worshiped and acclaimed. The worship phenomenon is nothing new in human history, but we can say that it has been taken to a whole other level in the modern era. There is no need to be "worthy" of worship, like a king or an ingenious writer or artist. Being ready to expose one's intimacy, increasing chances of being hurt, taking the risks, becoming vulnerable seems to mean a lot more to today's audiences. Being able to get over obstacles and triumph in the end represents the cliché of the popular hero/heroine present throughout human history; someone who despite his/her limitations, unfortunate twists of events, and ultimately the tragic flaw takes over and wins. Coping with embarrassment and humiliation gets to be a new paradigm of pride and rebellion against the system, the ultimate cry for freedom in the cage of late capitalism: "Embarrassment, these shows

demonstrate, is survivable, even ignorable, and ignoring embarrassment is a skill we all could use. It is what you risk- like injury in a sport- in order to triumph. 'What people are really responding to on these shows is people pursuing their dreams,' says American Candidate producer R.J. Cutler. A reality show with all humiliation and no triumph would be boring" (Poniewozik, 2003). What exactly are the "dreams pursued" by reality stars? Fame does bring some sort of opublic recognition, at least to some extent, but it also brings many other benefits that can lead to an advantageous carreer and profit. Money/possession, as previously explained, equals freedom and power at almost every moment of human history, and gaining it has never been simple, except for the lucky few, but in our era, reality shows make it look like a piece of cake. All we need to do is "be ourselves" or not afraid of judgment or punishment, we need to embody freedom in order to acquire it, even if it comprises deviant or morally unacceptable behavior. Tom Green, one of the pioneers of the publicized home videos containing pranks and sketches, explains in his blog published by Huffington post: "It used to be if you were 16 and pregnant you would get in trouble. Now you get a reality show. You get arrested on TV after a drunken binge and become an instant millionaire. Compromise your morals and make a sex tape and it may get you enough attention to land a lucrative fragrance deal" (Green, 2013). Mike Fleiss, the creator of *The Bachelor* and many other hit Reality shows admits: "I like to take a topic that someone says, 'You can't put that on TV,' and then I put it on TV. (…) I want to feel a little bit dangerous, a tiny bit irresponsible probably, and that usually equals controversy, and that's sort of my stock-in-trade" (Seal, 2003). It seems like ethics don't count anymore as the ends justify the means; participants in reality shows are voluntarily exhibited, unfolded, exploited and ruthlessly consumed by the audiences in order to get the status of the untouchable elite enjoying its freedom and deciding the fate of the others. It seems to be a vicious circle generated by technological progress, greed, competition and voyeuristic inclination of the cheering crowd.

Western ideals of privacy are constantly reshaping our life and being consolidated by new technologies, day by day. As Marx argued, technology is an

infrastructure element that shapes our social relationship as well as our mental and intellectual configuration. In modern societies, there is neglect for the ethical dimensions of technological developments, while their production increases. Lyon (1994) identifies this new human race's collaboration as a surveillance society and examined their method of surveillance as the common currency. He used this concept where he tried to indicate how the "details of personal lives are collected, stored, retrieved and processed every huge computer databases belonging to big corporations and government department" (1994, p.3). Lyon further notes how the people became the subject of surveillance in the "private lives and public surveillance" concept, where "[s]urveillance is strongly bound up with our compliance with the current social order, and it can be a means of social control" (p. 4). The enhanced role of technology, in this regard, reminds us of George Orwell's *1984* novel and the telescreens for monitoring the public that cause total surveillance. Giddens (1985) explained this by literally saying "Totalitarianism is, first of all, an extreme focusing of surveillance" (Giddens, 1985, p. 303). Besides, he tackled surveillance as one of the grounded factors of totalitarianism; "surveillance as: (a) information coding, documentation of activities of the population (b) supervision of activities, intensified policing" (p.303). From this point, it is vital to take into account the relation between surveillance and technology and their concerted action in affecting privacy. The existing *electronic world* through technology, as above examined, blurred the spatial distance between what is inside and what is outside and concretized the distance of who observes and who is observed. The flow of information through any kind of technological tool eliminates the boundaries of privacy, creates a ground for surveillance and transforms the meaning of visibility. The changes from private to public "significantly impact our perceptions, expectations and relationships to the people and places" (Gumbert & Drucker, 2001, p. 115). Surveillance technologies commoditize individuals and determine their psychological attitudes in public space, where privacy is lost. For instance, when a man is aware of surveillance through street cameras, then while crossing in front of the cameras, he will alter his behavior. Gumbert and Drucker

(2001), considering these circumstances identified three dynamics of this kind of surveillance that influenced the individuals and their social interactions. First is the lack of awareness of surveillance technology, which argues that, without any knowledge about the surveillance, social interaction may be affected by the imposed regulations and cultural expectations or any knowledge of past technologies. The second is awareness of surveillance technology, which means being explicitly observed. This would affect the behavior and individuals' social interaction, which has a similarity with Bentham's Panopticon or Foucault's conceptualization relating observation and control. Therefore all social performance of the individual is rooted in the awareness of observation. The third dynamic is awareness of confirmed surveillance, which is manifested in several behavior patterns; such as reactive conduct, the suspension of awareness and non-reactive behavior (p. 118). Being visible or feeling visible, as Foucault argued, is a state of consciousness, and assures the automatic functioning of power and it is an ominous metaphor for large-scale social control that characterize the modern world. Technology is an important tool to propagate information that would be accumulated by the public, and "[w]henever we drive, we drive in the public world, and thus normally subject to unobjectionable public observation" (Reiman, 1995, p. 29).

CHAPTER 3

MARRIAGE CULTURE AND TV SHOWS IN TURKEY AND AMERICA

In order to understand how two societies' people conduct their love affairs and romance, it would be valid to look at their marriage and courtship history. Cross-cultural aspects, whether a country has an individualistic or collectivist identity and the assumption that "the dimensions of individualism and collectivism, respectively – both at the societal and the psychological levels-provide a heuristic framework for better understanding romantic love"(K.K. Dion & K.L. Dion, 1996) give us a starting point for scrutinizing the marriage rituals of one country. The extent of a couple's love sharing, their limits and family consent, the role of society, sex and cohabitation vary widely. Furthermore, this differentiation also exposes the gender role ideologies, self-disclosure and the degree of intimacy sharing (Marshall, 2008). In collectivist societies, where individualism is not well constructed and self-disclosure is yet limited, people's romantic love continues in a more traditional way. For instance pre-marital sex still seems taboo in these societies; in the marriage process, couples' actions should comply with conventional standards, and receive families' consent; arranged marriages are common. In the individualist societies, the individual is autonomous and does what is expected to actualize and build his/her life course. Marriage is important

but nowadays not a must, and cohabitation and pre-marital sex are usually accepted by the family and the society. This part of the chapter will illustrate the divergence of marriage customs between Turkish society, with its collectivist identity, and the individualistic American society.

3.1. MARRIAGE CULTURE IN TURKEY

In Turkish society marriages were generally based upon spousal equality, since the 19th century, which developed as a part of the modernization movement. Afterwards, in line with the revolutionary process, women who experienced unwanted marriages were offered relative gender equality on marriage (Hortaçsu, 2003). Republican government, which was founded in 1923 after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, tried to consolidate conjugal affection as one of the veins of modernization and secularization. Efforts toward westernization (which is also designated as modernization) started during the late period of the Ottoman Empire years, however in a constricted and uneven way. Since 1923, Turkish society's modernization process was constructed in some cases, and gained constitutional grounds but yet remained loyal to traditional norms and patriarchal culture, such as the clear distinction in gender roles. According to Yıldırım (2005), although the Kemalist Revolution was always taught as a complete change from the Islamic Ottoman past, "the ghosts of beliefs, norms and laws of the past continue to lurk in present Turkey"(Yıldırım, 2005, p. 349), which can be proved within the field of the family law. In the family law provisions of the Turkish civil code, female sexuality issues had not been shelled from certain Islamic codes. Accordingly, Sirman (1989) also examined women's status, their movements and struggles in Turkish society and, as she argued, some attempts had been made during the Ottoman westernization period, though limited and suppressed by the authorities. That's why, the Kemalist Revolution was assumed to be a sort of exit road from the strict rules of Islamic identities that were imposed on women,

where the women's position was under the occupation of public interest. However after the Revolution, "[t]he new patriotic woman was still a wife and a mother, but she also had another mission, that of educating the nation"(Sirman, 1989, p.4).

Women's status in a country is a significant detail to assess the society's norms and structure when drawing a marriage map. Also, modern and traditional cultures act as a beacon for elaborating and comparing societies' marriage typologies. As Hortaçsu argued, when doing research on marriage types of one society, some factors need further consideration, such as whether there is a greater emphasis on spousal equality or whether the marriage maintains within a small or within an extended family. These questions spark a debate on collectivist and individualist society structures (Hortaçsu, 2007). In one given society, basic cultural orientations face social changes in a global sense, such as industrialization and urbanization (Sezen, 2005) and these changes may cause the transformation from a collectivist society to a more individualist one. Considering the modernization process of Turkey as a social change, its cultural fabric remained collectivist (Hortaçsu, 2003) and had not shifted towards an individualistic way as American culture experienced at the end of 19th century. There are many rooted components surrounding this reasoning; for instance transferring some marriage codes to the contemporary era. Within this context, the genealogy of women's status (since the Ottoman period or even before), or the fulfillment of Muslim society's customs had created collectivist features and rituals among Turkish society. While the American society shifted its traditional structure in the course of time, Turkish society maintained specific customs from the past up to now. This diversity between both cultures induces differences in the practices of their social norm as well. According to Jankowiak and Fisher (1992), both individualism and collectivism are dimensions of the cultural variations, and give us a clue on how the general structure of the society conceptualizes and practices love and romanticism. Although the individualist societies' people put self-actualization as their priority life goal, collectivist societies' people mostly comply with the societal norms prior to their needs (Delevi & Bugay, 2010).

Collectivism can be defined in terms of relationships, the emphasis on social

cohesion and harmony, and the value of family integrity. In collectivist cultures, the line between the individual and family is thin and there is a similarity rather than distinctiveness among group members. In order to grasp comprehensively how the collectivism in Turkish society was generated, Süleymanov pointed out the roots of Turkic people and their history (including both the Turkic people in Central Asia and Modern Turkey) within the context of family structures. According to Suleymanov, Turkic families are composed of elementary families and kinships, which mean extended families, and have an institutionalized system of values based on national, cultural and religious features (Süleymanov, 2010). These values strictly relied upon respect, honor, loyalty and discipline, which all together form the social norms and collectivist identity of the Turkish society. When tackling the issue on Turkish society's marriage rituals, it is much more comprehensive and layered than Western societies' practices. In Turkey, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies prepared a report on *Family Structure Research in Turkey* (Aile ve Toplum Hizmetleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2013) estimating that approximately half of marriages are arranged marriages, especially in the rural areas. However, the percentages of these marriages are lower in the urban areas, where people can enter into love marriages by their own choice, given a higher level of education and modernization that urban life brings along. Likewise, Hortaçsu, conducting similar research, grouped the marriages in a twofold structure; one is the marriage type arranged by family, called *family-initiated marriages* and can be seen in the rural areas, the other one is love marriage between loving couples which is designated as *couple-initiated marriage* and is more common in urban areas. In her research, when considering the findings, she argued that couple-initiated marriages are mostly associated with positive spousal emotions and based on more egalitarian division of labor. On the other hand, although the couple-initiated marriages in urban and family-initiated marriages in rural societies are different when comparing the age at time of marriage, family size and type of marriage, interestingly the "boundaries between the two types of marriage are less clear in present times"(Hortaçsu, 2007, p. 103), where both need family consent. Sezen (2005) profoundly scrutinized traditional

marriages in Turkey and presented 33 categories of marriages, including religious-bride priced-consanguineous and other various types of marriages. These categories were made by both the rural and urban population. It is obvious in his research; the rural marriages' classifications were grounded on customs in depth and sustained a more conservative system. Within this conservative design, women were commoditized and can be priced; to illustrate, women can be sold by their father in exchange for money or bovine animals, or once the groom's family decides on the bride, the groom's mother visits the bride's mother and the two women talk about the possibility of a marriage. During this visit, the groom's mother tries to assess the attitude of the bride's family toward the marriage. She may talk about the nature of the marriage and give a picture of the groom to the bride's mother if the bride and groom have not met each other yet. Unless something goes wrong, it is fairly certain that an offer will be made at this point. The bride's mother talks with her husband and possibly with the bride. She may show a picture of the groom to the young woman. If the response is positive, the groom's family are asked for a visit. Once the time is set, the extended families of both sides gather to establish a closer relationship. The traditional marriages include a "consultation with family members and a second visit to tell the decision may be required" (Hortaçsu, 2003, p. 160). This custom has a similarity with American marriage rituals in the early colonization process, where the potential mates are silenced.

In the urban version of marriages, in contrast, the couples conduct the process, the prospective partner is introduced by his/her partner to their families and the couple is relatively free to make their own decisions. Generally, the Western-style marriages are preferred among the young, urban, and educated people, albeit there is a degree of family interference, where, as a rule, the parents' approval of marriage is obtained even if the marriage is a modern one. In Turkey, during the pre-marital process, parents are sometimes conducting inquiries rather than the groom, and the groom asks for the young woman's hand even if it's a modern type of marriage. The father of the "bride-to-be" usually accepts the offer, saying that the young man and woman have already decided and that the families should approve. The preceding description of events

and practices that take place before marriage in Turkey demonstrates that there are two types of marriages; traditional and modern, and these types have many common aspects, with the underlying theme being interdependence between extended families and the conjugal pair. It can be observed in this literature that more autonomy is granted for the couples who prefer modern marriage, and more conservatism effectually in the traditional families, albeit collectivistic values still exist in both family characters. Although there are prototypical modern and traditional marriages, there are variations within each type. For example, a marriage may be initiated by parents but the pre-marriage process proceeds like a modern marriage in that the young man and the woman may fall in love and exercise control over most decisions. On the other hand, when addressing gay marriage, both the modern and traditional families stand at the same point, and generally veto these situations and force upon their children a hetero-normative approach. The 20th century saw economic liberalization sweep the state of Turkey. Henry Rutz and Erol M. Balkan have cited the study by Duben and Behar to suggest that transition from the "welfare state to neo-liberal state" greatly impacted the institution of marriage in Turkey. The majority of middle-class respondents who reported to have found themselves love married. However, the traditional hold continued with the grooms approaching the brides' parents to complete the formality of marriage after being engaged with a girl in a relationship. Thus, currently privacy in marriage, an individualistic idea, coexists with "shared sentiments, mores, and expectations of the family toward its members." (Fitzpatrick & Koerner, 2002, p. 234-253)

3.2. MARRIAGE CULTURE IN THE USA

In order to better grasp the historical process of marriage and love affairs in the American society, it is significant to mention Luhmann's (1995) findings reporting that until the 18th century, the marriage concept was just based on strengthening the

social stratification. Since then, when love affairs became a part of courtship and marriage rituals, marriage has largely been based on individual decisions and has in some cases overcome social inequalities. The Unites States traced back to the early colonial puritans, who were the European colonizers of the New World and brought their Calvinist values regarding marriage, child bearing, and patriarchal traditions (Ingoldsby, 2003; Burzumato, 2007; O'Neill, 2013). These newly migrated colonists were acknowledging the marriage concept as a comfortable life style or a survival pact (O'Neill, 2013) rather than as a romance-based courtship or a passionate love affair. During the 19th century, men and women were divided socially into separate spheres of activity, depending on their roles in the community. Single women were under the surveillance of their fathers, and it was not possible for them to date the men in the community individually. The fathers of the boys and girls did the dating on behalf of their children and chose the appropriate spouses, considering whether he or she would increase the family's wealth or landholding (Degler, 1980). This made it more difficult for young people to interact with each other, and bear any emotions. In the course of time, these circumstances had formally been generated as the rituals of courtship and gradually consolidated with incoming procedures such as engagement, rings, wedding ceremonies, and gifts (Ingoldsby, 2003). In the 18th century post- revolutionary era, the colonists gained their independence and enlarged their properties and living spaces with new settlements. When analyzing this process from the courtship and marriage perspective, this new settlement meant that it would be hard for the families to keep track of their children and their private life (O'Neill, 2013). This creates an opportunity for the young people to enter a relationship, where they could choose their spouses by themselves. This reflects the change of dating rituals and if a young man asks permission from the father of the woman he was interested in and if the father allows it, the young couple could begin a courtship and dating. However, although "the woman could veto her parent's choice, couples rarely married if the parents did not approve" (Ingoldsby, 2003, p. 6) and parents kept a close eye on the couples until their marriage became official. Despite some parental vetoes, the young people were much freer to pick or

reject a spouse with little parental interference. In addition, they started to live their relationship in private and construct their marriage on love. It is also worth noting that, in progress of time multi-level cultures and new socio-economic structures, which had developed their own cultural design, emerged in the American society. Thereby the courtship rituals and dating customs were differentiated according to the individual's *class*, which is called endogamy (Wells, 1971) and single people need to contemplate this socio-economic structure of their potential mate. Exemplifying the dating types of different classes, the middle class or working class individuals had to meet in public places, such as at the movies, theatre or dance halls, where their properties were not adequate to provide comfortable privacy. On the other hand, in the upper classes the courting was done at a woman's house and under the eye of her family (Bailey, 1989; Ingoldsby, 2003).

Until the 20th century, courtship was involved in couples' meeting time, in order to get to know each other with the expressed purpose to decide whether they were potential mates (Bailey, 1989). In their meetings, couples tend to create an intimacy, which can be designated as pure relationship and their paths were culturally well set up (Kaas,1997) and less complicated. In the 1930s and 1940s, dating became more common especially among the lower class men and women (Bailey, 1989). Among the lower class population, dating stands between casual dating and engagement (Whyte, 1992), which then had returned a sign of mutual commitment. However a decade later a new form of relationships occurred in the 1950s, which was called "going steady". According to Bailey (1989), this form of relationship refers to a new category of interaction between couples with its own set of rules and customs, such as monogamy, but it was uncertain whether a steady relationship would end with marriage. Besides, many cultural commentators argued that the marriages end with divorce in the modern times, rest upon baseless "going steady" relations (Burzumato, 2007). Since the 1960s and up to the contemporary period, marriage has continued to be an important rite, although courtship declined in importance and no longer occupies

a crucial place within contemporary American culture (Cere, 2001). Still, today traditional marriage and family, although less explicitly than in Turkey, represent the backbone holding together the American values: the fact that it has been evaluated and become more flexible doesn't diminish its importance. For example, in June 2015, the US Supreme court acknowledged same-sex marriage and granted the same civil rights to homosexual citizens wanting to found a family with their partner. Members of the LGBT community reached out for justice asking "for equal dignity in the eyes of the law" (BBC News). It just tells us to what extent the institution of marriage is still important in the US, although subject to so many (positive) transformations.

Likewise, the families of the contestants in *The Bachelor* seem to accept innovation operating through TV marriage, which is anything but conventional; the episode in which Ben Flajnik goes to visit the final three contestants' family homes reflects the concern about traditional values still existing in the modern era. Let's take, for example, the family of the contestants Kacie B., who seem to take marriage very seriously and openly dispute the kind of marriage their daughter wants to engage herself into. We witness one-on-one conversations between the bachelor and the parents revolving around the ethics of marriage; the parents support their opinions by criticizing sexual intimacy or co-habitation before marriage, trying to protect their daughter's integrity. They are obviously not happy with ideas promoted by the show. They imply that it encourages promiscuity and somewhat liberal interpretations of the institution of marriage. This moment can be seen as a point of intersection in terms of courtship rituals and habits in the two countries and their respective TV shows. This episode of *The Bachelor* contains scenes that would not be too different from a scene showing a traditional "kız isteme" (asking for a girl's hand from her family), still practiced in Turkey, even among modern families.

3.3. MARRIAGE SHOWS IN TURKEY AND AMERICA

People's general knowledge is acquired through television but because of the superficial knowledge level of the medium, this information does not reflect reality. Popular culture is a common public culture and represents the common beliefs and practices shared by society. On the other hand, mass culture is a process which uses manipulative techniques to maintain power and does not allow creativity. The invention of the television brought a new aspect of reality, but soon its genuineness began to fade, as different lobbies and stakeholders started taking control of its contents. In Turkey, especially in the 1990s, with the spread of private channels, the changes in cultural fields increased and the presence of popular culture has gained intensity (Yildiz, 2004, p. 175). In recent years, magazine programs have proliferated on all TV channels. And we can say that they are the product of the popular culture. These programs, which have been running on almost every channel, cause cultural corruption in the name of cultural function. As a result, day by day the boundaries between private intimate life and official public life began to disappear.

In Turkey, marriage shows have always attracted a huge percentage of the television audience. As a result, people are closer to the products of popular culture. The concept of popular has two general meanings: "public ownership" and "widely accepted and consumed". While the first definition of this concept is positive, the second seems negative because it implies cultural distortion and banality (Yildiz, 2004, 175). As is known, the reasons for this negative point of view are the values which were produced by the media: "success", "glorification of the good", "get-rich-quick scam", "being famous" and "competing for praise". When all these values are combined with entertainment, the result is a new visual ideology (Kose, p. 64). Turkey was just one more stop in the march of American and European reality shows toward global domination, with stations importing formats such as *Big Brother*, *Survivor*, *Pop Idol* and audiences watching in numbers that ensured the shows kept coming (Vick, 2005). Then Pelin Akat had her revelation, as she is the person who imported these

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programs to Turkey. She had particular success with a marriage show called *Will You Be My Bride* and she sold her format to the entire world. It was a new interpretation from the girl-meets-boy to the girl-meets-boy-and-boy's-mother reality show. These reality programs aimed to show the importance of family decisions in marriage. The season finale drew 74% of the television audience. (Vick, 2005) Since 2003, there have been many different formats on this subject but the new age started with Esra Erol, who is one of the presenters of marriage reality shows.

A short time ago, there were four different programs on various private channels. On ATV, *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* [*Marry Me with Esra Erol*], every weekday from 3 p.m. to 6.30 p.m., thus filling over 17 hours of air time per week. The other one is on Star TV, *Zuhal Topal'la İzdivaç* [*Marriage with Zuhal Topal*] between 11.10 a.m. and 3 p.m., covering four hours a day and twenty hours a week. FOX also has a marriage program of this type: Songül Karli and Uğur Arslan introduce the program *Su Gibi* [*Like Water*] every weekday from 12.15 p.m. to 3 p.m. Fox's daily broadcast schedule devotes two hours and 45 minutes to the marriage program, approximately 12 hours per week. Almost all of them have the same content: the studio is filled with men and women from various parts of the country. They introduce themselves, explaining their situation and what they are looking for. If someone from the audience likes them, the producer invites him/her to the studio and they start talking with a partition screen between them. When the screen is lifted, Esra Erol usually asks:

- "Did you feel any chemistry?" (In other words, did you like him/her?)

- "No, there was no chemistry." (In other words, he or she didn't like them)

- "Well, then we'll find you somebody else!"

And while all of this is happening, the singer employed by the show is singing a song, some members of the audience are crying, and some are dancing on the stage. Then the screen is brought back, another participant/suitor is brought in, and the senseless chat about immediate chemistry, in poor quality Turkish, starts again:

- "And did you feel any chemistry with this one?"

- "I want a man with blue eyes and brown hair, naturally with a job and house as I do not want to pay rent."

- "Ok, ok, where is the other candidate? Come on, dance, dance."

Some of the men and women who apply for this show use it as a last resort to get married. They enter the game with hopes and high expectations. They trust the producers and the presenter of the show, and voluntarily put their lives into their hands. Some public surveys show that in Turkey people trust Seda Seyan, a singer and a presenter of a women's program with nearly the same format, more than they trust the president of the State.

Reality TV Programs have spread in different formats around the world, gaining astonishing numbers of spectators and rocketing ratings. It is now hard to speak about one entire genre, due to their multi subjected reality based programs. The common feature of both programs, which are the most watched marriage programs in Turkey and the USA, is that they both have a good rating scale and gained popular grounds in the reality TV show subgenre. Although the aim of both programs is to marry a single man and woman, their course, content and extent of intimacy sharing have divergent structure. There are many factors inducing these differences ranging from the audience profile, the host's reaction and inclusiveness, the suitors general appearance and age range, the bachelor's or the bachelorette's desires, and general expectations from marriage. It is certain that one of the best known among these programs are dating reality shows, and in the last decade "ABC's hit series *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette*" (Albertini, 2003, p.1) have drawn a great interest of spectators. More specifically, one of the ABC's popular programs, *The Bachelor,* has made significant progress when compared with other popular shows such as *The West Wing, Will & Grace*, and *ER* with nearly 8 million viewers (Ferris, et al., 2007) and out of first place in the key 18 to 49 demographic (Collins, 2002, p.1). The aim of these programs, especially *The Bachelor*, is to allow a single man to choose his potential partner or prospective wife, among 25 eligible women candidates, all vying for his attention and love. This most popular of ABC's programs, well-accepted and currently

shooting its 20th season, still attracts a large audience. In Turkey, reality television is reportedly showing sixty hours of match-making TV shows. The four major TV shows drawing the largest number of spectators are: *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* by ATV, *Su Gibi* by Fox TV, *Dünya Evi* by Flash TV, and *Ne Çıkarsa Bahtına* by Ekin TV. There is a growing body of public opinion that argues that reality television is affecting the family values of Turkish society. All the shows ask the candidates to choose their partners from the given list, and the candidates only have one week's time to choose their potential spouse.

In the United States, the selection of the contestants for the reality show *The Bachelor* shows the effect on the privacy aspects of intimate relationships. Leslie Hughes, an ex-contestant revealed that *The Bachelor* is a standardized product that takes away most of the romantic notions associated with the institution of marriage. However, the notions of romance and love are the main guidelines of the show; many romantic stereotypes are used in order to create a unique sparkly atmosphere providing the participants with the opportunity to "fall in love". The show is full of obvious symbols that the viewer certainly doesn't have to struggle to understand: the contestants live adventurous experiences with the bachelor; they are taken to dinners, surprised by fireworks or concerts, where they should act in a spontaneous way and like each other. But to what extent are they actually able to do so? The annoying presence of the camera doesn't seem to disrupt the "authenticity" of their behavior, a fact that immediately renders everything unreal. The participants are not professional actors, but they still seem incredibly confident with all the crew and the cameras surrounding them. Moreover, they are aware of the arranged nature of their date, which lacks spontaneity and genuineness, yet they keep performing and giving their best to satisfy triple standards: those of the bachelor, the producers and the audience. The audience is surely aware of all the "effects" being induced to make the show successful, given that "too much reality" might be harmful. No one wants to watch daily routines of ordinary people if they are not followed by excessive settings, unusual twists and sensational scandals. Still, even if the authenticity of a television romance is questioned, some

of the feelings and emotional outbursts seem to be real, provoked by the producers' hidden cunning scripts. The viewers seem to get attached to the participants and the characters created by the show, not necessarily to the idea of the romance that is supposed to work out. Romance is in this case just a pretext for all the multilayered personalities' display that they witness. Maybe putting the contestants in a romantic setting makes them more likely to become someone's personal hero/heroine. What viewers enjoy is the struggle of the contestants put forward through their attempts to reach the bachelor. Romantic pursuits are one of the fertile fields for rivalry and competition, and maybe this is why the topic of marriage has been chosen for only one of the many hit reality programs. Romance where everything goes smoothly is probably not worthy of a worldwide audience's attention; fighting for love is what might be in the center of the producers' intention, not the romance itself. Many books and poems have been written on unfortunate lovers and broken hearts, and even if we know it belongs to fiction, it doesn't diminish its value or impact, thus it is the feeling inflamed by love rather than love itself that has been occupying readers'/viewers' attention for centuries.

However, Hughes critically looks back on the experience of being one of the contestants of the show, bringing into question the authenticity and intentions of the producers. Here are some of her observations (Klassen, 2013):

1. The contestants are forced to undergo STD test. Hughes reports that the producers want to "make sure everyone is clean." The contestants are made undergo a psychological test too.

2. The reality show provides the participants with lot of liquor, so that they can converse in a free manner. Hughes calls the approach adopted: "It's how they get you to be more talkative, more sensitive." The show uses alcohol as a tool, maybe even aphrodisiac, in order to stimulate the participants' senses and incite them to act more freely. We can say that these dates are therefore similar to random unromantic encounters in a bar, where inspired enthusiasm might be very far from the actual feelings and judgments.

3. The show takes away the private space of an individual. The cameras constantly track the movement of the participants, which emphases the loneliness of the participant, who unknowingly becomes emotional and reacts in a particular situation.

4. At an individual level, the contestants are asked to deposit all belongings, such as books, cell phones, music players, computers, and magazines; the participants are cut off from the real world. Hence, they are focused on themselves, which further reinforces individualism, one of the primary features of the American society.

5. The reality show provides the misinformed notion of luxury and glamour. "We have to do our own cooking, our own laundry… We do everything you would do when you're at home, except be able to go outside of your home," Hughes said. And all of the clothes, hair supplies, and makeup are brought in from home, so it's up to the women to look presentable for the cameras. "It's a lot of suitcases," said Hughes.

6. The contestants are forced to spend late nights due to film shoots, which creates a feeling of exhaustion.

7. *The Bachelor* show wants participants to fall in love. Not everyone may want that. However; the people in the show living in a competitive environment are expected to react as if they were being engaged in a relationship. However, according to Hughes, some participants are in the show for different motives, and the primary goal becomes "to get in front of America."

8. Some people come on the show with an agenda. Thus, the privacy issues that in real life may lay hidden get exposed on the reality shows. "The cameras can't lie, because you're on them 24/7."

9. The American show fails to show the social diversity observed in the society. "From watching it from day one, there wasn't a lot of diversity, [contestants] were always Caucasian, blonde, blue eyes … It was always the same", reports the contestant of *The Bachelor*.

In a similar way, we can observe the major ill effects of the show *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* as follows:

1. Married couples are found to be getting divorced in a short period of time. The major reason for failure, according to the psychologists, is the inability of candidates to judge their spouses in a controlled environment. "Most participants do not show their real personalities on these shows, so they try to get to know their partners from behind a mask in their first interactions," explained Serap Güngör, psychologist working at PSİKO-DER. (Kose, 2012)

2. *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* has come in for criticism for obscene dialogues. "The institution of the family has been losing the notion of privacy as relationships between couples are exposed on television. This takes marriage out of its private sphere and it therefore loses some of its value", states Professor Ergün Yıldırım of Yıldız Technical University. (Kose, 2012) On the other hand, there is evidence to suggest that Turkish reality television also is helping to change the old concepts of privacy. "It is clear that television has shaped and influenced social culture. In the last twenty years, especially in the cultural field, the velocity of social change has increased even further", reports Gozde Demirel (2011).

3. The show has given a platform to abnormal people, who are socially rejected in Turkish society. "Narcissists or people with borderline personality disorders or who are emotionally unstable may appear as guests on matchmaking shows as these people are attention seekers. It is difficult to be married to such people," said Gülden Esat. (Demirel, 2011)

4. The negative dimension of screen marriages has been that marriage as an institution is sold in a product format. In Turkey, marriage remains a highly regarded institution. *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* is a show where people from lower classes who appear have no idea of the nature of the show. "In the 'screen marriage' no one can guarantee the authenticity of the information given," writes Demirel (2011).

5. The show is targeting nuclear families wherein husband, wife and children are the focus of the family.

We see such challenges made by participants in reality marriage programs. The gap between stated cultural values and the popular fantasy cultivated by TV is revealed in the following quotation:

> David, do you find it strange that we live in a country where arranged marriages are regarded as unwise and antiquated, yet one of the longest running programs on television is about a bunch of young women who compete for the affection of a young man none of them had ever met before? A show where it is preordained that at the end of the season said bachelor will announce that he is in love with two of them and will need the full two-hour finale to choose his mate? (Tan, 2013)

This particular statement in *The New York Times* sums up the major difference between how reality television is seen in Turkey and in the United States. In Turkey, reality television has become a modern medium for arranged marriages whereas in The Unites States the reality television is looked down upon as a deception, which prohibits people from making a free choice. The American and Turkish privacy experiences suggest that both have extreme divergences. American culture is a progressive culture, whereas Turkey remains enmeshed in the past. Reality television, which is in its infancy in Turkey, is exploiting the relatively innocent Turkish youths to believe in screen marriages as new age phenomena that will liberate them from traditional methods of marriage. In The United States, the popular frustration with the show is increasing due to overemphasis on gimmicks and racism. The show's credibility is eroding due to the producer taking away the reality quotient. Many have started to argue about their privacy rights on the show, which are in contrast with real life situations. In real life, people have the opportunity to crosscheck the facts; hence can verify the information given by their spouses. The hidden camera used in the reality show in the United States and Turkey capture the emotions of people, which are in a domain of privacy, hence the pictures end in impacting people and their relationship on a social level as well.

Let's say that the reality quotient is higher in the Turkish reality shows,

for example Esra Erol's show, given that it is aired in real time, and covers just a few hours of the contestants' lives. Conversations and reactions of the participants are therefore uncensored and unpredictable; they also take place in front of "real" audience, present in the studio. The course of an episode can be cut and the gap used for airing commercials if inappropriate or unacceptable behavior comes about. In contrast, *The Bachelor* is a show that covers weeks of participants' lives in such a way that only one episode covers a whole week. The show is therefore obviously a patchwork of edited materials, thoroughly assessed and selected by the producers. Some words and actions of the participants are successfully twisted by being taken out of context and used for the purposes of the show. These rearrangements can take away the credibility or diminish the authenticity of the events shown, but it still doesn't change the fact of their popularity. Maybe this is the key to their success: embellishment of the reality in order to prevent boredom and barrenness. However, it can irreversibly harm participants' social relationships outside of the show, which they make possible by signing the contract engaging them to assume all the responsibilities for what is about to be displayed and turned public. We can thus ask ourselves whether the emotion shown on the screen is "real" or artificially created pathos that will charm the spectators and shock their senses.

To summarize, we can say that the two shows are both based on real emotions and reactions conditioned by the prevailing cultural codes and demonstrated in a controlled environment, and the sticking point in both is the act of surveillance. Participants might find themselves trying to control their behavior at first in such conditions, but sooner or later, their authentic feelings, at least to some extent, rise to the surface. It is interesting to observe how contestants of *The Bachelor* enter the show with confidence and enthusiasm but end up in tears, doubting their own values and worthiness. Thus, it is obvious that this is exactly what the producers have in mind while creating this kind of show; playing on human emotions and their unpredictable nature is exactly what makes them part of a million dollar industry. The fact that they are based on marriage makes them even more delicate,

especially in Turkey, where being in a marital union represents an important part of an individual's identity. In both shows we witness desire for some kind of a completion; desire to be chosen, approved, accepted or just simply loved.

CHAPTER 4

COMPARISON OF MARRIAGE SHOWS AND PRIVACY IN TWO CULTURES

4.1. COURTSHIP CULTURE IN TURKEY

The Turkish Republic was constituted in 1923 after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire following the war of Independence against Western occupation. Efforts at Westernization had started during the previous era. Thus, Hortaçsu argues that Turkey is a traditional and patriarchal culture in the process of modernization. Turkey is a modernizing but collectivist culture as opposed to individualistic American culture. Collectivism can be defined in terms of relationships, emphasis on social cohesion and harmony, and value of family integrity. In collectivist cultures the line between the individual and family is thin, similarity rather than distinctiveness from group members is desirable, and interdependence between individual and family is the norm. Thus, collectivism is different from individualism which focuses on the individual, personal rights, and an independent rather than interdependent self. (Hortaçsu, 2003, p.156) Just as in the U.S. marriage based on love and spousal equality was introduced to the Turkish scene during the latter part of the 19th century as part of the modernization movement. Republican governments advocated families based on spousal equality and

conjugal affection as part of the campaign toward Westernization and secularization. Marriage based on love freed women from the experience of unwanted marriages and offered relative gender equality in marriage. (Hortaçsu, 2003, p. 156) Cross cultural research that has been done by Medora and colleagues (2002) has shown that Americans score higher in romanticism than young people in Turkey. (Ingoldsby, 20013, p.16)It is currently estimated that half of marriages in Turkey are arranged marriages. The percentages of marriages are lower for the urban, young, and educated population of the country, for instance, only about one fourth of marriages in the capital of Turkey are arranged marriages. Furthermore, according to the findings of Hortaçsu (2003), today a milder version of arranged marriage has replaced the traditional one in which the bride and groom had no premarital interaction. Strictly traditional marriages, rare nowadays in the urban setting, are often practiced in rural areas. As previously observed, the possibility of marriage is discussed between two families and the presence of the bride and groom is not required. The groom's mother is usually the one who visits the bride's mother, in order to make sure of the bride's family's attitude in terms of the envisaged marriage. Normally, marriage offers are made at this point, unless something goes wrong. The whole premarital process that will follow includes even members of the extended family; they gather when the groom's family ask for the bride's hand. In traditional marriages consultation with family members and a second visit to tell the decision may be required. (p.160) In the newer version, the prospective spouses are introduced by their families and they are relatively free to make their own decisions. On the other hand, Western-style "love" marriages are on the rise especially among the young, urban, and educated sectors. However, these love marriages also involve a high degree of family interference and contribution to marriage arrangements.The description of modern marriage in Turkey is quite different from that of marriage in the West. In the case of modern marriage, the families may meet before the ceremony of asking for the young woman's hand. As a rule, parents' approval of marriage is obtained even if the marriage is a modern one. Parents rather than the groom ask for the young woman's hand even in modern

marriages in Turkey. The father of the "bride-to-be" usually accepts the offer, saying that the young man and woman have already decided and that the families should approve. Consultation with relatives and the second visit are omitted. Thus, it may be observed that even in the case of modern marriages, on the surface, parents appear to have the final say. (p. 160) The preceding description of events and practices that take place before marriage in Turkey demonstrates that the two types of marriage – traditional and modern – have many common aspects, with the underlying theme being interdependence between extended families and the conjugal pair. More autonomy is granted to the couples involved in modern marriages than in arranged ones. (p. 169) As would be expected from the prevalence of collectivistic values, family is an important value in Turkish culture, and marriage is seen as serving the ends of continuation of the family name, an orderly life, and fulfilling religious obligations. Chronological age, which is seen as an indicator of capacity for undertaking the financial and moral responsibilities of marriage, is one of the most important factors leading to contemplation of marriage in the traditional sector. Average age at first marriage in Turkey is 24 years for men and 20 for women. However, it is higher for those with higher levels of education and for those living in urban regions. (p. 157) Although there are prototypical modern and traditional marriages, there are variations within each. For example, a marriage may be initiated by parents but proceed like a modern marriage in that the young man and the woman may fall in love and exercise control over most decisions. It can be argued that the format of *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* is a complete mix of these two newer versions of marriage; in this case rather than the families or family friends, Esra Erol is the one with the role of the mediator. The participants of the program look for a "spouse", "love", "father for their children", or a "daughter-in-law" for their parents. In any case, we can see both very traditional and modern approaches within the same program which generally depends on the participants' age and socio-economic level. Esra Erol pays attention to participants' understanding of marriage and behaves accordingly; she never forces anyone to be in love or to be in a relationship with another. If there is a more traditional couple

she reinforces and highlights traditional values such as "the approval of the family", or "financial status of the groom". However, if there is a more modern or younger couple, she concentrates more on love and romance rather than using the jargon of traditional arranged meetings.

4.2. COURTSHIP CULTURE IN THE USA

Courtship in The Unites States began with the Colonial Puritans. European colonizers to the New World brought with them their Calvinist values on marriage, child rearing, and patriarchy. Marriage was essential for a comfortable life and the Puritans were opposed to non-marital sex; singlehood was viewed with suspicion. Single men were often forbidden by law to live alone or were taxed for the privilege. Throughout most of the 1800s, men and women were divided socially into separate spheres of activity. This made it more difficult for young men and women to get to know each other. The rituals of courtship became more formal, with engagement announcements, rings, wedding ceremonies, and gifts. (Ingoldsby, 2003, pp.5-6) In the United States, mate selection or marriage were transformed by the Industrial Revolution of the mid-1800s. Even though the foundation of marriage was primarily economic, the ideas of love and personal fulfillment were developing as well. Men and women needed each other for simple survival and child rearing. However friendship and love were beginning to be seen as increasingly important. In general, a young man would receive permission from the father of the woman he was interested in and could then begin a courtship and dating began with engagement. The woman could veto her parent's choice, but couples rarely married if the parents did not approve. (Ingoldsby, 2003, p. 6) Family life became more conjugal and private, and love and privacy emerged as the keystone for marriage. Courtship customs for the middle and upper classes were very formal, with woman receiving "callers". The partners' going

off together to private places was not appropriate, and parents kept close eye on the couple until the relationship was close to marriage. Young people of the working class had to meet in public because their homes were not large enough to provide the necessary balance of privacy. (Ingoldsby, 2003, p. 7) The 1930s and 1940s saw the rise of steady dating as an intermediate step between casual dating and engagement. Rituals such as exchanging class rings and talking frequently on the phone developed as signs of mutual commitment. From the 1960s till the contemporary period marriage has continued to be an important rite of passage into adulthood. In spite of the decline in the functions that the family provides for society, marriage continues to be strongly desired by young people in The Unites States. According to Ingoldsby (2003), nowadays in the modern Unites States, there are few arranged marriages. But free mate choice does not mean that a person can marry anyone they like. All societies have some marital regulations. There are cultural rules and pressures that affect a person's ultimate marital decisions. (p.11)Whether they are religious or not, most couples prefer to be married in a church by a minister. All that is necessary, however, is a marriage license from the county courthouse and a person authorized by the state to perform the ceremony. Each partner must show he or she is at least 18 years old, has parental permission if underage and is not already married. A processing fee is required and some kind of medical examination may be required as well.(p. 16)In the United States, the average age of marriage today is 25 years for women and 27 for men. (p. 13)

The United States is an individualistic culture where people should be free to make their own decisions based on what is best for them. Romantic love and the idea of the existence of a perfect companion are promoted by the media. Many young Americans believe in the idea of living "happily ever after". Although marriage remains very popular, it is increasingly acceptable to remain single or to postpone marriage to older ages. The stigma of being a bachelor or an old maid is disappearing as the media present a positive and exciting view of single life. Many prefer to remain single to avoid relationship problems and eventual divorce, especially now

that women have sufficient access to economic resources to take care of themselves. A culturally valued separation between real love and sexuality is a feature lacking most in the American culture. Most young people in the Unites States are extremely individualistic, egocentric, competitive, and anticipate opportunism and manipulation when it comes to love. Their private love lives are subjugated by mistrust and resentment; privacy and public masking, while spouses' joint actions and mutual aid are minimal. However, among some Americans, romantic relationships are romanticized, and love intimacy is a matter of exceeding beauty and worth, involving total trust, mutuality, and faithfulness. (Furman &Hand, 2006, p. 173) Upset lovers, in the United States, quit the relationship swiftly rather than wait and be subjected to any form of psychological stress. If there is something that contemporary people in this country appear to undervalue, it is the significance – even the need – of falling in love. The lyrics, cinema, and narratives of our shared culture continually express the differences in the anguish and happiness of love as it is tested, lost, denied, or frustrated, only to erupt again, destroying the lovers in a fire of longing. The American ideal of passionate love has progressively gained increasingly prevalence globally. Cross-cultural analysis demonstrates that youths from Pakistan, Polynesia, and China are expected to cry if they do not want their lovers to be selected for them; as an alternative, they wish for a loving romantic intimacy that will overwhelm and ultimately join them with their perfect adored lover in a relaxing matrimony of soul mates. In the American society, love (or more particularly, romantic love) is professed to be the eventual end-all. It has the influence to change monsters into men, beggars into kings, and ill-treated maidservants into elegant Cinderella stories. (Furman & Hand, 2006, p. 175)

Since the early days, at the earliest moment in time of socialization into American culture, people have been trained to accept that real love can conquer all barriers. Nonetheless, in line with the perception that love can beat any enemy, domesticate any beast, and quiet all malice, there is an overriding insincerity. The trouble with the American cultural view of love is not the lasting strength a man gets

when he is completely invested in love, and staying in love. Over 5 in 10 Americans (50%), including 40% in their 20s, do not trust that they have to wed to legitimize the dedication of a lasting relationship, according to a study from University of California Press. (Bloch, 2009, p. 25) This is simply one of the numerous results from a latest synergistic study of Americans aged 19 to 60 that deals with how diverse generations see a broad range of relationship matters – starting from love to soul mates, wealth, and trustworthiness. Issues related to trust in relationships vary significantly among different generations. More youthful people in the Unites States are more expected to demand a true relationship from their spouse; even though it hurts – in excess of 80 percent of participants in their 20s held that they desire the truth at all times, compared to 75% of people in their 50s and 60s. (Bloch, 2009, p.10)

Wealth is a significant issue in American relationships, but particular generations have changing perspectives about money and love. Americans in their 20s are less expected to be influenced by differences in wealth when it comes to love. In a survey conducted by Furman and Hand (2006), 86 percent of young people agreed they would love someone who earns considerably less money. However, Americans contradict this when it comes to defining love, lasting relationships, and free choice. They determine this absurdity by keeping in line two conflicting ideas of love, based on the latest study by a university lecturer of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. (Furman & Hand, 2006) The first idea is a humble belief that an individual must labor at keeping love active through compromise, individual growth, or sacred faith. The second idea resembles a Hollywood movie – that passionate trust in the existence of a single eternal true love. The American people move back and forth between these two idea systems, forming a justification for their actions in love and marriage. Another study conducted by the University of Chicago Press disclosed that most Americans trust that love is a chosen commitment. (Furman & Hand, 2006) This belief in love is very profound, specifically because it is conflicting and connects two contrasting ideas. This study consulted with 80 married and divorced middle-class Americans from San Jose, California. (Furman & Hand, 2006) Many respondents

were critical of romantic beliefs, asserting that they are seriously deceptive. These myths included whether lovers would continue in their relationship regardless of how difficult the relationship might become, through complaints or other types of adversity. The Americans' belief in real love gives the foundation for lasting loyalty in relationships and marriage - institutions that have turned completely voluntary and are no longer backed by efficient social or official sanctions. Day by day, people have to reconsider the decision to continue being in a relationship or being married. (Furman & Hand, 2006) *The Bachelor*, as a reality TV marriage show is a reflection of the individualistic courtship culture of the United States. In this program, extended families, parents, siblings, or friends are only superficially involved in the decision of the couple. During the season or the rose ceremonies the bachelor does not ask for his mother's or father's opinion. He aims to make his own decisions based on who is best for him.

4.3. BROADCAST RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.3.1. In Turkey

In Turkey, all the television programs are controlled while they are broadcast on TV or radio by the Supreme Council of Radio and Television. Its laws and rules have to be complied with by the producers, directors, actors and the members of the shooting crew. In case of violation of these regulations, channels and broadcasters are penalized by fines or even shut down. Therefore, if a show such as *Esra Erol'de Evlen Benimle* is a live broadcast, the host/hostess of the show needs to pay close attention and keep the participants language and behavior under strict control. In her show, Esra Erol, as the host of the program, usually warns people about how they talk or react. She tries to calm people down when they get angry or upset, even dismisses participants whose actions or discourse are inconvenient for the show. These kinds

of interventions of the host/hostess are basically expected and required for a healthy image of the program. However, the audience usually watches these kinds of shows for entertainment or witnessing incidents which are not happening in their daily life. For example, watching two men fight on TV or watching a woman blaming a man because of his misbehavior generally becomes a big event for the audience. As these incidents are happening, the rating of the show rises. As a result, these shows should offer people excitement as much as they offer entertainment. But the excitement should be within the limits of the rules which are stated by the Supreme council. The host/hostess, the director and the producer of the show should determine all these before shooting and broadcasting and they usually make up some scenarios. In one of the episodes of the show, producers arrange a meeting with parents and their daughter. The woman claims to have many problems with her father. Esra Erol tries to solve their problems by talking to the woman and her mother. After a while, the father is also invited to the studio. As soon as the father comes to the studio, the woman tries to escape. Esra Erol does not let her to go. After some discussions the father agrees to leave the studio. But the daughter is angry and addressing insulting words to her father. (Yıldırım, 2003) This incident is just one example for the arranged meetings and scenarios of the show. According to the Turkish Radio and Television Supreme Council, "Radio and Television broadcast services must never offend the principle of being respectful of human honor and privacy of the human's life, never contains humiliating, insulting or libelous statements beyond the limits of criticizing" (Turkish Law of Radio and Television Broadcasts and Services). Thinking of this rule, the incident mentioned above is just an example of the imbalance of the program. Esra Erol criticizes the participant very sharply according to collectivist social norms, traditional pattern son/daughter and general expectations of family. During the show, rejection of girl to a family member means that she is not able to maintain group harmony, and respect and obedience as values associated with relatedness. On the other hand, the problem of the family becomes public and the audience who has never met the girl or her parents before that time is involved in the discussion. They state

their opinions, criticizing the girl about her behavior towards the parents. As a result, their private life becomes a five minute show for the audience; they hurt each other's feelings, insult each other and the audience watches these real or so-called real events with excitement. The participants on stage know that their private life is in front of the cameras and they allow it, even if this kind of arrangement and discussions are opposed to the Turkish laws.

The Supreme Council, composed of nine members who are elected by the Grand National Assembly, promotes certain rules about showing respect to the individual's private life and privacy, to the honor, rights, and freedom of individuals. According to 8.1, any infringement of privacy in programs, or in connection with obtaining material included in programs, must be warranted. (Turkish Law of Radio and Television Broadcasts and Services) Yet, Turkish society imposes a series of unspoken rules that have had huge impact on its identity. Turkey, as a strongly patriarchal and considerably closed society, develops toward modernity assiduously protecting and cherishing its traditional standards. Therefore, what the nine members of the Supreme Council protect are the moral codes that might not be respected if the TV protagonists are given the chance to freely express themselves, rather than to keep their rights to privacy. Imported series and movies broadcast by Turkish television channels are strictly surveilled and censored; they are manipulated in such a way that it is impossible for a spectator to see nudity, or staged sexual intercourse. Turkish TV series and movies are deprived of any content suggesting sex. Scenes showing the consumption of alcohol, cigarettes or narcotics are equally manipulated and edited. However, scenes of violence are displayed without any previous intervention. Licensed reality shows featuring Turkish contestants and broadcast in Turkey are slightly different from their international peers; while in France or in the United States romantic connections or even sex between contestants is put forward, the Turkish edition is "limited" to displays of friendship and teamwork. *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* takes place in a similar setting insisting on the decency and restraint of participants. Television, as one of the mass communication tools in Turkey, still participates in keeping the moral

standards of the country in place. Its patriarchal structure allows a system of control to operate on every level within families as much as within communities. Recent social and political changes in the country brought back and put forward values and norms promoted by Islam, in a republic that not long ago built its grounds on the principles of secularism. Moreover, the law imposed by the Supreme Council contains a clause including regulations on women's and men's clothing and behaviors; "Radio and Television broadcast services cannot be salacious" (Turkish Law of Radio and Television Broadcasts and Services). The wedding show in question generally obeys this rule and only very few women wear low-cut dresses, sexy clothes and men do not try to draw attention to their bodies. Additionally, the audience in the studio and participants respect religious rules and customs. It is clear that each participant desires to share his/her life-story, abilities, disabilities, physical and personal characteristics even if they wear headscarves or cover their bodies. There are always women wearing headscarves as participants and candidate spouses. Esra Erol highly respects them and promotes the idea that covering oneself does not mean it is also covering the mind, will, desire or intellect. Participants do not see any contradiction in being in the show, revealing private details, but covering the bodies. According to Yasin Ceylan, a professor at Middle East Technical University, the fashion sector is another example of the changing values in Turkish women's circles. He gives an example of a women magazine which is called Ala (meaning "splendid" in ancient Turkish), which labels itself as the "Vogue of the Veiled Women," and which has become a pioneer of this trend. With more than 20,000 monthly subscribers since it was founded in June 2011, the magazine underscores the desire of Turkish Islamic bourgeoisie and middle class to express themselves in a more sophisticated way.(Setimes.com) Esra Erol introduces the head-scarfed woman as the one who has obedience to the creator, dignified, modest, bashful who wants to be protected and loved. Obedience is considered central to achieve harmony within the group – whether it is with parents, or relatives – participants must learn to be respectful of others as well as obedient to the authority of Esra Erol.

This presenter embodies all the layers and differences of the Turkish society that are tangled in a whole. As flexible and relaxed as she looks, she still radiates authority and develops a strict attitude towards the contestants of her show. The central figure of this program, she is a happily married and successful woman representing a role model according to Turkish social standards. She is also a mother and therefore her sexuality is possibly observed from a very different angle. The status of a "respectable" woman is conditioned by marriage and motherhood in Turkey; women are supposed to be keepers of the family's stability and comforting and nurturing figures in charge of the country's upcoming generations. Therefore, she is "allowed" to reveal more than her contestants, wearing attractive clothes and high heels. At the same time her appealing looks don't seem to be questioned by the contestants or the producers. Her style underlines femininity and modern lifestyle and has nothing of traditional elements. At every moment she looks very confident and in control of the situation, yet ready to comply with traditional norms of the Turkish society and prove to be a commendable "child" respectful of parents and the institution of family. Therefore, she represents a child of the newly transformed Turkish society obeying the rules on one hand, and the authority, the role model, the protector on the other. In one of the episodes previously observed in this thesis, Esra Erol tries to put a broken family back together by inviting all of its members to the studio in attempt to bring back home a girl who refuses to continue living with her family, especially with her father. The hostess accuses the girl of being disrespectful towards her parents and indirectly invites the audience to stigmatize this kind of behavior. After an intense discussion in which Esra Erol imposes herself as the ultimate arbiter of right and wrong, she walks the family off the stage and kisses the hand of the girl's father as a sign of respect. She then comments: "This should be an example for all of Turkey to see"(Islamilive, 2012).

As previously indicated, Turkey as a patriarchal society has tended throughout history to reach out for role models and protectors; we could even say "fathers." There is a very strong presence of masculine authority and obeying the rules of unquestionable authority seems to be the safest way of becoming a respectable member

of a family or a law-abiding citizen. The paternal figure and its jurisdiction is the backbone of the Turkish society structure. Esra Erol represents the female counterpart of this authoritative figure, evoking stability and force. She manages people and their emotions in the show as if they were children in desperate need of guidance. She is there to lead, to help and to orient, but the contestants have the opportunity to decide on their own. She allows them little freedoms and opens a way to funny or playful situations. She embraces all types of contestants without prejudice and seems to pay equal respect to all social classes and types of people. In her show everyone is worthy of marriage: people who were previously married but ended up divorcing, elderly people, people with disabilities, unemployed, unhappy, and the list goes on. Women and men obeying religious norms as well as people turned more towards the modern currents of secularism are both present in the show. Esra Erol seems to stand right in the middle, bringing these two currents together and finding a solution for reconciliation through a romantic setting. In this way, the targeted audience of the show is as varied as its participants, and a great number of diverse viewers follow and even apply for the show. For the past two decades, Turkey has been in some sort of an internal process of negotiation, between modern standards and the legacy of the Republic created in the early twentieth century on one hand and the uprising values of Islamic lifestyle on the other hand. This negotiation is perceptible in daily life, in the cultural field, in education and in every other aspect of the society. Reconciliation is the only condition for the survival at the moment of big revolutionary events, conflicts and transitions, and this is something that we witness on Turkish television as well.

4.3.2. In the USA

In the United States, the law on privacy still provokes polemic by being contradictory to the rights guaranteed by the first amendment of the Constitution:

> Many consider censorship in the United States as an elixir of safety to the public. Some consider censorship to play a major role in maintaining social standards.

On the other hand, many others consider censorship as imposing unreasonable restriction on the freedom of expression. Therefore the topic of whether or not censorship affects the first amendment has been subject to much debate. (…) Apart from the film industry, censorship is prevalent in all other areas of the entertainment industry. In the earlier days, the radio was the popular medium of the day. Even then, the radio did not enjoy the First Amendment protection from censorship that the press did. Later in 1927, The Radio Act was created by the Federal Radio Commission, later named the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). This agency which was responsible for assigning licenses to radio stations also routinely exercised its authority to revoke licenses as a means of censoring radio programming. The Act also banned the use of any 'obscene, indecent or profane language' on the radio. (…) However, the censorship regulations as well as the judicial interpretation of the laws have consistently taken the view that censorship regulations cannot unreasonably abridge the rights guaranteed to the individuals under the First Amendment. (US Legal Inc., n.d. (a))

We can say that censorship in the United States is more than flexible; American society, or at least the entertainment industry, seems to support the rawness and the "real" in its arts and representations. It has something to do with the "hyperreality", previously mentioned in this thesis. To illustrate, when the famous TV saga *Dynasty* entered homes of closed socialist countries of the Eastern Europe, it provoked some kind of excited bewilderment among its populations; sex on TV wasn't something new for its visual arts, but the notion of wealth and intrigue, the taste of complex lives of the unhappy rich and all that glitz and glamour provoked increasing interest for the audience. The best bit of it seems to have been the freedom of choice and its multiplicity. Crime and violence enveloped in a layer of sex and romance soon took over millions of screens. The "reality" of what was going on "out there" in America, the land of the free, soon turned into a visual obsession of the spectators. Everything is allowed, and shocking became the new normal. The need for "hyperreality" constantly present in the American society has probably led to the creation of reality TV. The reason is simple: consumerist spirits weep for bigger, stronger, higher, better, or simply for more; all of it based on the principles of democracy guaranteeing individual freedoms.

The fundamental element of freedom of expression, guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, is the freedom of speech, allowing individuals to

express themselves freely without any intervention or penalization performed by the government. However,

> within the universe of First Amendment protection, broadcast radio and television stations have been subjected to greater regulation than any other verbal, visual, or printed medium of expression. The U.S. Code prohibits the broadcast of any material that is "obscene, indecent, or profane," but offers no definition for those terms. Instead, that task is left to the FCC through its rulemaking and adjudicatory functions. Essentially, it is illegal to air obscene programming at any time. To determine what is obscene, the U.S. Supreme Court crafted a three-prong test:
>
> - An average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the material, as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest
>
> - The material depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by applicable law
>
> - The material, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value (US Legal Inc., n.d. (b))

TV Reality shows seem to be the most fertile ground for exercising the freedom of speech, and television seems to be a mediator between two "realities" more than ever. American movies and TV series do not ban profanities or obscene language, but it somehow doesn't seem to fit the "real" expectations of the audience. Edited and embellished contents don't appeal any more, it is time for real, live cursing, verbal and physical fights, and settling scores. In *The Bachelor* for instance, we witness discourses and dialogues that an average well-educated and cultivated individual would find rather shameful. Profanity is censored and covered with bleep censor sounds, but it still doesn't mean they are not there. Moreover, words such as "crap" or "bitch" are not censored at all, which proves just to what extent the aforementioned regulations are indulgent; why does the word "bitch," probably used to describe a female individual of doubtful morality or sexual ethics (which should also be a matter of freedom of choice), not correspond to "offensive or indecent material?" We could say that the laws operating in mass communication and created to protect the viewers, are failing on so many levels. Freedom of speech seems to have imposed itself through the principles

of democracy to the detriment of general ethics and civilized codes that should be operating more than ever in the 21st century.

4.4. AN OVERVIEW OF THE TWO MARRIAGE SHOWS

4.4.1. *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*

After the 1990s, with the privatization of the television channels, and with the emergence of new television networks, and due to recent transitions in Turkish communication systems, new conditions have given rise to imported global programs, especially "reality television". In Turkey, television plays a fundamental role as a mass medium as it is the main source of information and entertainment in society. The appearance of private channels in the 1990s has led to an astonishing proliferation of programs that seek to pair off contestants. The effects of the mass media on social change have been the subject of several pieces of research. (Demirel, 2011, p. 157) As much as Western-style reality television in Turkey has gained extensive popularity among the region's audiences, it has also provoked serious ethical questions due to more conservative understanding of marriage and family. In addressing this emerging genre, most of the television channels have evolved their own reality shows that emphasize local values and traditions. It is clear that television has shaped and influenced social culture. In the last twenty years, especially in the cultural field, the velocity of social change has increased even further. Television as the most common and cheapest mass media appliance became the main conveyer of popular culture in terms of cultural changes. (Demirel, 2011, 157) Turkey has presented an image of a closed community in dating and courtship relationships but in the last ten years Turkish society has been in a period of mutation and it is incredible that Turkish audiences have become accustomed to people on the reality TV marriage shows sharing everything about

their experiences related to marriage and dating. The private lives of people can be very easily deciphered from the screen and values such as confidentiality and privacy can be considered to be eliminated from the mainstream TV culture. (Demirel, 2011, 160) Thus it is important to concentrate on the specific genre – marriage programs – in order to understand the changing perceptions of privacy in Turkish society. The objective of marriage programs in Turkey is, in theory, to find someone to marry, which is in fact highly questionable given that some men and women who participate in these programs only want to exhibit themselves and have a few minutes of on-screen glory.

Esra Erol`da Evlen Benimle is a very specific subgenre that promises to follow a certain woman or man on her or his quest for "true love", defined quite strictly on this non-progressive show as a heterosexual union leading implicitly or explicitly toward legal marriage. In Turkey, marriage shows always attract a huge percentage of the television audience. (Demirel, 2011, p. 159)Since 2003, there have been many different formats on this subject but the new age started with Esra Erol considered as the main and original host of this specific genre. (Demirel, 2011, p. 159)

Photo 1: Esra Erol, The host of the *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* (Haberform)

Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle is a clear example of a mediated matchmaking which actually dates back to the old times in Turkey when the respected elderly people or families were mediating between the two people for the purpose of marriage.

(Morton, 2011, p.6) This daily daytime reality show, which acts as a matchmaker, creates a platform for people to introduce themselves and find a spouse. According to Algan (2010), it is perhaps one of the most conservative reality dating shows that has ever appeared on Turkish television – not necessarily because of the ideological positions it takes regarding gender roles and marriage, but because of its format, which restricts the audience's voyeuristic involvement in participants' lives. However, the show is quite significant for revealing how the mainstream ideologies and traditional practices of marriage are negotiated against the changing socio-economic realities of modern Turkey. (Algan, 2010, p. 198)

Anyone aged 18-90 can participate in *Esra Erol`da Evlen Benimle*. The conditions are: to be single and have a job (only for male candidates). The program has a waiting list containing hundreds of people. About half of these cannot be considered for reasons such as being "unemployed" or "not officially divorced". Sometimes, the family is asked for permission and the weddings are held in the studio. 59% of the people who apply for marriage are male, 41% are women. 20% of applicants are aged between 18 and 25, 35% between 26 and 40 and 45% of participants are over 40. (Demirel, 2011, p.160) Every afternoon the show is filmed live in a studio for three and a half hours. Live audience attends every show. The show runs like a TV version of *match.com* where people who want to find a spouse apply, introduce themselves, briefly discuss why their previous marriage has failed or why they never got married and then answer the hosts' questions about what kind of spouse they are looking for. Each show features on average 5-8 participants. Participants stay on the show until they find a spouse or decide not to continue. Depending on their situation at work, some of them come to the studio once or a few times a week. Those who are interested in a particular participant call the studio and they are soon contacted and allowed a brief phone conversation on air. It is the participant's decision to invite the caller to the studio to meet. If invited, the caller attends the show the next day in order to meet the participant. (Algan, 2010, p. 202) The two participants usually have a brief conversation, separated by a folding screen and not being able to see

each other. After the folding screen is lifted and after seeing the suitor/participant, if the participant is still interested in getting to know him/her, they are sent off to the teahouse of the studio away from the cameras. At the end of the show, the two are brought back to announce if they want to start dating with the intention of marriage or not. Furthermore, the spectators never witness their dates but are given reports of the process by the participants' own brief account. What makes these shows significant, is that despite their conservative matching efforts, they often create a lively, interactive space for the participants and studio guests to discuss their socio-economic struggles of coupling and marriage and thus challenge various mainstream ideologies of gender, family and marriage. Because they are not edited to increase the tension or drama like we see in dating reality shows in the West, i.e. *The Bachelor*, dialogues that contest traditional views on gender are a part of the show as well as those that prescribe problematic gender roles. (Algan, 2010, 199)

4.4.2. *The Bachelor*

The reality marriage show takes on myriad forms and appears on almost every network. There are so many reality shows, and they are so varied in format, that it is hard to speak coherently of the entire genre as if it were a single entity.(Albertini, 2003) Best known in the marriage show genre are probably ABC's hit series *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette*. Albertini (2003) explains that *The Bachelor* is one of the many reality dating shows in the United States geared toward young adults. Originally aired in March 2002, *The Bachelor* was one of the first reality-based shows to focus on romance. In the show, a man (a different white man each season) selects one woman from among 25 eligible women to be his potential bride.(Dubrofsky, 2006, p.40)ABC's *The Bachelor* is currently shooting its twentieth season, and is still attracting a large audience.(Ferris et al., 2007, p. 490) According to *Forbes online*, *The Bachelor* figures among the top five most profitable U.S. reality-based shows,

pulling in a profit of $38.2 million for the fourth season (with a price tag of $231,400 per 30-second advertising spot). (Dubrofsky, 2006, p.41) In each season, the bachelor goes on a series of dates with the female participants. At the end of each episode, at least one participant is eliminated during a "rose ceremony" where the bachelor presents a rose to each of the women he wants to keep for the next week. In the first few rose ceremonies, the bachelor eliminates several women at once; when the group has been narrowed to four, he eliminates the women one at a time, until he selects his final choice. Each season includes two specials. In the *The Women Tell All* special, the second-to-last episode aired in the season, before the finale, the eliminated women discuss their experiences on the show. When this special airs, the audience does not yet know whom the bachelor has chosen. The *After the Final Rose* special is the last episode in the season, airing after the finale (where the bachelor makes his final selection). In this special, the couple is reunited. (Dubrofsky, 2006, p.41)

The ironic part of this reality show is that so far only one bachelor actually married the woman he selected (The Bachelor: How many Bachelor and Bachelorette couples actually make it?, n.d.). What does it tell us about *The Bachelor* and all the other reality shows revolving around marriage? It is without any doubt surprising to see this much "effort" and dedication on the show, as well as tumultuous conflicts and emotional effusions that could start a promising romantic story, reaching a dead-end. We could say that this might be the product of the "reality effect" after leaving the luxurious mansion and getting back to the everyday life. The setting of the show makes "falling in love" look so easy, not only to the audience, but to the contestants as well. But what actually happens after the show reaches the end is the flip side of the same coin. Contestant might be revisiting their decision and choices, or maybe simply enjoying the fame they acquired through the show.

Courtney Robinson is a perfect example of a participant made into a celebrity after the airing of the show. Through the 16th season of *The Bachelor*, she acquired the reputation of the show's villain and a hard core manipulative opponent, showing

the audience what it takes to be a winner in a today's reality show. This contestant deployed all sorts of strategies and maneuvers in order to mislead the bachelor and take over the show, in which she succeeds and wins in the end. After a tumultuous relationship with Ben Flajnik that continued shortly after the show ended, Courtney Robinson published a book called *I Didn't Come Here to Make Friends: Confessions of a Reality Show Villain,* in 2014, about her experience and personal perspective on the show. She reveals pretty shocking details and comes out with an inside insight into the show, admitting to be "appalled later on to discover that Ben had slept with two other women in the fabled bed before she got there, writing that the show's producers 'did not leave us condoms'" (Pearson, 2014).This comment alone leaves us wondering about the real aim of the show and the authenticity of its perspective on marriage. Only two days away from choosing the woman that he is about to marry, the bachelor engages in casual sex with other contestants behind the closed doors of a luxurious Swiss resort, during the stay arranged by the producers of the show. The book itself attracted a lot of attention and its author, the winning contestant, got all the glory that comes with publishing a book containing juicy details of the "real" events behind the curtains of a reality show.

It is indeed difficult to imagine a normal, functional marriage between contestants taking place after all the emotional damage that this kind of show can provoke. All the relationships within the society and the families of the contestants seem touched by their participation in the show, especially after the latter starts airing. The nature of the show seems to inflict damage to the couple it creates as well: in the last episode of the 16th season of *The Bachelor*, called *After the Final Rose*, Ben Flajnik and Courtney Robertson come clean about the end of their relationship and their engagement in the aftermath of the show. Ben Flajnik's attitude towards marriage with Courtney Robinson dramatically changed after he saw the aired episodes of the show from a different perspective, the one of the spectators'; he therefore admits: " The woman I saw on TV isn't the Courtney that I know and that's why I had such a hard time with [it]"(Fleiss, 2002). Describing tricks and tactics used by Courtney

and shown to the whole country afterwards, he adds: "Those are the moments and the instances that led to Courtney and I not talking for a period of time while the show aired. We were essentially broken up" (Fleiss, 2002).Explaining that they had broken off the engagement, Ben Flajnik adds: "Yeah, we had a chat and we said that probably it's not healthy with all this negative energy to surround something that was so wonderful and pure at that moment. (Fleiss, 2002)

Photo 2: The Bachelor Ben Flajnik, Season 16 (ABC News)

The Bachelor`s sister show *The Bachelorette* reverses the roles and this time the woman is granted the ability to choose her mate, instead of being chosen by him. However, in both programs marriage exists as a site of satisfaction. While 1950s media normalized domestic life for women in general, husbands and children have become today's must-have luxury item that is not easily attainable.(Leonard, 2006) *The Bachelor*, among other programs in the marriage program genre, attempts to naturalize the most ridiculous situations. We come to expect to see the weekend fantasy dates, the "ladies villa" or "gentlemen's house", the poolside afternoons, fantasy getaways, and romance reality. (Albertini, 2003, p. 3)

According to Leonard, an excellent example of how pro-marriage ideology shows itself can be found in the television program *The Bachelor*, in which twenty-five women wait for a marriage proposal from the same man. The episodic structure of the program leaves the rest of the twenty-four women without a fiancé who will

be jealous of the woman who has received the proposal. The divisiveness between female contestants is the show's entertainment and lead women to act within a state of "marriage panic". Thus, this feeling or mood is characterized by the recognition that marriage is a scarce yet highly desirable commodity. (Leonard, 2006, p.56) Therefore, the producers of The Bachelor cunningly play on the fact that a lot of women are hypersensitive in terms of being chosen and "being the one", especially when it comes to marriage, which creates a very heavy competitive atmosphere among them. The contestants of *The Bachelor* will literally try to "exterminate" each other ruthlessly in order to win, but isn't that exactly what the interest of the show is made of? Maybe it is not about love after all, but about what people will do if they find themselves in a competitive environment that offers a price in the end. The competitors are therefore winners or losers, there is nothing in the middle; you live or you die (on screen). They are, together with their qualities, highly perishable. Hence, aren't they created only for the show? The "selves" copied and recopied in order to fit the audience's expectations? The audience, that scary and loud part of the arena, a one-eyed pertinent judge, whose needs are difficult to satisfy, is the point of reference, the Sirius leading them to a better and more prosperous selves, approved by the society.

Once the entity created by the show leaves, it no longer exists. It exists only in the bachelor's and the audience's eyes, for they are products, unfinished work in progress shaped by the merciless consumer society. Today, things and appliances that make our life easier are dignified, little material symbols of wealth and prosperity worshiped, and the human reduced to nothing more than a disposable object that serves the curious eye of the public. The contestants of *The Bachelor* and their bodies are products, white canvas on which the viewer can project his/her frustrations, expectations, judgments, feeling of catharsis. They are made and shaped by the television, with only one purpose: to be replaced. Aren't consumption and replacement the very center of every capitalist society? Consumption equals destruction, a systematic degradation that leaves place to another creation to be destructed and so on. This consumption is taking place on different levels in *The Bachelor*: not only are the contestants opened, investigated,

consumed, and degraded, they are eventually replaced and suppressed forever. One word is good enough: disposable. It seems to be the second name for progress, thus the capitalist society builds its foundations on destruction and the possibility to rebuild. Long lasting, "real", solid things seem to be long gone, evaporated before human greed and lust. Things are not made to be perfect; they are made to be destroyed. As Eco puts it, referring to the "New Middle Ages we live in": …" the consumer society at its maximum level does not produce perfect objects, but rather little machines that are highly perishable (if you want a good knife , buy it in Africa; in the United States it will break on second use). And the technological society is tending to become a society of used and useless objects (…)" (1990, p. 78)

Dubrofsky (2006) argues that the structure and the setting of *The Bachelor* evoke the Westernized trope of the Eastern harem enforcing time-worn racist gender dynamics and oppressive racist structures. The very form of *The Bachelor* naturalizes the desire of white men for women of color as a means of preparing for union with their ultimate partners, white women. In *The Bachelor*, whiteness is an implicit prerequisite for finding a mate. While many of the white women do not find love with the bachelor, they may be the center of the storyline for one or more episodes. In fact, the more spectacularly the white women fail to become the bachelor's partner, the more screen time they get. This is not the case for women of color, who work only to frame the narrative about white people forming a romantic union. While the premise of the series, to find the bachelor a long-term romantic partner, may not immediately bring to mind the concept of the harem, the very set-up of *The Bachelor* implicitly references the harem: one man with 25 beautiful women who live in the same quarters and are always at the bachelor's disposal. In fact, the women have little to do but lounge around and wait to share time with the bachelor. The women contestants on *The Bachelor* are often so similar in appearance (e.g., body size and skin color) that, at least visually, they may at times appear to be interchangeable (see Appendix A).[1] The

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[1]Note: Grandmother of the one of the participants, Sherly attends the first episode. The bachelor Ben soon finds out that she was not part of the program

structure of the show is such that the supply of women willing to make themselves accessible to this one man, and no other man, for the duration of the show is endless. (Dubrofsky, 2006) Based on information given in the first episode of seasons one, two, and six, the bachelors for those seasons were selected over other applicants because they were well-rounded, wanted marriage, had an established career, and boasted a great personality. (Dubrofsky, 2006)

4.5. THE COMPARISON OF TWO PROGRAMS

Before presenting the content and critical analyses of these two reality TV marriage programs – *The Bachelor* and *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* – it is essential to determine the basic similarities and differences between these two programs. In terms of similarities, the two shows are allegedly made for people who cannot find a partner to marry in real life, but in both cases we cannot deny the strong presence of personal interest, often of lucrative nature: in *The Bachelor*, even if it not explicitly stated, the contestants hope for their own five minutes of fame and glory. It is not rare that the participants of reality shows in general are ranked among the celebrities admired by fans worldwide or followed through social media. In Turkish marriage-based reality shows, as previously mentioned, people tend to "arrange" their relationship based on the principles of "give and take". Prospective partners offer various services (offer to travel on pilgrimage together, or providing a financially stable household) and seek for a partnership in return.

The two programs have high television ratings in the countries they are shown and generally have female audience. Both *The Bachelor* and *Esra Erol`da Evlen Benimle* enable their participants to reveal their secrets or private personal information/issues. Finally, in both programs participants' scandalous acts or life

stories get a lot of attention and lead to higher ratings. Despite the fact that they are similar on many levels, these two shows have lots of differences. A detailed version of the comparison of these two programs can be seen in Table 1. For example, in *The Bachelor*, the presenter does not have so much influence on the stream of the show. His duty is limited to offering an introduction to the show and managing the elimination process. In addition, he manages the gossip and interventions going on in the studio, but does not interfere with them. Thus, the program seems to manage itself, with the incidents going on between the candidates and the suitor. The participants are on their own in the house they are living in and during their outdoor activities. However, in contrast to *The Bachelor's* presenter, Esra Erol is an important figure in the show. She manages everything going on in the studio. The audience and participants, the musicians and assisting psychologists are in the shadow and under her command. She manipulates the situation and the participants by asking questions and making comments about the incidents. Due to the format and the characteristics of the show, the participants exercise little power; in that context, Esra Erol becomes a guru for the hopeless and ignorant people. She guides them and encourages anyone who needs assistance. Also, she often gives tips to the participants in ongoing relationships, citing examples from her own experience or from the stories she has heard or seen.

Table 1. Comparison of *The Bachelor* and *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*

	The Bachelor	Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle
Presenter	Male	Female
Time slot	Prime time	Daytime
Aim/outcome	Only one person is the bachelor in one season. 25 ladies are suitors	Numbers of people are candidates in one season
Location	Mansion	Standard TV studio
Candidates	Usually young and healthy	All ages (Some of them are disabled, etc.)
Indoor/outdoor	Candidates and the bachelor do outdoor activities in front of the cameras	Candidates are getting to know each other in private
Target	TV show	TV show + social responsibility projects within the program
Soundtrack	Dramatic or playful melodies are played in the background	There is an orchestra playing music during the program
Presenter comments	Mostly at the "Rose ceremony"	The presenter is always making comments even in the middle of the program
Format	Competition between candidates	Matchmaking between candidates
Attendance	The bachelor and suitors meet on the first day of the program	The candidate and his/her suitor always meet with a ceremony (the screen between two chairs)
Assistant	None	Two lawyers and one psychologist are always ready for the program
Audience participation	None	The audience's comments are a part of the program
Selection	Based on weekly elimination of one or more contestants	More discrete and not ceremonial.
Quantity	At the end of the season only one wedding may take place (if the candidates refuses the proposals, it is not happening)	In one season numerous weddings take place. All of the weddings take place in the studio during the program

Table 2. Similarities Between *The Bachelor* and *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*

• Programs are for people who cannot find a person to marry in real life
• Programs offer multiple choices in terms of participants
• Programs mostly have female audience
• Programs have high ratings in their respective countries
• Programs present participants revealing private information without hesitation
• Programs include participants create scandals for the ratings of the show
• Programs use similar colors in decoration (the colors affecting feelings related to romance)

4.5.1. Expectations of Participants

The contestants of reality shows live in a culture of image and performance. They are measured by how good they look, how well they perform, and if they have someone by their side that supports the good image. They have to have all the "qualities" sought by the entertainment industry of today: they have to be healthy, attractive and dynamic in order to deserve a shot on TV and then maybe even "love". If they hope to deserve victory, they have to perform, act, show, and sell themselves. Otherwise someone else will win and show himself/herself worthy of love and admiration. The producer of *The Bachelor*, Mike Fleiss, admitting that the participants typically have sex with more than one person on the show, explains: "There's not a ton of it, I think the average is that the guy will end up having sex with about three women during the course of the show." He enthusiastically adds that *The Bachelor* fourth-season star Bob Guiney holds the record for "highest batting average" in the history of his show, which tests its participants for sexually transmitted diseases before production begins. (Rocchio, 2010) Fleiss apparently enjoys the fact that his show manages to promote not only promiscuity, but promiscuity on television approved by the audience. This time, it is not about staged nudity or simulated sexual intercourse for purposes of a

feature movie, this time it is real, and even if hidden behind closed doors of the show's luxurious locations, sexual activities of its stars tingles the spectator's imagination more than ever.

Feminine sexuality is often thought to be a powerful weapon and tool for exercising power, but in the case of *The Bachelor,* an average educated spectator just cannot deny presence of its degrading aspect. Only the thought that these female contestants are among other things assessed and judged according to their competences in the bedroom under the watchful eye of the public is sickening because it somehow seems to bring us back to past, less civilized eras of the human history. The reality industry tends to explore and then exploit the limits of the sexual (im)morality of the individuals willing to surrender their right to intimacy, probably feeling like they are doing the right thing, supported by enthusiastic producers and a vague promise of a celebrity status. In that context, sex seems to be taken rather lightly, as an accessory completing female participants' style or appearance, which, on the other hand doesn't deny its power. A lot of television programs today, especially the ones produced in the United States, are reflections and sometimes even originators of the chaos that characterizes human community: "(…) television, including reality TV, may be a part of the erosion of community. There is, of course, a long history of discourses blaming social problems on the media; commentators have blamed cinema, comic books, and music for social ill ranging from sexual promiscuity to delinquency. (Cavender, 2004, p. 155) The show, as a popular culture product, builds itself according to contemporary roles of women and men. Sexual intimacy, especially for women, is associated with creative power because of their power to give birth, the power to bring joy, energy, and peace into a relationship whereas for men, it is usually associated with performance. The house where the contest takes place gives place to hypersexual, heteronormative relationships. *The Bachelor* normally focuses on how expectations of intimacy and relationships rely on particular understandings of love, sex, sexuality, and bodies to shape how participants experience themselves as gendered and sexual beings. According to Lindholm, in our contemporary society, romantic love occupies an

ambiguous place in our thoughts. While love is not necessarily sexual, it often assumes a sexual nature, or is thought to lead to sexual involvement. Love is akin to a religious experience – a vision of the beloved other as a unique, transcendent and transformative being who can "complete" one's own life, "the fountainhead of all that is beautiful, good, and desirable" (Lindholm, 1998). Therefore contestants usually yearn to prove their beauty, goodness, and distinctive features by being desirable, and sex is the easiest and shortest approach. Furthermore *The Bachelor*, instead of banning, blaming, or criticizing like Esra Erol's show, promotes forces, cheers love, romance and sexual relationships as a main goal.

The two shows offer significant variations in expectations from people in terms of marriage. The Turkish show indicates that most people are seeking marriage as a way of enhancing their economic capital. This is true for men and women who have been quoted as indicating that they want partners who are financially stable. It is also a way of getting nursing care at home for men, especially the older ones. The discussions and other aspects of the show indicate that marriage is seen as a care-based economic alliance in modern day Turkey. (Algan, 2009) Most people in Turkey seem to be seeking marriage as a way to get somebody to take care of them financially and physically. These are some of the economic, traditional, and emotional conditions that form the duties and responsibilities of couples. Men view women as a significant part of caretaking. Women have a cultural role of serving men's needs, and as a result, men feel entitled to have wives. (Algan, 2009) Women handle the work of caring for children, and many are criticized when they plan to seek employment. In the same context, many women prefer to stay at home and care for their children by getting wealthy husbands who can provide for them and all their financial needs. Still today, the husband is the head of the family. A woman does the housework, and if she wants to work outside of the home, she has to get the approval of her husband, at least according to what we see in the program. The women who want to work ask their suitors directly if he will give them permission to work. If the man approves, Esra Erol gets happy and praises the man's tolerance. On the other hand, if the man does not

approve, she respects it as well. To summarize the position of women in Turkey today, it can be said that unless you are a woman living in a metropolitan city and financially independent, life is still likely to be bound by the customs of traditional family life. (Turkish Odyssey)

In *The Bachelor*, it seems that some women are in it for companionship and love, really wanting this marriage to work. As previously mentioned, marriage is back, making part of a personal image, participating in the creation of social status. Being married to a successful man and being a "successful" housewife is IN again: a picture that we might have in mind when we say "housewife" is a woman with floral-print apron, wearing perfect makeup and smiling as if she didn't have a single problem in her blissful marriage and impeccable household, since her primary preoccupation was keeping her husband contented. But the times have changed, and what we witness today is a bombastic multiplication of attractive, rich housewives, only this time, housework is not what comes first; it is rather building an image of a perfect woman, mother and lover, arranging her million-dollar wardrobe and updating her statuses on various social networks. Platforms such as Instagram or Snapchat participate today in the phenomenon of new-age housewives; there is nothing wrong with the fact that they are jobless since they build up their chances for career through posting online pictures of their lovely children and lavish houses. They are new role models constructed gradually through a general fascination for celebrities that manage to have a perfect marriage, children and career at the time. Let's take Victoria Beckham and Kim Kardashian for example: they are now successful businesswomen, but they somehow climbed the social ladder through their marriages, being married to very successful men, and managing to carry out all the difficult tasks of motherhood, and stay young and beautiful. Being in a happy marital union and building a *renommée* and family fortune that equals millions of dollars, provided these families with a possibility to create whole empires, worshiped by the less privileged groups of the population.[2] The

2 Note: Family-based reality shows have been thriving for the last two decades: The Osbournes (2002), Keeping up with the Kardashians (2007), The Real Housewives of New York (2008), of Beverly Hills (2010) etc.

latest phase of the capitalism brought along this distorted version of vintage happy families gathered around an enormous table, covered from one end to the other with delicious food. Power and prosperity again found their place in the family, after a long period of fascination with individualistic, adventurous lifestyles. The capital is safer within empires built by couples than within isolated single households; thus this kind of capital awaits for next generations who will continue the tradition and keep the power, and so goes the vicious circle of "rich will be richer and the poor poorer" principle.

The woman fighting for the attention of *The Bachelor* has all it takes to become one of the happy few: she has the looks and the willingness to expose her privacy and that of her family. For her it represents ascension from a Walmart housewife to a million-dollar housewife bragging about her marital bliss and wealth, sending painstakingly retouched selfies through internet to the army of the unhappy. She is therefore in position to get fingers on two types of power that Freedman characterizes as agonic and hedonic. Agonic power is the one that influences others directly and "is accrued from being important, competent, strong, or wealthy". Hedonic power is "acquired by virtue of one's appearance, charm, exhibition, or political savvy" (Rudd & Lennon 1999, p. 156). She becomes a social figure of importance, recognized as strong and independent, free woman. Power is crucial in this game of domestic and social hegemony: it makes us who we are, gives us a chance of doing what we want and live our life to the fullest. Today, what we have or what we don't have defines who we are. Today it is not about *being*, it's about *having*. Possessing things, people, power. This idea can be synthetized in Marx's observation:

> Man is initially posited as a private property owner, i.e., an exclusive owner whose exclusive ownership permits him both to preserve his personality and to distinguish himself from other men, as well as relate to them… private property is man's personal, distinguishing and hence essential existence. (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 280)

Thus it is natural to see so many societies today turn towards merciless

competition; not only on the market, but on a personal level as well. Being not only good, but better than the others is the premise of the 21st century, ruling the western world. The Unites States have a more open culture that allows sexual relationships and companionship without marriage. As a result, marriage is not used as a strategy for avoiding loneliness. Instead, it is a way of fulfilling some personal goals. (Yep & Camacho, 2004) The view of American men and women towards marriage is that it is perceived as a competitive process. This is evident in the nature of the struggle women engage in to get the man of their dreams. Many people are seen in the program highlighting the traits they want in a spouse and most of them focus on personality, physical characteristics, and success. In collectivistic societies, marriage is seen as in perspective of creating a perfect "empire" that we previously mentioned. The joining of extended families and is a "huge responsibility" that should not be handled by young people. (Tepperman L, 1993) The Unites States have a liberal view towards marriage and do not tackle it as a way of getting care or financial benefits. Most people in individualistic cultures choose their romantic partners, marry for love, and tend to believe that love is the most important factor for marriage. (Zinn & Eitzen, 2005)

Participants in the two shows have very distinct views about marriage and their expectations. While most women in Turkey focus on the ability of a man to manage financial burdens, most Americans have a mutual view and take care of each other; this is why they don't discuss finances in the program. In *The Bachelor*, money is an obvious taboo; neither the contestants, nor the bachelor himself, talk about their interests or needs when it comes to their financial status. Wealth and the luxurious lifestyle that it implies are rather evoked through visual codes, uncontestably pointing out that the financial status of the bachelor matters in terms of his eligibility to be on the show in the first place. His wealthy lifestyle is shown to the audience through a series of scenes in which we see all the things that money can buy: beautiful outfits, exotic destinations, yachts, cars, champagne, pools. His villa placed just next to the vineyards that are a part of his private business is another name for abundance. Ben Flajnik, as a future husband, is represented as a successful man that has everything that money

can buy, but he doesn't have love. In this show, the notion of money is omnipresent and appealing for the audience, indulging their own fantasies about the high life. On the other hand, none of the participants seems to refer to money in any way or have an open conversation about it. This paradox can be viewed from many different angles. Contestants feel embarrassed to talk about it, given that it can be perceived in the wrong way: "speaking openly about wages is still considered inappropriate: braggy from those who earn a lot, or whiney from those who don't" (Fleming, 2015). Maybe contestants don't want to be misinterpreted in terms of their participation in the show; being in it just for the money wouldn't be a good image to create in front of millions of spectators; they would be called gold-diggers and opportunists. Our possessions reflect the degree of our success in the meritocratic system of late capitalism, and often what we have is considered to be who we are. Our financial situation, or rather what we spend money on, can reflect our deepest secrets and reveal so much more about one's personality. It can be a direct insight into someone's dreams or frustrations; in that context, money-talk might be considered as extremely delicate:

> When people come for psychoanalysis nowadays their resistance to talking about money, their inability to speak freely, is patent. It is as though when people are talking (and not talking) about money, they are always talking about, or gesturing towards something else. Money buys you the clothes that get you the life dreamed up through the clothes. Talking about money is talking about the dressing-up box. (Phillips, 2009, p. 172)

According to Jameson (1992), American society historically did away with clear distinctions between the classes:

> The values of the civil rights movement and the women's movement and the anti-authoritarian egalitarianism of the student's movement are [thus] preeminently cooptable because they are already – as ideals – inscribed in the very ideology of capitalism itself; and we must take into account the possibility that these ideals are part of the internal logic of the system, which has a fundamental interest in social equality to the degree to which it needs to transform as many of its subjects or its citizens into identical consumers interchangeable with everybody else. (p. 49)

Another reason for the complete absence of money talk in *The Bachelor* can

be rooted in a very simple fact: it is not the contestants who have the money, it is producers. According to the findings of Pozner (2010):

> While they don't genuinely offer their hearts, reality TV men *do* play the proud provider. It hardly matters that what they provide is not theirs to give; they are simply handsome shills (for products as well as ideas), offering well-orchestrated infomercials disguised as courtship rituals. (p. 38)

Thus the question of money seems to be redundant in *The Bachelor*, given that all the luxury is provided by the producers. It is still unattainable and serves the purpose and the intention of the producers: inducing a luxurious lifestyle fantasy, representing the bachelors as strong and confident and creating a unique reality TV setting based on abundance. Because this is what brings millions of spectators in front of their television sets at the prime time: it is something like candy addiction: you know you are going to feel bad afterward and you know it is not good for you, but you just have to have a little bite/glimpse into the world you can never attain and at the things you can never have. In accordance with this idea, *The Bachelor* does lack a touch of reality in its general setting: the adventures of its participants are directed, the clothes, make-up and jewelry sponsored, the cars and yachts rented for the occasion; the bachelor or the bachelorette actually don't need the money, which might be the reason for not mentioning it; they seem to try very hard to leave the impression that all of that is perfectly normal and natural to them. On the other hand, the contestants generally act surprised and we witness many "Wows" and "Oh my Gods". In our case, Ben Flajnik is represented as someone who can do whatever he wants, which seems to be pretty misleading for the contestants; for example, while on a date with Ben in Belize, more precisely during a ride on a helicopter, one of the contestants Lindzi explains: "I'm so happy when I'm with Ben. It's rare to find someone that you can kind of share the same base foundation values with, and at the same time have that kind of fun, quirky, playful relationship, which to me is so important. Now that I met Ben, I know that I want kids and marriage and forever, and I feel like there is something special between us" (Fleiss, 2002). The relationship Lindzi is talking about is anything but real, and

the fun part is probably linked to the numerous surprises that Ben is "organizing" in order to impress the contestants. It is maybe unnecessary to mention that without the producers and their million-dollar budget, their "relationship" would have been completely different.

Turkish women try to get a man who can take care of them and their children financially; correspondingly, women are ready to take care of the house, the husband and the children. That is why bargaining about economic conditions, asking about financial details, and talking about lists of assets is normal and usually comprises the first step. The one who promises an affluent society to the spouse automatically assumes the right to expect more maintenance. Esra Erol emphasizes that having possessions is not the expected feature of a man, and that the more important feature to expect from a woman is being moral. The Unites States focus mostly on affection or that is, the narrative that is being performed and consider the financial burden of a family to be a shared responsibility. The issue of age and compatibility in marriage is another significant difference between the two shows. In the Turkish show, many men prefer to marry women who are younger because it increases their ability to take care of them. Most people in Turkey believe that a woman who marries a younger man does not have the capacity to take care of his sexual needs and puts him at a disadvantage. (Algan, 2009) The physical activities, performance, power, and health associated with men as a gender category is discussed in most conversations, but the improbability of its association with women is challenged. In brief, asking for possessions is treated as an activity bound to females and asking for maintenance and care is treated as an activity for males.

4.5.2. Settings, Rules and Scenography

The ideas expressed in the two programs shed some light on how people view marriage in both cultures as well as their perceptions of privacy. The settings of the two shows are completely different. In *The Bachelor*, the potential groom is a given a chance to sample the different candidates to choose the one who is most suitable. The selection takes place off the air and the audience views different candidates competing for the bachelor's love. It involves many women who undertake different activities with the bachelor to win his love. In the Turkish show, the participant goes to the show and introduces him or herself briefly, indicating what they are seeking in a partner and why they are not married. Others explain why their previous marriages failed. Home audiences send text messages and are allowed a brief phone conversation on the air. The participant decides which callers to invite to the studio. After a conversation, the participant requests a date at the teahouse if they are still interested.

In contrast to *The Bachelor*, failures take place away from the cameras, and the audience only gets reports on what happened. Although it is a big change, homes in Turkey were divided into guest and private areas recently, and it was improper to ask for a tour of the house. It can be related to the long history of "Harem" culture that confined women into a part of Ottoman palaces, houses, and residences. The Arabic word "haram", pronounced in Turkish can mean "wife" among other things, and is a symbol of "sacredness" and privacy. At the beginning of the 15th century, a number of foreign visitors to Istanbul described the many facets of the city, providing accounts of the Turks, and especially of the palaces and the harem that the Ottoman rulers called home. Every family's harem, where its women lived and where men from outside were not permitted to go, was the very honor of that family, its sacred niche. What we know concerning life in the harem is known only indirectly. Consequently, there is no clear information in the sources about the form of life in these places, which were very private. (Turkish Cultural Foundation, n.d.) For example, Harem sections where the Sultan lived together with his family were built with almost no connection to the

official palace and the city, but over time, the passages for various purposes were kept under tight control of the Sultan. As stated above, the Arabic word "haram" can also mean "unlawful", "protected", or "forbidden". The women had to protect their bodies and honor by living apart from men. Therefore, the harem became the separate part of a household where women, children, and servants lived in maximum privacy. (Women in Turkey: The harem. n.d.)

This can be one reason why Turkish families separated a part of their house as a guest room even in very small flats. According to Damla Zeybekoğlu's master thesis (2005), Turkish houses have different room names such as living room, guest room, and bedrooms. It is an important hint that in recent times, most Turkish people do not accept guests into their living rooms and do not want to show details of their daily life. Private affairs are used to live secretly behind closed doors. Also in the program, a man and woman are separated with a screen and then they go to the teahouse, which the audience cannot see. This highlights a significant difference in terms of privacy and personal space in the two cultures. Whereas homes are usually divided into guest and private areas, the studio is divided into two. The individuals in the Turkish show are given a chance to explore their compatibility away from the cameras, but the procedures confine the participants to the rules of the show, which has its foundation in traditional roots. The studio itself has closed rooms that the audience, studio guests, and other participants cannot see the first date of the contestants. This secret part of the relationships is under Esra Erol's guaranteed control, and only she can question the couple about their intimate relations. Esra Erol, her studio teammates, and guests are involved and control all of the procedures regarding the relationship. According to Day, choosing a partner makes part of "family-involved mate selection processes" (Day, 2010). The couples return from the teahouse and the studio becomes like a courtroom, especially when the man and woman explain the reasons why they like or dislike each other, according to the host's questions. Esra Erol announces repeatedly that she respects the privacy of participants and understands the importance of securing and protecting the information collected about them. On the other hand, her

comments create strong doubt and distrustful ideas about the participants. While she is guaranteeing privacy, she also has the authority to disclose it. In this case, privacy is used as a means to protect and control the antenuptial intercourse during the program. Even if there is a physical relationship between couples, it is not declared or shown during the program. Sexual relations before marriage can be a negative accusation in Turkish minds whereas it is totally different in *The Bachelor*. Sex is taboo and never mentioned in this show; the only reason for talking about sex or physical harmony can be in health programs. Otherwise, it is not a common topic to reveal publicly and can be perceived as unacceptable. For example, the adaptation of *Sex and the City* lasted only for 11 series and it failed because of very low ratings at Metro Palas in 2004. Certain tones, themes, and moods of one culture's entertainment cannot always be accepted totally by another culture, especially if it is related to sexual freedom of single women.

On the other hand, *The Bachelor* offers a range of sexual evocations constructed through their strong voyeuristic appeal. This particular pleasure operates through the notion of fantasy; it feeds and empowers it. Isn't it agreeable to just slouch on a couch, observing someone else's mistakes and "deviances," cheering or cursing, living the life through avatars, incapable of living certain fantasies in real life, out of fear. Fear of failure is craved into souls and minds, now able to perform in the virtual world using someone else's limbs, words or even genitals. The best part is of course when it comes to taboos, or infringements of unspoken laws and social codes. The pleasure then becomes complete, and the personal fantasy becomes materialized, labeled as "real" or "possible", at least visually attainable. And the spectator himself/herself remains untouched, unsoiled by this infamy that is taking place on screen.

"Rather than emphasizing sexual deviance, recent accounts of contemporary culture conceptualize voyeurism as a common (and not solely sexual) pleasure derived from access to private details". (Metzl, 2004, pp. 127-131) The *Bachelor* contains a hyperactive amount of gossip, fight, romance, promiscuity, and sexuality. The most

common fights are based on romance and sexuality, because the girls aim to capture the same man's interest and love. It happens frequently that couples flirt, touch, embrace, and kiss each other – and it is the most expected part of the show. Without this, contestants can be left out of the program. According to Carol Queen, "Postindustrial Western societies romanticize sex… We've come to expect a level of intimacy and understanding or rapport, especially in the first stages of sexual experience that very few lovers can sustain" (Queen, 2013). Popular culture is infatuated with the ideal of passionate love with all its branches, representing it as reality. Literature, films, TV series, and advertisements treat love as something people can find difficult and cannot be defined entirely. Romantic love justifies marriage and partnerships and incites legal contracts, which is why people should try to seek, find, and experiment with it. TV shows, Hollywood movies, and literature, even beginning from children's tales, are full of messages that the desire for romantic intimacy and true love are the main goal of life. Romantic love validates sexual activity within or outside of marriage. On the other hand, true love, romantic relations, and marriage are somewhat all related to sex. This is the common message of all media. In brief, according to Weingarten:

> intimacy is an innate human need that can be achieved through mutual self-disclosure and the appreciation of the other's unique qualities in romantic, sexual, couple relationships characterized by equality and propinquity. Intimacy is no longer a need or a state of being. Rather, as discourse, intimacy is framed as a cultural and historical construction that is "mediated by social processes… [and]… inextricably linked to the other discourses – discourses of gender, power, domination, and sexuality (Weingarten, 1991, pp. 285-305)

The Bachelor is an extension of the dominant culture that repeats the importance of physical appearance, heteronormative relationships, and common occurrences of hyper sexuality, gender norms/roles and women who are extremely ready to believe in dreams and romantic love. Although they mostly talk about sex, intimacy, and friendship, the sex scenes are often limited, shallow, and infrequent. The messages reference bedroom activities and often reminisce about physical relations. The construction of the program forces participants to be open about themselves physically and psychologically. They

have a desire to grow as individuals, and have sufficient ego to take responsibility for the moments of human drama that aren't necessary. According to script theory, the mass media provides individuals with behavioral scripts determining how to act in social situations. (Simon & Gagnon, 1987) That is why physical contact, sex, and intimate relations are expected and they act through the social discipline of media. Love becomes a fluid communication process that changes from day to day and from person to person and everyone tries to show himself/herself during this process. The participants in *The Bachelor* indeed seem to follow one unvarying instruction, one fixed pattern during the interactions with the Ben Flajnik. Their behavioral traits work together in order to create a unique allure, separating them from other contestants. Even their voices become different once they are in the bachelor's company. Their moves are softer and their vocabulary much more sophisticated. At the beginning of their respective relationships with the bachelor, the participants mostly describe themselves verbally, giving their best to incite interest and stand out. As the show progresses, the contestants are more likely to get emotional and extremely vulnerable, once they understand that they are constantly assessed, compared, and eventually unjustly eliminated. Towards the end, sex as an ultimate reality show value starts kicking in, and the stakes get higher in parallel with fierce conflicts between the contestants.

4.5.3. Different Cultural Influences on the Two Shows

Across the world there are two contrasting cultural orientations: Individualistic and Collectivistic culture. One values individualism which means a life guided by self-oriented behaviors; in contrast, the other values community and collectivism, which means a life of individuals who tend to live together in a communal way. Certainly people who value individualism also live together. However these two kinds of life styles differ from each other in so many ways. According to recent research about individualism and collectivism, the features and components of individualism and collectivism can be classified as in the table below: (Kagitcibasi, 1995, p. 6-7)

Table 3: Components of individualism and collectivism

THE RESEARCH	INDIVIDUALISM	COLLECTIVISM
From the research of Janzx (1991)	• Human beings are the fundamental "building block" of the society • Dignity of a one person is crucial • Equality between individuals is important • Liberty from interference of others • Collective aims become only one person's aims	• The source of the value is the group • "Commitment" as the moral aspect of ideology • No individual freedom. Freedom is detached to the group • Individual not separated from the group, on the contrary embedded to the group
From the research of Hsu (1983)	• Self-reliance, competition between individuals, aggressive creativity, different religious groups.	• Group protection is the main aim • Low emotional level • Less competition • Less creativity
From the research of Triandis (1990)	• Individuals ought to realize "his/her" selves • Individuals should develop their own judgments	• Norms and duties are defined by the group rather than pleasure of the individual • One should be ready to cooperate with the group
From the research of Ho&Chiu (1994)	• Individual has the value • Responsibility belongs to the individual • Autonomy • Achievement belongs to individual	• Group has the value • Collective responsibility • Conformity • Achievement belongs to group

Table 3 (continued)

Today, in the world, while some of the countries are oriented to individualistic culture, some countries are oriented to collectivistic culture. This difference in

orientation depends on sociological, economical, religious and historical reasons. However, cultural orientation cannot be in one direction for all the citizens of one country. Nevertheless every country has a major orientation. Here is the list of some examples of the countries. (Collectivist and individualist cultures)

Table 4: Major orientations of some countries

INDIVIDUALISTIC CULTURE	COLLECTIVISTIC CULTURE
USA	ARGENTINA
GERMANY	CHINA
AUSTRIA	ITALY
SWITZERLAND	GREECE
CANADA	BRAZIL
AUSTRALIA	BELARUS
UNITED KINGDOM	EGYPT
FRANCE	ISRAEL
IRELAND	JAPAN
POLAND	KOREA
ESTONIA	TURKEY
THE NETHERLANDS	ROMANIA
BELGIUM	RUSSIA
LUXEMBURG	SAUDI ARABIA
SOUTH AFRICA	BULGARIA
HUNGARY	PORTUGAL

Table 4 (Continued)

In individualistic cultures, with the flourishing of the "self" comes the cult of exploited privacy. In these societies, privacy comes with a price tag; it is a legitimate

commodity, it is recognized as property for one simple reason: individuals have right to it. Privacy in these countries belongs to individuals and therefore makes part of their personal belongings. If we own something it means we can use it in any way we choose to. We can decide to use, modify or sell what we possess. And an average post-industrial mindset buys it and consumes it, because this is what people do in consumerist societies. This expensive western privacy, once exploited, has big chances of growing bigger and making fortune; somehow it is now safer to open up and come clean facing the world, than to hide in obscure couloirs of anonymity, running the risk of being suppressed, disappearing. In *The Bachelor* we see exhibition and the disclosure of "self", typical for individualistic countries where the personality cult is very strong; we witness autonomous decision making and the importance of individual goals, shaped through a "just be yourself" policy. Being "different" allows one to be ranked among the stars. On the other hand, in Turkey, it is maybe not such a good idea to stand out too much, given that we are talking about a collectivistic culture with strong social codes built upon strict traditional beliefs. Social harmony is a top priority and all the society members have to comply with its needs.

Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle and *The Bachelor* demonstrate that cultural differences emerged strongly and the individualism-collectivism dimension has come to be regarded as central to an understanding of cultural values, of social systems, the underlying basis of constructions. In Turkey, people are still living in communities; neighborhood, relatives, family members, friends, co-workers create a life circle for an individual. People tend to gather around ideologies, religion, sports, national phenomenon etc. In small regions like villages or towns, public cafés are the places for people to get together and enjoy their free time. Weddings, funerals, holidays, celebrations always happen with a certain group and comply with certain customs. People respect and obey the cultural and religious customs. Not only religion and culture but also acting together with a society is much more valuable than acting as an individual in Turkey, which is also observable in the show. For example, the spectators present in the show's studio, as well as participants, behave with visible restraint,

with rare exceptions. Suitors are mostly polite and act shy when it comes to talking to their peers. The variety of different personalities that we witness in *The Bachelor* seems to be completely absent from the Turkish show in question; the participants tend to resemble each other, rather than stand out or claim their uniqueness. Everybody is expected to comply with the unspoken laws of decency and moderate expression of views. Moreover, in terms of engagement ceremonies or other pre-marital rituals that take place in the program, they follow the same pattern of uniform behavior and strictly traditional conduct. While in *The Bachelor* the proposals are somehow a matter of individual taste and freedom, in *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* it is impossible to imagine any different kind of scenario than the one that is imposed by traditional practices: one of the engagement ceremonies that take place in the studio, is a perfect example: the future spouses exchange golden engagement rings attached to one another by a red ribbon. They exchange the vows and the ribbon is cut by family members. (Bulutsu, 2015) Collectivism is measured with respect to parents, friends, the host of the program and others in the show. They tend to share each other's burdens and troubles in the show and discuss about families problems. According to Moorman and Blakely's research (1995) in the Journal of Organizational Behavior, results suggest that if an individual holds collectivistic values or norms, he/she would be more likely to perform citizenship behavior. It is possible to examine the shows as micro cosmos of respective cultural atmospheres and the ways in which a culture affects individual processes and, subsequently, how these processes affect communication. The image of self on the programs, referred to as self-construal, is an ideal candidate to perform the role of linking culture to behavior. Triandis (2001) argues that people in collectivist cultures, compared to people in individualist cultures, are likely to define themselves as constituents of groups, give priority to in-group goals, focus on context more than the content in making attributions and in communicating, pay less attention to internal than to external processes as determinants of social behavior, define most relationships with in-group members as communal, make more situational attributions, and tend to be self-effacing. (Triandis, 2001) On the other hand, in the United States, people tend

to be much more individualistic. Social pressure is lower than it is in Turkey. Identity and independence are valuable and important; work life promotes individual goals, achievements and initiatives. People are stronger, self-reliable and self-confident. In contrast, mainly collectivist culture represents itself as lack of a self-enhancement motive arising from the perceived centrality of others, and cultural restrictions imposed on the self that are manifested by modesty requirements.

Results from the two shows reveal that self-enhancement measures were significantly and positively related to the self in one case and in the other case, self-gains, meaning importance with emphasizing the uniqueness of "me". The basic level of behavior regulation of the individual's relationships and privacy approach is simultaneously influenced by a set of contrary factors. It does not mean these shows do not or do value privacy but that they have totally different approaches and attribute different values to it. Certainly some limitations must be in mind while interpreting the differences; these shows do not necessarily represent all aspects of these dimensions. According to two cultural orientations, Individualistic Culture/Collectivistic Culture, the comparison between two marriage shows can be listed as below:

Table 5: Comparison between two marriage shows in terms of individualistic culture/collectivistic culture

INDIVIDUALISTIC CULTURE(THE BACHELOR)	COLLECTIVISTIC CULTURE(ESRA EROL)
- Individuals are the participants. Their families are not included. (Families or friends only used for rating objects; for example in the episode which is surveyed one of the participants' grandmother enters the program as anactual participant and meets the bachelor. Afterwards it was made clear that it was a joke.)	**- Participants usually join de show with their families or friends.** (In every episode studio is full of families and friends of the participants, as much as the ordinary audience. They frequently interfere and make comments about the incidents happening during the program)
- Participants do not behave in a friendly way to each other. (In the episode observed in the thesis, two contestants have a fight on the first night of the show.These kinds of arguments occur often during the show. The conflict is a background for the show, and a strong competition is needed for the high ratings.)	**- Participants become friends after a while. They sometimes see each other after the show in their daily life.** (In the episode which is observed in this thesis, there is a man in the audience that everyone sees as a big brother; the younger participants ask him for opinions and consider him as a family member The participants represent a small tribe where all the decisions and moves are discussed together.)
- The participants only value themselves. They do not relate with social customs. (This is an effect of individualistic culture in the US. The culture continues in the contest as it is in the real world, the participants rarely talk about their relatives, families etc. they mostly focus on themselves, their careers and personal achievements)	**- Every participant values traditional customs** (Esra Erol (the presenter of the program) often talks about her own life. She has a happy marriage, and children and lives accordingly with the unspoken social codes. The participants themselves mostly respect social code's boundaries on the show)

- The presenter of the show does not interfere in the incidents (The presenter leads the program mostly without making comments or interfering in the participants' actions. They make decisions and act without the host's permission.)	**- The presenter always interferes in the participants' actions, managing the show according to the rules and customs** (Esra Erol is the main component of the program. She manages the audience, the participants, the people who participates online, or via telephone. She gives permission to people before they talk.
- Participants are much more creative. They even try to eliminate their competitors using special strategies (Participants have one aim; to be the one that the bachelor will choose. The contestants make plans and act accordingly, sometimes even disobeying rules of the show.)	**- There is novisible competition between the participants. They only discuss about the other participants or suitors** (Due to the format of the program, the participants are not competing against each other. Every participant has his/her own suitors. They become friends after a while and share opinions about their respective situations.)
- The audience in the studio (in two special editions) do not discuss in front of the participants. They only discuss between themselves (Thecontestants are accommodated in the special house surveilled by cameras. All the incidents occur in the house. The audience is not able to interfere in the program)	**- Studio discussions are the main focus of the show. Even the audience watching the show on TV participates in discussions online or via telephone** (The program is not separated from real life. On the contrary, the program shows moments which are not embellished and correspond to the real-life situations.)
- Self prominence is likely to be the main aim of the participants. (The contestants often exhibit their bodies during their daily activities. The also try to stand out inducing drama or suspense in the show. They represent themselves as prospective celebrities)	**- Prominence is the second aim coming after marriage.** (Participants try to find a good suitor for themselves. Self-prominence is not as important as finding the one to marry. During the years of the program no suitor or participant has ever becomea celebrity in Turkey.)

- **Objectifying the human body is one of the main ways for achievement in the show.** (For example in one episode female contestant dances topless. In an episode of The Bachelorette,a suitor carries a canoe naked. Human body is in the center of the show.)	- **Participants act and share their life stories with the audience instead of showing their bodies.** (The participants gain attention with their stories instead of their bodies. They cry, get angry or upset. The main idea is to share experiences with the audience.)

CHAPTER 5

METHODS

This study aims to analyze relationship between the changing privacy perceptions of the society regarding two different cultures one being individualistic – American culture, and the other being collectivist – Turkish culture, by concentrating on two marriage shows. Content analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA) are used as two qualitative analytical guidelines to study our research questions.

5.1. CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis is drawing conclusions from observations of content. The key to understanding content analysis competently lies in understanding the meanings of objective, systematic, quantitative, and manifest content. The contribution that the content analysis makes to our understanding of this goal is reveal the relationship between participants' orientations in these programs and their choices for telling and showing information and actions about themselves that are considered private as common sense

knowledge. The exhibition of private actions such as intimate moments, sharing secrets and choices about choosing a mate becomes even more evident in the marriage shows.

5.2. CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) accentuates the transformations in discourse and language that result in the modern changes in society. Discourse analysis pertains to both everyday knowledge that is conveyed via the media, everyday communication, school and family, and so on, and also to that particular knowledge (valid at a certain place at a certain time) which is produced by the various fields. It is through the discursive and linguistic transformations that CDA approaches a process of analyzing changes and transformations in society. Through critical discourse analysis the researcher attempts to reveal the discursive acts and behaviors displayed by the participants on ABC's *The Bachelor* and ATV`s *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* that are changing and transforming society`s perceptions of privacy, marriage, and courtship. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) summarize the main tenets of CDA as follows:

1. CDA addresses social problems

2. Power relations are discursive

3. Discourse constitutes society and culture

4. Discourse does ideological work

5. Discourse is historical

6. The link between text and society is mediated

7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory

8. Discourse is a form of social action.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is relevant to this study for many reasons. As Wodak claims, language is a social phenomenon; not only individuals, but also institutions and social groupings have specific meanings and values that are expressed in language in systematic ways. (Wodak &Meyer, 2002. p. 5) CDA is useful in disclosing the discursive nature of much contemporary social and cultural change. Particularly the language of the mass media is scrutinized as a site of power, of struggle and also as a site where language is apparently transparent, how ideology functions in social institutions, and; how people obtain and maintain power within a given community. (Wodak & Meyer, 2002, pp. 6-12)Central to a critical discourse analysis (CDA) based on Michel Foucault's discourse theory are issues such as, what knowledge (valid at a certain place at a certain time) consists of; how this valid knowledge evolves; how it is passed on; what function it has for the constitution of subjects and the shaping of society and what impact this knowledge has on the overall development of society. (Wodak & Meyer, 2002, p. 33) Here "knowledge" means all kinds of contents which make up a consciousness and/or all kinds of meanings used by people to interpret and shape the surrounding reality. Reality TV is one of the formats of television that helps people to reach real ordinary people's life. It is less concerned with the aesthetics of scripts. It is claimed that reality TV is the discourse of the real. Thus, it allows us a clear view into the guiding discourses that shape the discussion of love, courtship and marriage. With the developing technology, the format of reality TV has changed too. In the late 1980s and 1990s there were only *Cops* and *Funniest home Videos* demonstrating a "reality-based" approach, taken by ordinary people or shot with handheld cameras. (Murray & Ouellette, 2004, pp. 1-11) Reality television is a great opportunity for audiences to compare their lives, beliefs, and emotions with other ordinary people.

> The individual does not make the discourse but the opposite tends be the case. The discourse is super-individual. Though everybody 'knits along' at producing discourse, no individual and no single group determines the discourse or has precisely intended what turns out to be the final result. As a rule, discourses have evolved and become independent as the result of historical processes. They convey more knowledge than the individual subjects are aware of. Thus, if one wants to identify the knowledge of a society (for example, on privacy in our case) one has to reconstruct the history of its evolution. (Wodak & Meyer, 2002, p.33)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND UNITS OF ANALYSIS

Content analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA) are used as two qualitative analytical guidelines to study our research questions. Processing the material in these marriage shows is at the base and at the heart of the content and discourse analysis. A successful content and critical discourse analysis study is the result of a series of good decision in terms of units of analysis, sampling, categorization etc. The process must start with a clear statement of research questions.

Formal hypotheses are rare in qualitative research. Because qualitative inquiry usually sets out to interpret qualities of the phenomena, there is little reason to predict the relationship between the variables. Far more common in qualitative research are research questions and these questions articulate the researcher`s expectations. Research questions are open-ended probes involving theoretical reasoning. In general, the content analysis and critical discourse analysis of this qualitative research aimed to address two research questions and in order to accurately and successfully carry out this study, the researcher employed two methods of qualitative data analysis that best accommodated these research questions:

1. To what extent do the participants of these programs reveal-either verbally or through their behavior-personal and private information about themselves?

2. To what extent do these marriage shows enable viewers to witness the intimate and private interactions between couples that would otherwise be inaccessible to the audience or the viewers?

For this study, the unit of analysis is two reality TV marriage show programs. The category is constructed in order to understand the privacy and personal information

revealing mechanisms and therefore two category sets are determined. One episode of each show is utilized as a sample of content, and from each of these shows three dialogues between bachelors and bachelorettes are analyzed for content and discourse analyses. But at the same time the other episodes of these shows in general are utilized for overall analysis. For the coding of the categories, each category is given equal weight in order to decrease the error margins because there are not too many researches in the literature that the researcher was able to check the reliability of coding. The content and critical discourse analyses are oriented towards identifying the extent to which participants reveal certain types of personal/private information through their speech and/or behavior. For this section of analysis, a list of 8 main categories of personal/private information is determined: participants' financial wellbeing, occupation, educational attainment, religious beliefs, political beliefs, hometown, marriage/relationship history, and familial issues. The scores are calculated at the end to understand the extent to which participants of these marriage programs reveal different types of personal/private information. All categories are given a value of "0.5" and at the end the extent of information revealing is calculated out of 4.

The second section of the analysis focuses on the extent to which a program makes accessible behaviors and actions that would typically take place in a private setting and would not normally be accessible to strangers or outsiders. This section consists of 4 categories: first date, expression of emotions towards each other, intimate behaviors (i.e. touching, kissing), and exhibitionism. All categories in this section are given a value of "1" and at the end it is calculated out of 4. This section focuses on private setting actions and behavior that would typically be expressed in intimate settings. The categories in this section were based on the assumption that programs that make private behavior more accessible and will be more likely to appeal to the voyeuristic tendencies of television viewers. According to this prediction, this study assumes that the relationship between voyeurism, privacy and exposure to marriage shows would change the privacy perceptions of the members of the society who watch these shows. In addition to these assumptions and predictions, the content and

the critical discourse analyses also provides a valuable opportunity to understand candidates' and participants' attitudes and willingness about privacy and sensitivity of personal information. The logic of this assumption derives from the fact that by willingly attending these programs that make private interactions more accessible by their individual and personal consent, these people also give consent for living a less private life under surveillance.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS

To reveal the various components of changing privacy conceptions in two different cultures, this thesis conducts a critical discourse and content analysis of *The Bachelor* and *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* (see Appendices B and C for broadcast streaming of the shows). These programs are not talent competitions; these are programs more and more centered on sensational drama and scandals. Although the main goal and message is marriage, subliminal messages are about money, consumption and a seemingly unattainable lifestyle. Instead of talking about marriage content, participants look for a potential partner: how he or she should be significant to others, possess perfect physical characteristics and have an endless parade of lifestyle highlights. Furthermore, viewed through the shows in question, privacy is something to be created, exploited or sold, changeable and adjusted for maximum appeal.

6.1. STRICTLY PERSONAL?

The content and critical discourse analyses in this study aim to identify the extent the participants of these programs reveal – either verbally or through their behavior – personal and private information about themselves. For this section of analysis, a list of 8 main categories of personal/private information is determined: participants' financial status, occupation, educational attainment, religious beliefs, political beliefs, hometown, marriage/relationship history, and familial issues. The scores are calculated at the end in order to understand the extent to which participants of these marriage programs reveal different types of personal/private information. All categories are given a value of 0.5 and at the end, the extent of private/personal information revealed is calculated out of 4. As mentioned in the methods of analysis section, two episodes of each show and information from the general season are utilized for the analysis.

Reality shows, especially marriage and dating shows, cannot be thought of without considering the audience watching, both in person and in front of the TV screen, since the format of the programs includes the responses and interventions of the people. Surely, the performance of the participants is needed for gaining the attention of the audience, especially in marriage shows. And in these shows the audience's attention is usually gained by revealing private information about the participants. Television's reliance on performance, rather than just a theatre for normative performativity, makes it the perfect stage for demonstrating the breakdown of elements in participants' behavior encompassing all the senses, the affects, and embodiments that are contained in the contours of the self. (Skeggs & Wood, 2012, p.73) What audiences want to see is a real thing, real personal drama, pain, tears, joy and happiness. However, it is not something recent; throughout history humans tended to enjoy other's pain, appropriating the strength and the power through the performance of the other, fighting in this fashion against the terrible feeling of *impuissance* carved into the human consciousness. Let's take the Roman Empire for example: this appropriation of power

was made possible through ruthless arena performances, where people were watching and cheering gladiators, some of whom were not slaves but volunteers. Today, we can say that the same feeling of power among the spectators is achieved through watching sports and cheering. A football or a boxing match for example, offers the supporters not only the opportunity to socialize, find their peers, share experiences, tell stories; it offers them a unique chance to construct an extra identity, the one that allows this empowerment, an insight into another world besides their own. The acquisition of this illusory control has been offered to humans through tragedy, drama, books, and narrative movies and sports. However, we have to admit that the stakes are much higher and the pleasure much more intense inasmuch as this experience is closer to reality. Television provides this possibility, through its capacity to show a great deal of details and provide ostensibly accurate information in real time. Not only are we temporary owners of its protagonists' feelings and actions, we are in control of the TV set as well, omnipotent rulers resting on our throne, deciding who stays and who goes. In this light it is easy to imagine to what extent this relation of control is formulated through reality shows. We can choose our favorites, judge, cheer or gloat. Hiding things is difficult on TV, given the audio and visual support of protagonists and their actions. What we see are "real" tears of sorrow and joy. In this context, television's perfection and ability to show details is worth more than a thousand words. Humanity seems to have found a new method for reaching catharsis: Reality TV. The great reality industry exploits that moment where humans fight to prevail, or, in other words, to survive. Is this fight for survival tragic or comic? It depends, as Eco claims, on the protagonist's character and our ability to place ourselves in a certain position towards this protagonist. Our predisposition to experience catharsis depends on the level to which we can identify. Eco's assertion in connection to the relationship between the protagonist and the viewer is highly interesting:

> (…) So, in reconstructing a part of the lost Aristotle, it is not enough to say that in tragedy we have the downfall of a person of noble condition, neither too wicked nor too good, for whom we can in any case feel sympathy, and at his violation of the moral or religious code we feel pity for his fate and terror at the suffering that will strike him but could also strike us, and so finally his

punishment is the purification of his sin and of our temptations; and, conversely, in the comic we have the violation of a rule committed by a person of lower degree, of bestial character, toward whom we feel a sense of superiority, so that we do not identify ourselves with his downfall, which in any case does not move us because the outcome will not be bloody(Eco, 1990, p. 270).

In *The Bachelor* and Esra Erol's show we witness profuse confessions, tears, and nervous breakdowns, the display of weaknesses, losses, refusals, and regrets. Is the audience there to sympathize or to gloat? Can everyone actually sympathize with a middle-class, white, good-looking young woman, crying over a failed relationship with the bachelor? It seems that the notion of the arena arises again bringing along a series of semiotic values that the audience is searching for while deconstructing television characters. In contrast to what Eco claims, we should be able to resent sympathy towards an unfortunate person of "lower rank", in whatever level, because it could be us, by the random wheel of destiny. At the same time we find tragic the failure of a protagonist that we already find something in common with. Therefore, the level of identification with the protagonists of the two shows varies according to the audience, which is always miscellaneous. For some, contestants' feelings of failure and rejection can be tragic, while, on the other hand, somebody would find the same situation highly comic. Curiosity and the desire to know can be counted as further motives for people to watch the shows. Once they watch, they get curious about the next episode. Also, if the community in which the watcher lives, such as family, close friends, co-workers or neighbors, like and watch the show, the necessity of talking and gossiping about it motivates people to follow up. People tend to be a part of the community they live in and talking about common subjects and events help them find a place in that community. According to Alexander (2004), performance is the successor to ritual; its aim is to "create (…) the emotional connection of audience with actor and text and thereby to create the conditions for projecting cultural meaning and privacy from performance to audience" (Alexander, 2004, p. 547).

In *The Bachelor*, women who are participants in the show are introducing

themselves in many ways, opening themselves explicitly through different codes, symbols, bodily attitudes, feelings, speeches, gestures and movements. We can add that the contestants are all good-looking. The cult of the body is in the very center of *The Bachelor's* narrative; the contestants are all the "average-sized members of the society" (Gimlin, 2002, p.124). Their bodies are seen as a source of pleasure that can be exploited and manipulated and above all, enjoyed. The visual aesthetic is abundantly evident; the candidates are all in good shape, mostly well-dressed with flawless make-up, perfect teeth, beautiful hair and fit. Even if many modern societies discriminate against overweight members of the society, the USA seems to go a step further; according to Gimlin (2002), the American culture is a "culture that equates fat with disease, sin, ugliness, and even crime" (p. 135).

All these negative implications are a product of high standards and expectations imposed by the American society tending towards physical perfection. The contestants' identities seem to be determined by their bodies, while other qualities are pushed into the background. The show leaves no place for physical imperfection or weakness; even for the contestants that seem more sensitive than others, or show their emotional or psychological weaknesses are very soon discarded from the show. Mental and physical health and strength are put forward and insisted on. The bachelor himself is a healthy, wealthy, young man who seems stable and determined and knows exactly what he wants – a partner that could satisfy every aspect of his high expectations. On repeated occasions he admits liking "strong and independent" women. The candidates must not only be this impressive construct, they have to look like it too. Their pitch is supposed to evoke an unshakable self-esteem and help them find their place within the "pack". Some of them are trying to stick out at any cost, wearing revealing clothes, laughing loudly, being a little too audacious. Some of the contestants openly talk about their feelings towards the bachelor to the bachelor himself. They try to convince him to get a one-on-one date in order to gain time and get to know him better, and to protect themselves from a potential refusal at the "rose ceremony". One of the contestants, 26-year-old Samantha, went too far asking Ben what he really sees in group dates and

expressing her wish for a one-on-one date. Ben Flajnik, the bachelor, then put it this way: "I want to see as if you can kind of handle yourself in a group setting and to be completely honest with you, group dates that you've been on, you've been kind of highly emotional, and so I'm wondering if, you know, you can continue to hang and be a part of this…From what I've seen, up to this point, I don't think I see this going very much further, to be completely honest with you. I wonder if, you know, you take this seriously enough, because this is something that I'm really, really looking for." After the bachelor indirectly asks her to leave the show, Samantha withdraws in tears. Two other contestants are wondering why she is crying, and Courtney, one of the most confident contestants adds: "She is always crying". (Fleiss, 2002) Previously, the contestant named Jenna was left out during the "rose ceremony", being the one that can't hold back her emotions and whose interactions with others mostly end in tears. Obviously, what the bachelor wants to see is the real competition, a fight that leaves no place for mercy. He embodies the society and its standards, sending a strong message to the audience; being emotionally weak or insecure seems to be punishable in the show. The loss of focus or not trying hard enough can be the end for the contestants. The competition seems to run on a business model, where control and professionalism are valued. Performance alone is evaluated and "personal" issues are beside the point. Toughness and the suppression of emotions mark a person as a serious candidate for advancement. Ben Flajnik also seems to be involved in the secret zone of power, along with the producers, enjoying a panoptic view of the contestants and their struggles. His motives are apparently derived from those of the show's executives as much as from his own often rehearsed romantic narrative. An image of a "strong and independent woman", as the bachelor puts it, is created by the show in order to represent the sanity of the society, in all its health and vigor, the stability and the prosperity of a female body representing motherhood, glamour, and sensitivity, all at the same time. The fit bodies of the contestants are their strength and their temple; their body is giving them a ticket to this show and a right to respect and admiration. In that context, doesn't the leaving of the "body" comprehend the suppression of the "self" created for a specific

purpose by the producers? Debra L. Gimlin (2002) explains her academic interest in the female body in a similar way:

> Women's body work offers the best location for studying the processes through which self and body are bound because the relationship between self and body is likely to be most problematic among women. While contemporary men must undoubtedly work to negotiate the relationship between body and self, women, more than men, face social pressures that make the negotiation difficult and complicated. (p.12)

The range and variety of these social pressures are immense, but the one imposed by the camera and the reactions of the audience seem to prevail in our case. The house where the contestants live becomes the battlefield where the female body is used as a weapon. The more feminine it is, the stronger it is, and therefore, the battle becomes more intense. The relationships between contestants are constructed in a closed, surveilled environment where they are trying to gain in the "play of forces" (Fiske, 1989, p.5), forces established and maintained by the body. The whole dialogue of the show is based upon the body, and every little success of the contestants is measured according to it. Proving to be a woman seems to be a challenging task that takes more effort than it usually would in the "real world". Being more feminine, funnier, and smarter than the other contestants and getting the bachelor's attention is obviously the goal, but the means used to get there are actually the first concern of the show. The contestants' body language and pitch seems to strongly evoke their sexual arousal, proving them to be sexually reproductive, healthy individuals. Their flirty glances would lead to the bachelor's surrender and enchantment of his senses. While observing the contestants on the screen a more careful viewer will definitely notice how the glamorous clothes and accessories, as well as facial expressions at times evoke sexual animosity, at times candidness, at times a naive look of a simple girl next door. All the details are carefully assessed and chosen to mesmerize the judging eye of the bachelor, thus he represents not only masculinity and protection; he embodies the society, its expectations and standards.

One of the contestants, Emily, plays more on "the brains" and embodies the values of education and good conduct in the society. A PhD student, Emily, represents

herself as being well organized, strong but emotional, polite and easy-going. The features put forward through this contestant are common sense, chastity and stability. However, she enters in a conflict with Courtney, who, on the other hand represents animosity, hostility and sexuality. Even their physical appearances tell different stories, stressing the battle between good and evil, relying on the cliché of light versus darkness: while Emily is blond with softer facial features, Courtney is a brunette with very sharp facial features and seductive, pronounced cheekbones. Their respective behaviors are displayed through the contrast based on an offense-defense relationship. Courtney's aggressive and provocative behavior that becomes the very center of *The Bachelor*'s group dates and indoor gatherings between contestants, is balanced by Emily's attempts to "protect" the bachelor and get him to notice Courtney' s unjust and harmful conduct. She decides to come clean and put herself "in danger" in order to explain everything to the bachelor during a one-on-one conversation. (Fleiss, 2002) Her willingness to risk and put her own success on the line, in the name of fair-play represents her courage and determination. The bachelor's reaction though wasn't even close to what this contestant was obviously expecting. After the bachelor retorts a bit harshly that what he expects is more focus on *their* relationship, Emily seems to give up and decides not to stand out in this context anymore, visibly upset and scared for her own position in the show. During the rose ceremony later that evening, Emily is kept waiting until the very last rose to realize that she won't be the one leaving the show. It brings excitement and suspense to the episode where the bachelor is shown floating between good and evil, apparently unconscious of what is going on between the contestants. Emily is almost punished for trying to "save" him and seems to finally give in. Besides this sharp contrast introduced by the contestants Courtney and Emily, some contestants try to evoke their determination in the game, focusing only on "love" and what is best for their relationship with the bachelor. In that light, Kacie B., Lindzi and Nikki gain a very strong grip, staying until the end of the show. These three contestants are the image of "perfect love", containing friendship, romance, flirtiness, familiarity, simplicity and companionship. The attempts to evoke these qualities are

visible through Kacie B.'s kind and friendly conversations with Ben Flajnik. This contestant is the perfect illustration of the American concept of "girl next door"; what is put forward through this contestant are patriotism, attachment to the family and good conduct, all of which are praised in the American society. On the other side, some of the contestants choose to concentrate on their body in order to progress in the show. Their clothes seem to be a bit more revealing in comparison with other contestants, along with their conduct which suggests sexual interaction more openly. Blakeley, Elyse, and Jamie for example can thus be seen through a prism of sensuality which assumes an important place in *The Bachelor*. Blakely gives the impression of a sexually mature and experienced woman, who is ready to go for what she wants; Elyse uses mostly her physical features to attract the bachelor's attention, and Jamie, realizing that she is losing the game, resorts to open sexual seduction, ending unsuccessfully and in the bachelor's confusion. Courtney is one of these contestants too, but she seems to use the "body strategy" more wisely: She gets closer to Ben Flajnik aggressively but smoothly at the same time; her accent on the body and sexuality are supported by her availability to the bachelor and her strenuous efforts to create an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality during their one-one-one encounters. This contestant stands out thanks to her ability to use practically the circumstances created by the show: she turns her hostility towards other contestants into vulnerability and a claim of being misunderstood by the group, and her obviously strong competitive motives are virtuously turned into exclusive interest in the bachelor. She creates an image that is difficult to beat: thus it is a combination of femininity, boldness and intimacy.

As we have previously seen, some of the contestants try to be kind and sensitive while others aim to expose their lives in scandalous ways. Exhibitionism in marriage shows seems to be the easiest way of obtaining meaning and value. Every act of exhibitionism can be seen as an act of creating, making, reproducing of the self. The main idea leading participants to gain attention and be the show itself is reflected in Guy Debord's synthesis: "The spectacle manifests itself as an enormous positivity, out of reach and beyond dispute. All it says is: Everything that appears is

good; whatever is good will appear" (Debord, 1994. p. 14). People become productive exhibitionists trying their best, giving themselves in order to avoid being disqualified. The construction of these "reality identities" is visible in the first episode of the 16th season that is the object of our observation: the presenter announces the video in which all the contestants introduce themselves to the audience and to Ben, the bachelor. The first contestant mentions her ex-boyfriend and the nature of their break-up. The second contestant, Amber T., evokes her lifestyle in Nebraska. Another contestant, Courtney, says that she has been a model for 10 years and she knows competition very well. The fifth lady, Jamie, highlights her occupation as nurse and shares somewhat unpleasant information about her childhood and adolescence briefly. She explains having had difficult life because of the death of her father, after which she had to take care of her siblings. While speaking, this contestant bursts into tears. Jamie also highlights the fact that she wants to be honest to Ben (Photo 3). The participants all provide different insights into their privacy, creating fertile grounds for what the audience will receive as satisfaction, entertainment, relevance, and convenience which relate to everyday life. Viewers identify with virtues like caring, usefulness, honesty and sensitivity.

If we have a closer look at one of the participants' introductory video, we will immediately be able to assess at what extent some of the participants are willing to share important and private information about themselves and their families (Photo 4).

Shawn: "I am Shawn, I am 28 years old and I am from Phoenix, Arizona. I am working in finance and my career is really important to me, but it is not the most important thing because I do have the man of my life. He is my son. Everything I do, at the end of the day is for him. [*at this point we see Shawn and her son in the bed reading a fairy tale.*] So, finding someone to spend my life with is the missing piece. It is really important for my son too. I and my son are at this stage ready for it. I will be really blessed if this works out."

Photo 3: Personal/Private Information Revealing on *The Bachelor*

Photo 4: Shawn, one of the participants in *The Bachelor*

In the introductory videos we can see their hometown, age, name, and occupation on the screen. Some of them talk about their hobbies, the food they like, their parents, and their familial problems and issues. However the women who have participated in the show generally do not mention their financial or educational status. Throughout the season they talk about their previous relationships but their religious or political beliefs generally remain unrevealed.

The cult of personality and individual identity is crucial in *The Bachelor,* where all the contestants seem to have a role to play, in such a way that it becomes impossible not to recognize evoked stereotypes. In these terms, as the show progresses we come across a girl next door, an intellectual, a villain, a mother, a shy girl, an audacious girl, a lady, etc. What we get is a clear metaphor of the society and its members trying to prevail in their relationship with what Fiske (1989) calls dominant groups. Private details from the contestants' lives are disclosed in order to prove that they are worthy of the love and attention of the bachelor (and the audience!) and discard or punish anyone who tries to disrupt its balance. The participants are more like characters (Hedges, 2011), given the pre-established circumstances of reality shows. Identities are constructed through more or less same reality show setting, but tested and reinvented through different circumstances within the setting: the characters are expected to act in a certain way on a romantic date, in a group conversation, in a conflict with other contestants, in order to prove that they are worthy of love they are about to find. Relationships between contestants are crucial in our understanding of the characters and represent the second of two main guidelines of the show. Rivalry is put in the center of the viewers' attention, especially through the previously mentioned conflict between contestants: on one side there is Courtney, the show's villain, and on the other, Emily, promoting knowledge and fair play, but their common goal is love and all the blessings it brings. Fighting for love with all possible means thus becomes legitimate and acclaimed by the audience, thus marital bliss that comes as price shouldn't be taken for granted, but understood as risky, bumpy, exhausting and challenging quest that only the strong can accomplish. On the other hand, we have to

admit that the "love" of the bachelor can be identified or even mistaken for the "love" of the audience, the one that brings fame, status and above all recognition. No matter the cost, fame is today object of everybody's desire, thus it equals power, which, as previously suggested, provides this precious feeling of freedom, liberation, at least to some extent, of the strings and limitations imposed by the authority of the society. In this light, Courtney Robinson is trying to do everything to stick out; it seems the bachelor is only the means and not the final goal. "Love" in this show equals success, a value worshiped in the late capitalist society. It is success or different methods utilized on the way to it that measure and appoint different roles. This distribution of roles allows the audience to choose sides and identify themselves with the characters through their own social roles, inciting interest and increasing the show's ratings. In this way, the show reaches its balance and fulfills expectations of not only different social groups, but also of different personalities existing in the potential audience. According to Richard Dyer (2010), "the effectiveness of stereotypes resides in the way they invoke a consensus." As much as the reality television promotes shocking disclosures of what exists behind the closed door of every household, it also pursues a consensus, a general agreement. (p. 209)

As the show heads toward the end, the stakes are getting higher and individual confessions in front of the cameras are getting more focused on the bachelor and the possibility of marriage. The three remaining contestants claim to be "ready" and "in love." They also express their feelings openly in front of the bachelor, ensuring him of their genuineness. Episode 9 is very significant on many levels, not only because the contestants' "I'm falling in love" becomes "I'm in love", but also because there is a strong evocation of sexual intercourse organized and implemented by the producers. The final destination for the bachelor and the contestants is Switzerland. The viewer can see incredible scenery accompanied by the soft sounds of romantic melodies. The final dates are about to take place and the bachelor himself seems to be preoccupied, pondering on whether he might pick "the wrong person". Describing his own experience in the show he explains: "I've really experienced every emotion in the book. Love,

anger, sadness, but I keep thinking about why I'm here and in the end go and find one person that I want to spend the rest of my life with. There's things I need to find out about these women, you know, 'cause I'm starting to fall in love with all three of them…"(Fleiss, 2002) Later in this episode (season 16, episode 9) we witness three romantic dates, with Nikki, Lindzi and Courtney, at which the producers take us a step further into the contestants' intimate life. The bachelor and the contestants enjoy a one-on-one adventurous date, before proceeding to a hot tub in a very intimate setting. After dinner, during which the contestants openly declare their love for the bachelor, the couples are given a key to a "fantasy suite" where they will be able to spend the night "as a couple". After finding out she is about to spend a night in the "fantasy suite" with the bachelor, Nicki explains: "The fantasy suite… it's not something I take lightly, and this is a big deal, I'm in love with this guy, and at this point, we are very close to the future."After dinner with Lindzi, the bachelor comments: "I was a little worried that Lindzi wasn't in a place, you know, to fully open up to me, but I feel like tonight I'm not really worried anymore. We are really moving forward now. I could be with this woman for the rest of my life." The couple discussed Lindzi's difficulty to "open up" and let herself be "vulnerable". (Fleiss, 2002) The audience is even given a peek into the suite. Suddenly Lindzi is not wearing her evening dress anymore. We see her dressed in nothing but a male shirt, petting and kissing with the bachelor on the bed. This image contains indisputable sexual innuendo and leaves no doubt about the producers' intention. The bachelor then adds: "Lindzi is taking risks. She is vulnerable, this is the most vulnerable I've ever seen her, and I'm thinking, I love Lindzie, she is everything that I could want in a relationship. She makes me happy. And I see myself with her for the rest of my life, I do." (Fleiss, 2002) The bachelor then closes the door of the suite leaving the audience to their own conclusions. Is this "vulnerability" directly referring to one of the most intimate spheres of a person's life, its ability and willingness to procreate, or, if we put it differently, ability and willingness to enjoy recreational sex? The invitation to the "fantasy suite" came about in the very critical moment of the show, where "tough decisions" are made and the bachelor's choice is

rapidly narrowed. It resembles a test of the contestants' sexual aptitudes, set as one of the major criteria in the show. Sexual activity can thus be seen as one of the primary conditions to a successful marriage, even if we are talking about a TV marriage. The three contestants seem to symbolize different aspects of marriage, for the contestants are described differently by the bachelor himself; he defines Nikki as "nurturing", Courtney as "strong and independent" and Lindzi as "vulnerable". All these qualities put together seem to create a "perfect woman" that the bachelor is so impatient to find. Isn't his need for a mother, a friend and a lover put together through these three women? We could even recognize three different roles played by women in a man's life that Foucault mentions as a tripartition "that implies exclusive functions: sexual pleasure on one side, everyday life on the other, and for the wife nothing more than the maintenance of the line of descent" (Foucault, 1992, p. 149). Indeed, we could say that in the last three contestants reflect the emotional, the practical and the sexual.

In *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* viewers get all the information about the bachelor's or bachelorette's ages, occupations, salary, real estate information, city of residence, number of children, their marital status (divorced, never married, married twice etc.) via on-screen graphics. Through their discussions and question and answer sessions, the viewers also learn about their prior relationships. By providing this personal information, the program helps viewers see these couples as real people with real jobs and real problems as they plan on being a couple. The four captures in Photo 5 are from various episodes of the show. In the first one, we see a 28-year-old participant, Nazli, working as a manager of a beauty parlor. Information on her status is given in the "summary". The phrase "she owns a car" actually means that she is wealthy enough to get herself a car. Her background and details from her private life are also announced on the screens with the phrase, "she was married once and she has got a child". In the adjacent square, we can see Mr. Dogukan's personal information. He is a 28-year-old business owner in the restaurant sector, has graduated from college, has a car and a house and lives in Adana. Nearly the same information is given about the contestant named Hasan, shown in the same picture. His economic and working conditions as

well as his background are displayed in his summary: Mr. Hasan is 30 years old, he is a businessman doing trade, owns two apartment buildings, earns 5000 Turkish Liras each month, and has never got married. Ms. Yasemin is 25 years old, has a car and a shop and is divorced with a child. Her headscarf is a symbol of her religious belief.

Photo 5: Personal/Private Information Revealing at *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*
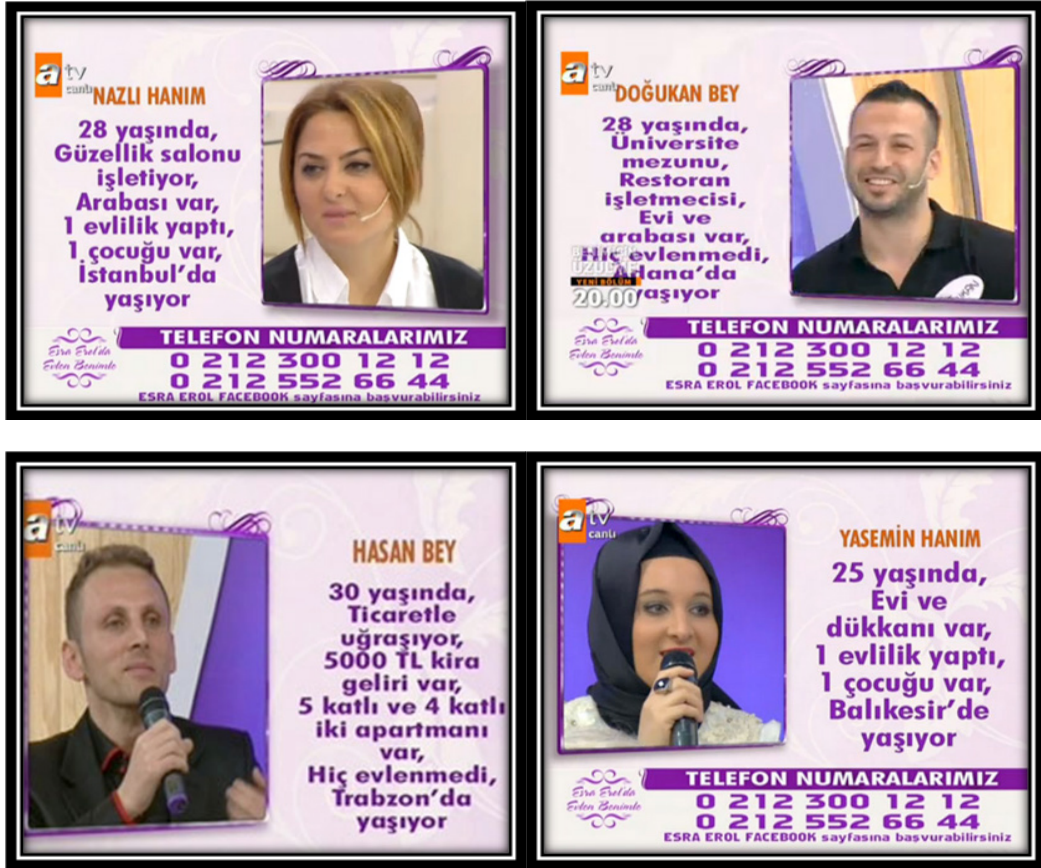
These examples prove to what extent the participants reveal their private and personal information in front of the cameras in *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle.* In this program financial status including real estate, occupation, educational attainment, hometown info, marriage/relationship history, and familial issues are shared with the audience. If we have a closer look at a conversation between a relatively elderly couple – Osman and Fatma – in the season finale of the show, it will give us a better

understanding about how much couples share their private information with the audience. In this case Osman is the bachelor who has been looking for a mate in the program for a long time, and Fatma comes to meet him. In her conversation with Osman, she shares information concerning her daily activities, children, problems with her ex-husband, her financial and economic status, and also her religious beliefs. This directly proves that marriage is still perceived as an arrangement in Turkey; personal traits seem to be pushed into the background, while appearances and facts are the priority. The individual is often measured through his/her accomplishment in terms of marriage and wealth. Being in a marital union, having more than two children, and being able to provide for them is a new status symbol, not only in Turkey but lately in some Western societies as well.

Osman: Welcome Ms. Fatma

Fatma: Thank you.

Osman: I know you are very nervous. If you want I can ask you questions. I was really anxious on the first day too. Ms. Fatma, you wake up in the morning, and what do you do? Can you tell me something about your activities during the day?

Fatma: I wake up early in the morning for the morning prayer. I wear my sporting clothes and go running. I use the exercise tools both in my house and in the park. I come home, I do my daily housework and have breakfast. I am done with financial and personal problems; I have two children who are married and made their own careers. They got married, own houses and cars. I am now alone in my house. Being lonely is hard, that is why I am here.

Osman: Why did you choose me?

Fatma: You are a very friendly and happy person. I believe that you have the capacity to honor your wife. Since my children's father did not honor me or respect me, I have never experienced anything like it. Long story short, this is it. I am retired and own

a house. I hope we can be together without hurting each other. I want to go on the pilgrimage to Mecca, would you like to come with me? I could not do it on my own.

Esra Erol: Mr. Osman would you like to know Ms. Fatma better?

Osman: Of course. I would love to. I will take her to dinner.

Esra Erol: [Smiling and applauding] Awesome... They will get to know each other better.

In contrast with *The Bachelor*, as we can see from this episode, *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* doesn't focus on romantic feelings. Marriage issues are handled and negotiated in a way that leaves no place for much drama and passionate twists. The female participant here offers some kind of agreement to her suitor, who she finds pleasant enough to be her husband. It seems that the notion of partnership is more put forward than other aspects of a relationship. The suitor would pay her due respect without hurting her feelings, and, in return, she can guarantee a stable economic situation of the household. The world socio-economic conditions have been changing rapidly in the past two decades, leading to numerous diplomatic conflicts, economic crisis and revolutions worldwide. Nowadays, it is difficult to maintain wealth, let alone acquiring it. Are the modern societies turning back towards history and choosing marriages that can offer stability and security more than love? Is the innate urge to belong finally prevailing even if the modern society teaches us different perspectives on love and marriage?

Photo 6: The conversation of Fatma and Osman

By contrast, in the 16ᵗʰ season of *The Bachelor*, the question of money is never raised, not even once. The producers' intention to create a show fully dedicated to "love" might be the reason. The bachelor is verbally insisting on "someone he could spend the rest of his life with", meaning a person choosing him for "all the right reasons". His financial position, as one of these reasons is only indirectly evoked, never explicitly stated; his property, income and rather luxurious lifestyle are visually displayed and implied, carved into a series of his "values" making him the most wanted (and the only available) man on the show. The narrative of this show has possibly chosen to be more subtle in terms of unfairly representing women as "gold diggers". Let's take other marriage reality shows for example: Joe Millionaire, aired in 2003, where female participants were duped by being dragged into the show and said that they would be competing for affection of a man who had inherited 50 million dollars, but who is in reality a construction worker with annual salary of 19,000 dollars. Jennifer L. Pozner, in her book entitled *Reality Bites Back. The Troubling Truth about Guilty Pleasure*

TV, digs deeper into the hidden intentions of Reality TV shows explaining that the show "didn't hide its contempt for female cast members" (Pozner, 2010, p. 127). The American society has one more time confirmed its fascination for the financial wealth/ success, and the cult of the rich, opening a way to "mockery of the poor". (Pozner) In a hyper-capitalist society such as the USA, it even implies that individuals "deserving" to take part in any of the shows on TV belong to at least upper middle-class category of population; however, most of the reality show stars that fascinate the audience are the ones whose properties' value exceeds dozens of millions of dollars. Money has become the ultimate value, the *sine qua non* of the modern era. The rich have their own shows, gaining rocketing ratings just because they are rich, and consequently becoming even richer. Envy and malice have taken different forms and opened way to new kinds of worship. The rich are now the ones with power, never mind their religion or ethnicity. Talking about money issues on television might be viewed as degrading, given that wealth is concerned to be a part of one's personal success; it should imply that one is able to afford an IPhone or a car or other possessions as signs of personal achievement. Members of financially inferior population groups are just less interesting and believed to have nothing to offer. One of the contestants of the 5th season of *The Bachelor* seems to have shocked with a message written on the T-shirt she was wearing on the show that read: "Gold digger: Like a hooker…just smarter" (Pozner, 2010). Besides this "incident", *The Bachelor* seems to avoid any direct implication of personal interest, concentrating strictly on "love."

According to the content and discourse analysis of snapshots of the two marriage programs, the researcher evaluates the degree of the private/personal information exposure (Table 6). According to this analysis participants of the *Esra Erol`da Evlen Benimle* seem to reveal more private/personal information about themselves, the weighted mean being 3.5. The participants of *The Bachelor* on the other hand seem to reveal less private/personal information about their financial status (i.e. real estate ownership), religious and political beliefs. The weighted mean for *The Bachelor* is 2 out of 4.

Table 6: Weighted Means for Research Question I

Criteria	The Bachelor	Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle
Participant's financial status	X	
Occupation		
Educational Attainment	X	
Religious beliefs	X	
Political beliefs	X	X
Hometown		
Marriage/Relationship history		
Familial issues		
Weighted Mean	2	3.5

People both in Turkey and the USA, like to watch melodramas. The idea of somebody else with similar problems or issues gives courage to people constituting the audience to interfere in lives existing on the screen. These kinds of shows are also typically watched by couples since it gives them a chance to articulate and understand their own relationship. However, sometimes it is only curiosity that makes the audience watch this so-called real drama. Thus it is not surprising that people especially on a reality TV marriage show like to talk about their family related problems or previous relationships. This private information always gets the attention of the audience and besides, the producers always encourage participants to share their melodramatic real life stories. It allows the audience to identify with the characters on many different levels. In this way, the audience members' potential feeling of isolation and loneliness is diminished, they find a branch to hold on to through a character that is eventually accepted and approved by the show and the audience. The spectators' "dirty laundry" becomes justifiable or even obligatory. They get to purify themselves on repeated occasions through the characters' mistakes. They finally get the opportunity to look better in their own eyes in the midst of a merciless, judgmental society. This

observation is valid for both cultures. The bachelor himself is convinced that all the feelings he witnesses among contestants are genuine and real. He claims to have a certain "connection" with some of the contestants. Their communication is exercised with ease and flowing without barriers. What about the communication between the show and the audience? According to Eco, the world of mass communication is full of divergent interpretations. The reception of the show is different according to countries. The show cannot be received in the same way in the U.S. and in China; the decoded message varies from country to country, from culture to culture. The traditions, habits, cultural values and ethics of every society play a huge role in these terms. The reception can be individual as well, and it varies from person to person, in such a way that one unique message is dispersed in millions of different messages and perspectives. "For a Milanese bank clerk a TV ad for a refrigerator represents a stimulus to buy, but for an unemployed peasant in Calabria the same image means the confirmation of a world of prosperity that doesn't belong to him and that he must conquer. This is why I believe TV advertising in depressed countries functions as a revolutionary message", affirms Eco. (1990, p. 141) In the same light, is it an objective observation if we say that reality show *The Bachelor* is shocking on many different levels? What we can objectively see is a group of perfectly capable and for the most part educated female individuals using all possible means to get what they want. And in this case what they want is a man, at least for the audience. In the first episode, the opponents are chatting to each other being mostly kind and keeping up with civilized standards for most of the societies. However, as the show progresses, they gradually start using profanities, in front of each other, and during the individual confessions in front of the cameras. On the other hand, the same profanities are never used in front of the bachelor. This two-sided dimension of the show is something that should occupy our attention for a while. On one side exists a beautiful setting of many different locations of *The Bachelor*, a luxurious lifestyle, abundance in food and alcoholic drinks, the taste of adventure, romantic conversations and French kisses, burning candles and champagne. On the other side we witness human conflict, insecurities, envy, spite, tears and the ruthless

elimination of contestants, sometimes discarded without being given a chance. In some countries the luxury in the show would be seen as a potential provocation, in others, the provocation would be placed in women's audacious behavior, or in the collective atmosphere in the show impregnated with strong sexual energy. Lack of privacy, unlimited and unconditioned physical contacts, disclosed sexuality of the contestants, conflicts and disrupted trust, all of them equally shocking on a personal level. Yes, many would find it shocking but it seems like the reality show industry is quite a way to build up a fortune. The combination of risk, courage, emotion, sexuality, conflict and luxury seem to be a perfect match reflecting different sides of a human life. It is a big experiment on human happiness and misery supported by pleasures and materialistic mechanisms; as Eco explains, in his analysis of the cult movie *Casablanca*: "it became a cult movie because it is not *one* movie. It is 'movies.'" (p. 208) This multilayered nature of the show attracts unquestionable attention of the audience, who, from their cozy sofas enjoy the scenery surrounding the human conflict and suffering. Controversy sells and becomes a cult. This, again is common for the way the contestants made the private into the public and for viewers what was private or repressed in each member of the couple was brought out into the couple's own "public" arena, their shared consciousness of each other and their relationship, in a miniaturization of the show's making public of what is normally private.(Fiske, 1989. p.63)

Definitions of the romantic relationship established by the two shows are widely different. *The Bachelor* focuses on the personalities of the couple and their ability to communicate. Therefore, the expressions commonly used are "We have a connection" or "It's so easy to talk to each other", or "We're having a great time". However, other aspects of a relationship are demonstrated in the show; the idea of importance of family as the backbone of society is put forward: The show brings up new characters in episode 8: the bachelor is about to meet 4 contestants' families and attend 4 "hometown dates". The four contestants left are Kacie B, Nikki, Lindzi and Courtney. Respectively, the bachelor visits Clarksville, Tennessee, Fort Worth, Texas,

Ocala, Florida and Scottsdale, Arizona in order to meet their parents. The notion of family is the main focus of this episode which represents a milestone in the bachelor's relationship with the contestants. The viewer is suddenly drawn into a strong patriarchal context, and the contestants are seen in a different way: this time, they are on their own ground, surrounded by the members of their families. The producers integrated the most personal and private part of their lives into the show, which gives it a more genuine touch. In every one of the four hometowns we can see a warm, welcoming home, two living parents acting in a protective way. The four contestants' family homes are the representation of wealth, prosperity, healthy relationships and balance. The parents are represented as protective and supportive, wanting only what's best for their children. There is no place for dysfunctional, unhappy or poor families in *The Bachelor*, considering that the image of the American society has always been constructed through the institution of family. A number of American cult sitcoms are based on a happy family life.[3] In poor countries or some countries of the third world, or countries with a broken political system, the American culture is seen through the prism of its nuclear family: it's a safe place located in a beautiful, comfortable suburban house where everybody respects each other's wishes and decisions. It is a reflection of the democratic society itself, a vision of what the American society should be at its best. In that context, episode 8 offers us an insight into the privacy of the contestants' warm and welcoming homes. The links between the notions of family of orientation and family of procreation (Parkin, 1997) are strongly evoked: the bachelor is invited to meet the final four contestants' parents, learns about their childhoods and get an idea of the way they were brought up. What we see during the bachelor's visits is always a dominant figure – a father, taking the floor, making a toast, making a final decision, being protective and strict. Mothers are there as well but it seems like the paternal image is much stronger. In this episode, the contestants, previously shown in a situation where they can, more or less, decide on their own

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3 Note: The Cosby Show (1984), Married with Children (1987), Thge Simpsons (1989), The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air (1990), Everybody loves Raymond (1996), Family Guy (1999), How I met your mother (2005), Modern Family (2009), Hot in Cleveland (2010) etc.

actions, meet restrictions and slaps on the wrist. As we previously mentioned, the show imposes certain boundaries: the contestants, white Anglo-Saxon adult women who have to fulfill certain expectations, are free to choose their outfits, attitudes and language. They had the freedom to apply for the show, to start with, but now they are put in the context of family, their position is somehow stabilized and they have to respect the family's balance and well-being. The setting is pretty similar during all four visits: after a relaxing activity, the bachelor and one of the contestants are invited to the family home, where the family gathers at the dining table for lunch or dinner. The relationship between the bachelor and the contestant is discussed openly among the members of the family, and many questions are asked. However, it seems that none of the families are actually shocked by their daughter's decision to participate in the show. Their members look like good sports respecting fair play and giving their best to fit the standards of the show. These families let the television crew get into their homes and assist private discussions and moments that the family shares at the table. Although it is obvious that this insight is restricted and controlled, we can't help but feeling like we got to know the contestants better. Their families of orientation become a big part of their TV identity; they provide understanding of their behaviors, they "humanize" them and justify the "reality" part of this reality show. The contestants are closer to the audience than ever, making this huge step forward. One of the final four contestants, Kacie B, was eliminated during the rose ceremony right after the hometown date. The contestant's father was the only one of all four fathers to openly express his disapproval of the TV marriage. The mother of the contestant had an open conversation with the bachelor criticizing the idea of the couple living together before marriage. The contestant was trying to convince her family of the authenticity of her feelings; in a heart-to heart conversation with her sister, Kacie B. claims to actually be in love with the bachelor explaining that she really wants this marriage. The visit didn't seem to go very smoothly, and the tension was almost palpable. The bachelor looked disappointed and left this family home in a rush. This scenario including disapproval and rejection is much more authentic than the three others; it introduces real family

problems into the romantic setting of *The Bachelor.*

The common point of the two shows is the influence of the family on a romantic relationship. The institution of family is the ultimate point of reference in the Turkish society, thus it is not surprising that people in Turkey share information on real estate and car ownership, or on their household or even religious practices, given that for Turkish people having a house and a car is an important status symbol and culturally has lots of meanings. When sharing this information, members of Turkish society feel rather proud to reveal their socio-economic class. The economic realities of marriage are not hidden, not taboo. They form a part of the bargain. As opposed to individualistic American culture, Turkish culture is more collectivist and conservative, and it seems more normal to share certain information on family and ownership. It's a culture where neighbors can have equal status as members of family. Knowing more about each other gives people certain comfort and sense of stability in the community.

The first research question of this study is to understand to what extent the participants in *The Bachelor* or in *Esra Erol`da Evlen Benimle* reveal – either verbally or through their behavior – their personal and private information. The qualitative analysis of the first question demonstrates that Turkish participants are more open to talk about their private/personal information (3.5 out of 4) when compared to American participants (2 out of 4).

6.2. PORTRAYING INTIMACY

This section focuses on private setting actions and behavior that would typically be expressed in intimate or private settings. The research question related to this analysis is to understand to what extent these marriage shows enable viewers to witness the intimate interactions between couples that would otherwise be inaccessible

to the audience or the viewers. The categories in this section were based on the assumption that programs that make private behavior more accessible will be more likely to appeal to the voyeuristic tendencies of television viewers. According to this prediction, this study assumes that the relationship between voyeurism, privacy and exposure to marriage shows would change the privacy perceptions of the members of the society who watch these shows. This section consists of 4 categories: first date, expression of emotions towards each other, intimate behavior (i.e. touching, kissing), and exhibitionism. All categories in this section are given a value of '1' and at the final score is calculated out of 4.

Since becoming a staple of prime time television programming, reality TV marriage programs have often been linked with the rise of voyeurism in contemporary societies. Also related has been the argument that the increased popularity of these programs coincides with a decrease in individuals' expectations of privacy. The purpose of this study was to investigate these two related claims and understand how consumption of marriage programs is related to individuals' voyeuristic tendencies on the one hand and attitudes about privacy on the other.

The audience is generally not allowed to witness the first or following dates of couples in *Esra Erol`da Evlen Benimle.* The participants usually meet for the first time behind the scenes in a place called the teahouse. Sometimes they sit in the studio on a couch which is called the "live room". However, the audience is not able to hear what they are saying but are able to see their behavior and facial expressions. The "live room" is not used very often. Esra Erol's program has a set of guidelines for monitoring and chaperoning the participants' dating process. Due to the conservative nature of Turkish society and the approach of Esra Erol, it is absolutely impossible to see couples have a french kiss. They can hold each other's hands, hug, and kiss on the cheek but the format of the program would never allow intimate touching or compliments during the show. *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* thus respects the social codes according to which open sexual behavior is mostly viewed as an infringement.

This part is by unspoken laws left behind closed doors, as something sacred and reserved for the practices of the marital life. As much as the marriage is a matter of family and an image of good conduct and wealth shared with the society in Turkey, the courtship, flirting or sexual habits practiced by the couple are often hidden behind a curtain of convenience and good taste. Sex is still a taboo topic in Turkish society, mostly due to different practices belonging to the culture of Islam. Phenomena like promiscuity, which is openly put forward in *The Bachelor*, are viewed very harshly and would never fit a Turkish marriage show. Sex or cohabitation before marriage would in that sense face the strong disapproval of the community.

Therefore, it is important to stress completely different allowable levels of intimacy in the two shows, and respectively in their countries of production: in *The Bachelor*, "private information" such as religious beliefs or annual income of the contestants are left aside as irrelevant, (or too "personal") while their emotional intimacy seems to be completely exposed, promoting the idea that there is nothing wrong in expressing feelings, or being open and genuine. Moments of intimacy showing physical interactions are also displayed as something that makes part, not only of the show, but of the American society as well, where sex is not taboo as much as in Turkey. In the 16th season of *The Bachelor,* the audience is able to witness the dates of the bachelor with the participants. They sometimes go on special vacations and the cameras are always *on the* air to show their most intimate moments (Photo 7).

Photo 7: Dates with *The Bachelor*[4]

On repeated occasions we see the contestants allowing the bachelor to physically interact with them. We witness a series of French kisses, hugs and petting. Their enthusiasm and their willingness to interact seem to be very strong at the beginning, but gradually start to fade while the show is progressing. Throughout the 2nd and 3rd episodes of the 16th season, the contestants started feeling resigned and hopeless. Thus as human beings we all tend to feel unique and irreplaceable, our wishes count and make us who we are as individuals. Soon enough we witness an outbreak of tears and regret. The cheerful atmosphere that was omnipresent in the very first episode soon begins to drop and the contestants start being emotionally affected. The fear of rejection and a constant threat to be discarded and disgraced in a big, ruthless arena are becoming the main referent point of the show, an entity before which everyone trembles and in front of which all the masks drop. Is this violation of intimacy itself what leads to the inevitable drama in *The Bachelor*? It seems to be the generator of all conflicts and scenarios build upon them. Proliferations of profanities suddenly replace elegant and sophisticated appearances. The contestants start calling each other names and gossiping behind each other's backs. Insecurities take over most of the contestants, trying desperately to find their way to the bachelor. The stakes are very high: the contestants' pride and integrity, as a part of their intimacy, are endangered and suppressed. The villa and the dreamy Cinderella settings soon startgoing up to

4 Note: http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/bachelor-recap-belize-ben-courtney-290240

smoke. "Real" emotions and uncontrolled reactions start rising up to surface.

But to what extent are these emotions actually real? It is probably better to limit their intensity to the "simulation of real", thus actions and reactions of the participants are maintained in artificially created conditions, resembling a scientific experiment. Every reaction is surveilled and measured, sometimes even punished. There is freedom, but there are also boundaries. It is like a probe in which real becomes more dramatic, more intense; otherwise it would be boring. The audience watches reality shows in order to escape reality, not to plunge in another one. There is something tempting in this "parallel" reality, because everything seems possible. It is an absolute surplus, some kind of mental prosperity; as if fairy tales and old fashioned representations are not enough anymore, enough to stimulate and to entertain. According to Eco, there is a need to create "more real", present in America: "To speak of things that one wants to connote as real, these things must seem real. The 'completely real' becomes identified with the 'completely fake'. Absolute unreality is offered as real presence" (Eco, 1990, p. 7). Eco here refers to a whole new world, a world of rebuilding and replacement that has taken over our old, real world. Is it just another attempt to make things last, present throughout human history? As if in the universe of capitalism, goods and services are already disposable and perishable, in such a way that we are trying to save our reality, or at least what is left of it? Has seeing something real become a luxury? In the era of technology and capitalism, whole lives and identities are constructed through chats, photographs, statuses and tweets, representations some of which have very little to do with reality. People's emotional attachments are becoming dangerous tests on whether they can keep up with the new standards and demands of the fast moving society. Emotions are repressed; insecurities and doubts buried deep inside, where no one can reach them and compromise our image of the unbreakable and fearless. And then comes the reality show: a window to where we once were, with all the drama, emotional effusions, romantic correspondences that seem to die out before our eyes. On the other hand we can take into consideration the reality according to Debord, according to who a representation *is* reality, because it reflects the truth about

the human society. In this light, spectacle would be just an insight into what reality contains, expressed in different shapes and images: "The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images" (Debord, 1994, para. 4).

The Bachelor is shot in a house/mansion, and every moment of its participants is recorded on camera. In *The Bachelor*, the enjoyable part of the series seems to have always resulted from the sexual tensions in the houses where the program is shot. The question is if the boundaries are going to be pushed to the limits of acceptability in television or whether any of the participants would in some way be caught on camera in sexual activity. One of the interesting elements of the show is the way in which the boundaries of what defines sexual activity become interrogated. The conventional version of acceptable sex – in the private bedroom with the lights off – is of course unavailable to the housemates who sleep in dormitories under infra-red cameras at night; under the eye of the camera, every kind of activity becomes reinterpretable as sexual by pushing the privacy norms of the American culture. In this way, the audience can satisfy their voyeuristic pleasures by seeing different forms and levels of intimacy (Photo 8). *The Bachelor* offers the audience an indirect insight into the contestants' intimate habits and attitudes, while in the Turkish marriage show it is impossible to have the slightest allusion to it. In Esra Erol's show, the risk of drama is therefore much lower; stormy emotional reactions are mostly left aside. Drama in Esra Erol's show is mostly limited to misunderstandings between the contestants or their family problems displayed in the studio in front of the cameras. The excitement is solely brought by the fact that the show is not edited but aired in a live broadcast; thus shocking or dramatic situations occur when the participants use inappropriate language or behave in an unpredictable way. Verbal fights between family members or between engaged/ married/divorced participants who met on the show are substitutes for any kind of sex scandals or obscene actions. The lack of sexual interactions prevents the feeling of humiliation and revenge that mostly reign in *The Bachelor*. In this show, the disclosure of intimacy operates on two levels: physical and psychological. In the American culture

the latter seems to provoke more bewilderment among the audience. Revealing one's intimacy equals willingness to participate in the society more actively, to share and to inspire. This aspect is very important in the American society where human life is sometimes identified with the way to success, with all its blessings and difficulties. Many celebrities in the US share their life stories with the audience, becoming a brand, proving that trying hard pays off. In this context, we again encounter the notion of "self", extremely important and strong in the individualistic American society.

Photo 8: Intimate Moments of *The Bachelor*[5]

Reality television formats propose a flexible model of the self in which no stable identity can be found and whose only tenet is that change is always good. (Palmer, 2011, p. 65) For example, as the show progresses, the pretty masks of winners start falling off, showing a narcissistic, greedy, spiteful inside on its way to "success." There is something unquestionably cruel and raw in the show, something that denies fair play and justice, as a reflection of real-life situations present in modern societies, as Fiske

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5 http://www.howaboutwe.com/date-report/the-bachelor-season-16-finale-recap-this-ring-is-heavy/#
http://nahupsi.wordpress.com/2012/01/04/the-bachelor-season-16-episode-2-ben-flajnik-takes-
courtney-on-a-romantic-trip-to-tiffanys-not-reality-a-moonlit-tractor-ride/

beautifully explains describing the American animated series "Rock'n'Wrestling":

> "Natural" justice, enshrined in social law, is inverted; the deserving and the good lose more frequently than they win. It is the evil, the unfair, who triumph in a reversal of most dramatic conflict on television. There is a "grotesque realism" here that contrasts with the idealized "prevailing truth" of the social order: despite the official ideology, the experience of many of the subordinate is that the unfair and the ugly *do* prosper, and the "good" go to the wall. (Fiske, 1989. p.87)

To illustrate, one of the most ferocious contestants, who wins in the end, Courtney Robinson, seems to show her real intentions and reveals an evil side only in front of the cameras during the individual confessions, or in front of the other contestants. On the other hand, in front of the bachelor she appears to be a perfectly balanced, contented and down-to-earth personality that enchants him, while some of the other contestants claim that there is "something a bit off" about her. For example, one of the contestants, Erika explains: "I thought she was maybe a real person at first. She's not. She's just not."; or another contestant, Emily who claims that Courtney has some personality problems and a social disorder, that she should be diagnosed with; she adds: "I absolutely think that Courtney is not good for Ben, I think that he's seeing a very different side to Courtney that the rest of us are seeing and it's bothersome to watch that happen." The participants talk directly to the camera while they confess their feelings and fears. The power of monologue in the show promotes the transformation of television from a mass medium to first-person medium addressing masses of individuals. The viewer feels like a close friend or a confidant getting to know more about their inner universe so candidly exhibited to the outside world, thus the contestants behave as if they were alone or misunderstood by other competitors. These monologues are filmed using close-up shots, mostly expressing emotions and making claims of the authenticity of those emotions. In the end the competitors perform their feelings in front of cameras as taking necessary risks in order to find love and strike a balance between not showing enough emotion and showing too much. Nonetheless they seem to reveal their inner, private, hidden self to prove their values and commitment, using

similar expressions, such as "This is the best thing that has ever happened to me", or "I'm falling for Ben" (Fleiss, 2002). *The Bachelor* as an edited show can be divided into multiparty conversations, dialogues and monologues. The producers chose the most interesting parts and the monologue is the dominant form through which moments of self-disclosure are constructed. *The Bachelor* is full of drama-like prose mentality; single-person speech situations which serve to reveal the inner life, secret thoughts and feelings of the characters. The form of monologues creates a context of diary confessions that reveal the competitors' secrets. The close-up is used to make all facial expressions visible to support and affirm verbal expressions. The contestants are performing "the self", a better, more emotional, and more receptive and dedicated self that sets the standards for the viewers who would eventually go for a romantic relationship. If "the self" is reinvented through history, its eras and their changing values and codes, then there is definitely something we can call the "reality show self", constructed on the notion of modern identity. This new "self" exposed and crucified is a character painstakingly performed for the judgmental eye of the audience. It is hyper sensitive or hyper strong or hyper cunning, so that the character it reflects becomes the quality itself. Real people in unreal situations such as a specially-constructed house or event offer a context where extreme emotions may be considered as normal and where emotional realism may be achieved even in the midst of the overly crowded production crew. The bachelor himself has the chance to talk in front of the cameras, and in the 4th episode he declares: "Emotions have steadily increased as the weeks have gone by and that goes to show there are real feelings on the line here" (Fleiss, 2002). Again, "real" given the constructed circumstances among which they arise. The participants compete for surveillance and confession and try to be an enterprising project to be invested in. The self-representation across television has meant that the self turns itself into a project which requires specific methods of narration and biography. A surplus of pleasures and abundance in *The Bachelor* can easily trick the viewer and camouflage the rawness of its nature. Trickery, as one of the most important assets of the popular culture is omnipresent. (De Certeau) Not only towards the audience; it is a weapon

used among the competitors. Breaking the rules is one of the most secure ways to get to the top. This game does not recognize ethics and fair play. The winner of *The Bachelor*, Courtney, at the same time the villain disrupting the contestants' focus, uses trickery and similar tactics in order to get to the bachelor. In the 5th episode this contestant shows up in front of the bachelor's room, right after he discarded another contestant. He was pleased, even if he stressed it was against the rules. They then go "skinny-dipping" on one of the beautiful beaches of Puerto Rico. In the episode 6, Courtney is strolling around in a bikini, refreshing herself in the pool, with a glass of wine in her hand, while Ben Flajnik is trying to have a private conversation with another contestant at the same spot. This deliberate distraction of the bachelor is only one of many cunning methods this contestant uses in the show. Another commonly used weapon is masks that each of the contestants is carefully wearing, to the point where at times we have the impression of attending a masked ball.

There is, without any doubt, something carnivalesque in the whole setting of *The Bachelor*. The exhibition of bodies, the masks, vulgar pleasures, abundance in food and alcohol and an atmosphere where everything seems allowed with no restrictions and no regrets. At first, we don't actually have a lot of information on contestants' private lives, what we actually see is their avatars, personalities defined through a series of leisure activities and romantic interactions. They can all become a queen or an outcast all in the same night. In that light, there is a certain notion of equality between the contestants, who are all given a chance to win; just like in carnivals, where kings and beggars have the same rights to enjoy life, and "in which rules were inverted, authority mocked and criminals transformed into heroes", according to Foucault. (*Sheridan*) (Foucault, 2005, p.140) But isn't the institution of carnival some sort of a reflection of real life, especially in the meritocratic scheme of the capitalism? In all the chaos of the modern life, one can be a beggar and a king in one night. We can even say that it is the similar transformation to the one announced in the fairy tale of Cinderella, story that changes perspectives on the good and the bad, the rich and the poor. *The Bachelor* as a postmodern version of the story of Cinderella still does not

question stereotypes and instead uses traditional clichés of gender roles and social classes. The fast moving plots of fairy tales and Hollywood romances emphasize the concept of a humiliated and devaluated princess who needs to be rescued by a prince, a man who can provide for her and protect her. If we observe *The Bachelor* through the Marxist perspective, along with the story of Cinderella and its variations, we will easily comprehend the close relation between wealth and happiness. The Grimm brothers' heroine Cinderella is an orphan, a beautiful and educated girl left all alone to fight the unjust world and cope with everyday responsibilities. Her life seems tragic and pointless until the prince walks into the story. A strong, wealthy, determined man, possessing unquestionable jurisdictions takes her away from the nightmare and makes her a princess. The myth which built the expectations of whole generations is far from becoming obsolete; as a matter of fact it is still omnipresent, not only as a part of general culture, but also as a reference in many academic discussions. New York Psychotherapist Colette Dowling specialist in the mental health treatment of women, even wrote about a complex named after this universally known fairytale character; in her book *The Cinderella Complex, Women's hidden fear of independence*, Dowling details behavioral traits of women in desperate need of a savior male:

> In the last 10 or 15 years, a great deal has been learned about the training, motives and experience of women; in addition, psychoanalysts have brought new aspects of women's unconscious conflicts to light.(…)I came to the conclusion that psychological dependence - the conscious or unconscious wish to escape responsibility -was the unidentified element in the conflict many women are experiencing today. It leads to a condition I call the *Cinderella Complex*. (Dowling, 1981)

Producers put the participants behind the gates of a fascinating, lavish mansion to direct their own stories and become the chosen one among others, saved and recognized, just like the character of one of the world's most famous fairy tales. The main focus of the show is based on women's struggle to stay in the mansion symbolizing wealth and happiness. In this mansion there is no space for poor, unattractive, overweight or disabled people; poverty and other unfavorable features are absent from the mansion

just like at the Prince's ball in the castle. The mansion constantly offers balls, parties, dinners, and other flashy scenarios with romantic endings. The contestants' main preoccupation is attracting attention of the Prince (Ben Flajnik) which pushes them to compete against each other fiercely. These new-age fairy tales characters in elegant gowns, wearing impeccable make-up believe that all they really need is love and that they should do whatever it takes, no matter how devious, in order to become heroines of an unflawed romance. The agreeable appearances seem to hide insidious urges and frivolous desires. Just like in the Cinderella story, the evil characters are all female in *The Bachelor*. Sabotage, hatred and jealousy of the contestants reign on the show. All of the contestants are each other's wicked stepsisters, desperate in their attempts to overshadow the beauty and the charm of the other and gain the attention of the Prince, constantly inducing a flirty mood and rendering themselves more visible. The whole process is, without any doubt, gladly approved by the producers.

At the core of the format, participants have to be interesting; they should provide a series of exciting mini-dramas. These actions are supposed to be natural and attractive. Crying and arousing the pity of the audience is the most common performance of the marriage shows, especially in Turkey. People cry because of an illness, the loss of a loved one or some bad incidents they had to deal with in their previous experiences. In Turkey, when the participants burst into tears, members of the audience and even the host/hostess get emotional and sometimes cry. Physical appearance and facial expressions definitely play an important role in appearing honest and genuine. In one of the episodes of the 2013 season of *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*, the participant named Serap intended to meet one of the candidates. And while she was at the stage meeting her prospective husband, Serap's father called the program and told the audience that he had to leave his family due to some problems. He explained to his daughter that he had been trying to reach them without success. As soon as Serap hears her father's voice she bursts into tears and leaves the studio. The host and the audience react emotionally, being witnesses of a real family drama. (Photo 9).

Photo 9: Tears in the Studio, *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*, April 2013[6]

These two programs are also venues for participants to show and share their emotions without hiding their real feelings. In *The Bachelor*, women participants create conflicts and arguments even on the first day of the show. In the episode which has been analyzed in detail for this thesis, two women argue over the bachelor who was the contestant of the season. Awkwardly, this conflict took place on the first night. The contestants were not even familiar with each other yet. At the end of the episode, one of the contestants ends up crying in the restroom while the other one pretends everything is fine with a fake smile on her face. Later that night, during the first "rose ceremony", both of the women were kept on the show in hopes that they would create further conflicts and arguments. Furthermore, the motivation of being watched and admired by other people gives the participants courage for making further moves. After gaining the first attention, they try to be indispensable by exhibiting their bodies, talents or life stories. Some of them become highly aggressive; some of them try to touch the audience's emotions, some of them try to attract the audience with their sense of humor by making exaggerated jokes and trying to make the audience laugh. In this way, they manage to stick out among other participants. The contestants are supposed to show their "different sides" implying that they are deep and complex individuals who can satisfy the bachelor on many different levels. Different narratives and circumstances are constructed in order to give place to a performance, at times

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6 Note: http://www.aktifhaber.com/gelin-adayi-aglayarak-studyoyu-terk-etti-765864h.htm]

symbolizing family, romance and friendship. The contestants' qualities are therefore manipulated and emphasized, reconstructed into what we previously characterized as "hyperrreality". For example, how would the audience know if a contestant is emotional, brave or romantic, without circumstances allowing them to act as such? In episode 3, the bachelor is taking Emily on a date that starts in an adventurous spirit: they are about to climb to the top of the Golden Gate Bridge. Despite her fear of heights, Emily decides to accomplish this task, hand in hand with the bachelor. Not only does this endeavor "test" the contestant; it tests the couple's aptitude to love and their ability to overcome obstacles together. After reaching the top of the bridge, Emily says: "A bridge takes two things that are separate and it brings them together. Here Ben and I are two different people from different places, with different backgrounds and we are coming together on the top of this bridge and it's a wonderful experience." The bachelor than adds: "This was hands down the scariest moment of my life, and it's safe to say it's probably hers too. If we can accomplish something like this, there's nothing that we can't do together" (Fleiss, 2002). This test, symbolizing love as the supreme goal that is not easy to reach and which takes courage and dedication, proved to the bachelor and the viewers that the contestant is worthy and ready for true love. She becomes the heroine ready to face her fears in order to attain the ideal of perfect love. Moreover, the contestants are often put into stressful situations, creating conflicts or even panic. In episode 3, the producers introduce Shawntel Newton, a contestant from one of the previous seasons of *The Bachelor*. Ben Flajnik himself had already participated in one of the editions of *The Bachelorette*, and according to Shawntel, this is when she "had a crush on him", after seeing him on television. They allegedly had a connection that stayed on exchanged private messages on Twitter, because Ben Flajnik "couldn't be seen in public." (Shawntel Newton Explains Why She Crashed The Bachelor, 2012) The "intruder" is inserted to the show just when tensions start to rise, before the third rose ceremony. Anger and resignation take over the contestants, while they are trying to understand her intentions. Ben Flajnik then comments: "It's a huge surprise having Shawntel show up and I need few minutes to kind of collect my thoughts. I trust that

these women can handle themselves. How they react to Shawntel being here I don't know. I hope these women are gracious and welcoming."(Fleiss, 2002) This new and intense amount of stress imposed onto the contestants sets new criteria and allows new values and motives to come up to the surface. It is a new test for the bachelor and the audience; a new miniature arena set in order to see whether the contestants can, and in what ways, overcome the unpleasant effects of a stressful situation. The show creates, in similar ways, different settings allowing the contestants to plunge into different moods and take different attitudes. Throughout the 16th season of *The Bachelor USA*, the viewer is constantly taken from a light, vacation mood to difficult, depressing and dark states of mind. In episode 7, Nicki reveals how she feels about not being invited to a one-on-one date with the bachelor: "Lindzi is pretty damn lucky that she gets Ben for a whole day. I feel… envious (crying), I don't know, it's hard, maybe I'm realizing that it's really real now, and that's really scary"(Fleiss, 2002). This contestant later explains her fears because she doesn't have a clue about what is going on between Ben Flajnik and the other contestants. She looks very upset and admits it in an individual close-up confession. This contestant becomes an unfortunate lover, tragic heroine of an unrequited love. In the case of *The Bachelor*, the most private zone of a human life, the one that comprehends romantic feelings and relationships, is exploited as a zone that most of the insecurities can occur. We all long for love and understanding, for belonging. In that light some of the emotional reactions provoked among the participants are based on the lack of these feelings. They are therefore victims or winners; they succumb to the pressure or take over and get in control directing it to their own benefit. In the absence of knowledge about the individuals', the viewers question the participants' personal characteristics automatically. It seems unreasonable to expect a participant who tries to protect the limits of privacy. The general new trend is stronger emphasis on individual self-fulfillment in personal relationships and living all publicly. Eventually, the participants are never hesitant to reveal themselves during the show. The outcome and main idea should be stated; the more the participants act and exhibit themselves, the more the show gets ratings and interest.

Parties and extravagant outdoor dates are taking place every day. Group dates and gatherings are mostly chaotic: the bachelor strolls from one contestant to another in order to start a conversation and get to know each of them a little better. The one-on-one dates with the bachelor are unmistakably accompanied by vicious comments and envious glances of the uninvited contestants. The one-on-one conversations are mostly about the contestants' personalities, where the contestants tend to describe themselves as "laidback" or "easy-going". However they describe the whole experience in front of the bachelor as "unnerving". They mostly praise the bachelor's personality and claim to feel "amazing" in his company. One of the contestants (episode 3/16) explains: "After the rose I know that this date cannot get better than it already is. I conquered my fear (climbing to the top of the Golden Gate Bridge), and then I had dinner with him and it was perfect, and then we kissed and it was perfect, we drank champagne and it was perfect. I can't imagine anything topping this" (Fleiss, 2002). Exaggerated emotions and hyperbole are commonplace: one of the contestants, who decided to leave the show early, explains that decision was the most difficult decision of her life. Before leaving she had a conversation with Ben explaining her departure: "I got your card about the one on one date and oh my God, it was the best feeling in the entire world, but I feel like I don't even deserve the chance with you". The bachelor commented: "Britney leaving makes this all more real for me. Her departure represents the fact that any of these women can leave whenever they want" (Fleiss, 2002). But can they really? Is the urge to win and dominate stronger than the simple feeling of integrity? Does leaving mean letting their families, the audience and themselves down? Is giving up a sign of weakness for everyone to see on the screen, for that very screen is the window to their personalities and their secrets. Their fears and doubts are displayed in such a way that the audience has little space for guessing. Does quitting equal the departure of the self?

The participants who permit themselves to be watched generally believe that they gain certain benefits, or, perhaps simply because they enjoy being watched for psychological needs and reasons. Being seen, recognized, and valued is a rewarding experience worth sacrificing for. The popularity and acceptability of TV icons is a

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well-known reality. As for expression and feelings, or emotions, the liberation, in contemporary society, from the older anomie of the centered subject may also mean not merely a liberation from anxiety but a liberation from every other kind of feeling as well, since there is no longer a self present to do the feeling.(Jameson, 1991, p.15) Considering the contest between the female contestants in *The Bachelor*, prominence is one of the major issues to manage in order to be the winner. Thus, exhibitionism is the safest way to get attention. Also, these kinds of behaviors are required for the audience's interest in the show. Producers of the show probably encourage the participants to objectify and exhibit their bodies. Another example from one of the surveyed episodes of *The Bachelor*: Courtney bravely takes off her top in front of the cameras during an outdoor activity. All the participants and the man who is looking for his spouse are at a party on an island. All of them are wearing local clothes of the indigenous habitants of the island. The contestants' bodies are more or less exposed while they are dancing and singing songs of the local natives. However, the contestant who manages to win at the end of the show, Courtney, tries her best to be the object of the bachelor's undivided attention, in which she succeeds without any doubt.

Photo 10: Nudity of Courtney, *The Bachelor*, 2013

Such behavior originates from the idea of being herded among the other participants. Each of the contestants is trying to be the most romantic, the most talented or the most sensitive one. Before the growth of reality TV, people hesitated and weren't as confident in showing and promoting their talents. Nobody wanted to be in sight with their emotions so easily. Displays of love and hate, sadness and happiness, fear and courage used to happen behind closed doors. With the emergence of being an object on the TV screen, these closed doors have been opened widely. Nowadays, TV figures try to be on the top of the agenda using scandalous incidents and shameless performances. The populaces are offered new roles and responsibilities by authorities like the police working with reality-television producers to fashion lessons in conduct.(Palmer, 2011, p.65) In *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*, exhibitionism doesn't seem to be included among the major characteristics of the show, in which contestants who are unattractive, old, or suffering from an illness which causes physical defects are allowed to participate. In this way the viewer can also identify with the participants' difficult situations, problems, illness, misery and handicaps. However, it cannot be claimed that objectifying one's body is not an issue for this show. Even if the participants do not have perfect bodies or features, whenever a young and good-looking participant is on the stage, the interpretations and gossip of the audience get much more serious. Physically attractive participants have therefore more chances of becoming stars in Turkish marriage shows as well. Beauty is just one of the many features that get undivided attention of the TV spectator. The aesthetic ideals shown to the audience are not easily attainable and are something that belongs to the elite. These participants' success or failures are more assessed, judged or condemned, because they belong to the happy few. Therefore, their mini personal dramas on TV become much more "important". It is believed that the beauty belongs to the winners and they become little gods of a neighborhood everyday lives; their relationships and marriages become sacred places of the viewers' fantasies and compensation for their own broken dreams. In most modern societies, physical beauty equals or brings merit; going through life is much easier thanks to this blessing. Moreover, the participants and their physical appearances become eroticized

and put on the pedestal by the viewers, thus their fantasies operate through the visual. The factor of reality brings up even more excitement and interest. The beautiful participants belong to real life and are forced to make difficult decisions, just like the rest of the population. The participation of the audience in *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* allows the empowerment previously mentioned in this thesis. This empowerment operates and reconstructs itself through the body of the other, through its sufferings and joys. According to Fiske, "Popular pleasures work through and are experienced or expressed through the body, so control over the meanings and behaviors of the body becomes a prime disciplinary apparatus" (Fiske, 1989. P.81). In *The Bachelor*, the women and men have idealized bodies; they are attractive and do not have any visible physical defects. However, in Turkey, marriage shows are not based on displaying physical characteristics of beautiful women and handsome men. From this point of view, the aims of the two shows are completely different. While in *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* the aim is claimed to be giving a chance to people who are not able to find a partner on their own, in *The Bachelor* the men and women are chosen thanks to their idealized bodies seeking for perfection. In the American society, the body is put forward in the context of romantic relationship. A big part of *The Bachelor* is based on the behavior of the body in highly eroticized situations. The idea of marriage is constructed on notions of romantic, crazy, intense and passionate love. It contains adventure, risk, and adrenaline. A touch of unpredictable is a perfect note that stresses the fatal impact of the "true love" as an unprecedented lifetime experience. Marriage is mostly based on the feeling of mutual love, understanding and moral support. The Turkish marriage show in question shows marriage as a down-to-earth socially based arrangement, deprived of erotic connotations. Considering the difference between the shows, it can be easily said that the objectifying of the human body is much more efficient in the shows broadcast in the USA. Fragmented bodies are another issue experienced in such kind of shows. The cameras are usually adjusted and focused on the participants. Whenever some of them wear low-cut dresses or whenever their body parts are accidentally revealed, cameras do not miss the close-ups. Shortly, in *The*

Bachelor focusing on and zooming in different body "fragments" of participants is as important as showing the whole.

The audience's inability to scrutinize the very private act of participants' dating diminishes voyeuristic pleasure somewhat while giving credibility to the unedited personal accounts they are expected to submit throughout their dating. According to the content and discourse analysis of episodes of the two marriage programs, the researcher evaluates to what degree these marriage shows enable viewers to witness the intimate interactions between couples that would otherwise be inaccessible to the audience or the viewers. As Table 7 shows, for *The Bachelor* the weighted mean is 4, and for *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*, the weighted mean is 1 out of 4.

Table 7: Weighted Means for Research Question II

Criteria	The Bachelor	EsraErol'daEvlenBenimle
Witnessing first date		X
Expression of Emotions		
Witnessing intimate behaviors		X
Exhibitionism		X
Weighted Mean	4	1

This analysis demonstrates that the viewers of *The Bachelor* are more able to satisfy their voyeuristic appeals, since they are able to witness private/intimate moments of the contestants. They are able to see all the dates of the bachelor and the contestants; they are able to witness contestants' emotional confessions, and observe their exhibited bodies. However, the audience of the *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* is not given a chance to witness the dates of the couples, and the format of the program does not allow couples to engage in intimate behavior in front of cameras. Although the participants are able to reveal their emotions related to anything, there is a limit due to the conservative nature of the program. There is a certain resistance to novelty and change perceptible in Turkey, which relies on a very strong influence of tradition.

Many social codes originate from unspoken laws and expectations of the society. The conservative conduct of the show's host and the audience is reflected in different limitations: there is a lack of any physical interaction, and the language of the participants does not tolerate profanities. The participants who have difficulties controlling their behavior or language are mostly warned or even discarded from the show. The 21st century brought an incredible shift in terms of opening to the body and its exhibition in Western cultures, where sex is less and less considered taboo. In Turkey, on the other hand, this type of exhibitionism is still limited to private spaces, which brings to mind some old fashioned ways and behavioral patterns. In these terms, we can say that Esra Erol's show keeps policies based on relatively conservative norms; it is considered as one of the most conservative reality dating shows that has ever appeared on Turkish television – not necessarily because of the ideological positions it takes regarding gender roles and marriage, but because of its format, which restricts the audience's voyeuristic involvement with participants. In this respect it is not surprising that the show is quite significant for revealing how the mainstream ideologies and traditional practices of marriage are negotiated against the changing socio-economic realities of modern Turkey. (Algan, 2010, p. 198) The show insists on the approval of the family and kids for the marriage to take place, and has a set of guidelines for monitoring and chaperoning the participants' dating process. Showing marriage and flirting on national television in Turkey is already a big step in that sense; however, the format of the show dictates discretion and restraint. Over the past 20 years, Turkish society itself has been subject to two different dynamics, one orientated towards European fashions and practices and the other turned towards tradition and respecting codes imposed by Islam. At the same time the two currents are entangled in the people's everyday life. Some of the prenuptial practices still live among both, conservative and modern families in Turkey, for example asking for the girl's hand from her family. Nonetheless, the progress of the era of technology brought considerable changes and allowed a strong influence of Western cultures, proposing new different contents with less restraint, especially through the mass media. During the 90s, for example, contents

of the Turkish music video clips, especially in the field of pop music, seemed to allow more physical exhibitionism. In the last two decades, the place of women in the public space has been subject to an evolution; the women's roles defined by marriage and society started taking different shapes, leading to more open arrangements, where women would be able to turn to their careers. A hectic lifestyle started taking over Turkey, plunged into fast economic progress made possible on the grounds of the late capitalism. Esra Erol's show seems to stand on the intersection between the two currents and the two eras, allowing some sort of a cultural compromise. The process of courtship in the United States has also changed dramatically over the past century. Many now choose less traditional forms of courtship, such as the one performed through internet, operating through online dating. Online relationships have become the new normal and believed to be, among numerous sociologists, the main spot for engaging into intimate relationship in the future. Given the virtuality of the new sense of dating and marriage, *The Bachelor* is quite consistent with the contemporary courtship understanding of this segment of the American culture. Today, American courtship is seen as being less focused on the formal procedure and ceremonial allure it seemed to display in the past. Instead of romantic night excursions and the tender acts in order to pursue one's love, which were typical of the traditional courtship ritual, new generations believe that the dating system today should be replaced with less formal behavior, facilitated by partners having more freedom to pursue the one with whom they wish to be intimate with, through a more exhibitionist attitude.

CONCLUSION

Major social, technological, economic and cultural transformations came together to give rise to the unstoppable growth of information. In the information and knowledge age, sharing intimacy and privacy turned into building an identity accessible to others, an identity in the constant process of transformation, visible and exposed, yet virtual and almost imaginary. This new type of identity created in the modern era seems to have become the ultimate model of the individual as a member of society: every action of this individual appears to be defined by the reaction of the other. It is certainly not a novelty, since human nature pushes us to compare ourselves to others continuously trying to create better selves, defining and controlling our behavior according to certain social codes, for the sake of being accepted. We are determined by *the other* in every possible way, and in every aspect of our lives. Yet, the modern era seems to bring more demanding standards in terms of the representation of the self; a self closely scrutinized by the circumspect eye of the camera. We live in a world of selfies, statuses and other numerous tools for self-promotion, in constant quest for fame and acknowledgement; Holding on to the number of "likes" or comments under our picture determines our day, mood and sometimes even level of self-esteem. The picture of us, staring blankly at the round tech-eye staring back at us indifferently, the picture of us driven by envy, striving to be a better, smarter, more loved, a picture

of us colored by fear of rejection is a picture of our narcissist and selfish epoch. In that light, the privacy shared with a wide, personal audience of each and every one of us, is painstakingly constructed, embellished and carefully retouched millions of times. Today, we are able to make the color of our "reality" look brighter. Yet, with constructing a better, stronger, more successful self, comes a loss of self and an unquestionable emptiness, after giving a piece of us to everyone eager to look at or read whatever we have to show or say. In this process, we lose one of the crucial parts in the puzzle of *self*, our privacy as a backbone of human integrity.

The concern for privacy is the predominant conceptual framework within which a resistance to surveillance is socially articulated. The idea of privacy as a possession that we need to protect was deeply embedded in our culture over prior decades; and can change when the societal and cultural perceptions start to transform due to social, economic, technological, local, and global changes. And yet through new age reality TV shows it seems that the notion of privacy is functionally quite weak as counter to the growth of surveillance.

The Reality TV screen together with its subjects, the spectators, introduces fake standards of conscientious behavior, judging and throwing sticks and stones, yet being the one with the most ethically dubious conduct. Surveilling its participants 24/7, it performs its power and generates a new type of reality – a hyperreality, a unique reconstruction of the blend, regular reality, containing more emotion, more colors, more of everything. The voluntary and public exposure of the participants including their emotional, physical, spiritual and even financial details reveals that the attitude toward privacy has changed dramatically. This thought introduces many different aspects of the Reality TV dominion: we can identify it as modern slavery, rendering participants willing to sacrifice their own selves for five minutes of glory and a prospective "million dollar contract"; the total renunciation of self in quest for fame and money is the new normal, no matter how shocking it may appear. Today, privacy is a commodity, property, and according to the modern laws, one can do whatever

he/she wants with it: some choose to sell it; it is as simple as that. Another aspect might be linked to the authority trying to give us morals though Reality TV: there are winners and there are losers, the strong ones and the weak ones, and through the incontestable screen rules, we know how to recognize them. Moreover, one frequently cited hypothesis is that the rising popularity of reality programs can be attributed to their ability to accommodate television viewers' voyeuristic needs. Both programs have offered different explanations for the rising popularity of surveillance and satisfaction with voyeurism. As it has been extensively discussed during the literature review, reality TV marriage programs have often been linked with the rise of voyeurism in contemporary societies. Another purpose of this study was to investigate these two related claims and understand how consumption of marriage programs is related to individuals' voyeuristic tendencies on the one hand and attitudes about privacy on the other. This research very explicitly shows that the voyeuristic appeal of Reality TV marriage programs often comes at the price of privacy of their participants; however the features of revealing private details are not unique or stable and can be totally different in two different cultures. Television marriage shows incline participants that having control over private information is important to maintaining their persona and it can be made possible through exhibitionist behavior.

Whereas the loss of privacy and the public-ness of every ordinary individual have been thriving for the past two decades, the media became a place to inhabit physical and virtual space to find, make, and rebuild ourselves. Television extended and refigured both domestic and non-domestic spaces, and reality shows work to bridge them. Instead of worrying about the loss of privacy, reality TV, especially marriage shows, moved to a new kind of privacy with the focus on emotional shifts for contestants, participants, and viewers. Not only are the participants forced to reinvent themselves, they are made do it in front of millions of curious spectators. Marriage TV shows are particularly delicate in this context: participants must be likeable to their suitors and to the audience at the same time. Failing in fulfillment of such a difficult task is the central point of these shows; being good enough for others or better than

them as the main preoccupation of our century, gives perfect material to the producers, exploiting and manipulating it, at times making it unrecognizable. Television even plays the role of matchmaker for marriage through reality TV programs both in Turkey and in US, just as in many other countries. This very private sphere of one's life, containing romantic feelings and profound need for love, finds itself surveilled, assessed, judged and directed by the great industry of Reality TV: the audience is powerful enough to make suggestions, and sometimes even decisions, but at the end of the day, we all know who the boss is. Television, with its surveillance tools has the power to twist personal realities, make them juicier, more scandalous, often forgetting about ethics.

Thus, this qualitative study demonstrates very explicitly the degree to which the public has already come to embrace a shifting courtship morality in two different cultures, American and Turkish, in regards to two reality TV marriage shows, *The Bachelor* and *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*. Hence, the main objective of this research is to analyze two different cultures from the perspective of their changing modes of privacy. Within that framework, the researcher took into consideration how privacy perceptions changed especially within the reality TV marriage shows. The comparison of the Turkish program *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* to the American TV show *The Bachelor* allows us to solidify how these two different shows in two different societies reflect the social relations in relation to intimate relationships, marriage, and privacy.

It is evident that television serves as a love and courtship guide for people of all ages. Furthermore reality marriage programs such as *The Bachelor* or *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* affect viewers even more that purely fictitious programming. These programs' similarity to soap opera and documentary genres may lead viewers to evaluate content as more realistic and encourage them to form pseudo-relationships with the personalities on the show. Viewers are more likely to discuss the program with others and to speculate about the outcome, thereby making the program and the personalities feel more real to them. It is important to recognize that these mediated images of romance and courtship might affect viewers and therefore it is important to

be critical of the cultural love/marriage myths that are represented in these programs. It is essential to mention that the two marriage shows cannot be analyzed as "dating" programs; within this study they have been conceptualized as "courtship" programs where courtship is when two people get to know each other with the objective being marriage; dating is the same process of getting to know one another; but, it does not necessarily include intent on either partner's behalf to get married. The extended time frame through multiple years and seasons of these two shows is important in understanding how these television series attempt to put forward meanings that serve the dominant interests in their respective societies as well as the ways in which they circulate these cultural meanings about privacy and marriage amongst the wide variety of social groups that constitute their audiences. According to the socio-cultural background of the society where these shows are broadcast, these shows can be overrated by the audience. However this exaggeration affects both audience and participants in so many ways especially in the case of privacy and surveillance.

The Turkish show is based on respecting the Islamic values and traditional conduct norms, putting an accent on the values embedded and preserved in the core of the unspoken social codes and rules of the country; the most prominent in that light would be the institution of family and its involvement in the life of an individual; family is what defines a person, and his/her status in the society; the next step on the life ladder is marriage, equally important since participating in the creation of a new family. Moreover, there is a visible concern for protecting values such as chastity and morality, operating through the omnipresent censorship on television and through the direct promotion of these values. In that context, we see how this system of values establishes itself through the scripts of *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*, continuously complying with the principles of restraint and discretion. In contrast, American production tends to turn to the promotion of values concentrating on freedom, free will and postulates of a democratic society, putting forward individualism and independence. However, the free will becomes a generator of self-exposure, to an extent where it often turns to ridicule, in American Reality TV shows, in our case

The Bachelor. Promoting luxury, personal interest and individualistic lifestyle, this show reveals malfunctions of late capitalism, graved into the participants' attitudes and behaviors. All the performances operate through a meritocratic approach, setting demanding tasks and high expectations.

According to the content and discourse analysis of snapshots of the two marriage programs, the researcher evaluates the degree of the private/personal information exposure According to this analysis, participants of the Esra *Erol'da Evlen Benimle* seem to reveal more private/personal information about themselves. The participants of *The Bachelor* on the other hand seem to reveal less private/personal information about their financial status (i.e. real estate ownership), religious and political beliefs. It is not surprising that people in Turkey share this kind of information; for Turkish people having a house and a car, or practicing their daily religious practices (i.e praying five times a day, fasting in Ramadan) is an important status symbol and culturally has lots of meanings. For example, someone's personal wealth is seen as a capacity to bring up a family, and is therefore perceived as one's strength in a society whose first preoccupation is to maintain a structure built upon the family model. One's worthiness of marriage is displayed through this capacity and evokes the phenomenon of arranged marriages, built upon the principles of business agreement. As opposed to individualistic American culture, Turkish culture is more collectivist and conservative, which means that the country relies on traditional values and commits fully to their preservation. Technological development and new currents inspired by modernity are expected to comply with these values, creating a unique combination typical of the Turkish society. It is a country less apt to embrace changes that could endanger its balance in this sense. Furthermore, strong patriarchal foundations proscribe a behavior that would not include sticking out in the crowd or being "different", thus personal behavior and inclinations have to follow the rules and operate for the sake of social harmony.

On the other hand, *The Bachelor* follows a script destined to put accent on

"love" and the values it implies. The participants are not talking about their possessions and financial status directly; it stays rather taboo in this Reality show, although the demonstration of wealth is displayed through visual codes. One of the elements of the bachelor's worthiness is shown through scenes containing his lavish villa with a pool and through discrete conversations about his private business. *The Bachelor* produced in the USA, in American culture impregnated with the values of late capitalism, tends to promote its democratic values, by distancing itself from any type of conservative principles. It tries to exclude the idea of arranged marriage, as one of the main characteristics of traditional societies. It concentrates rather on the emotional aspect of the contestants and the drama created around personal conflict, evoking, once again, the cult of personality.

The second section of the analysis focuses on the extent to which a program makes accessible behavior and actions that would typically take place in a private setting and would not normally be accessible to strangers or outsiders. This section analyzed 4 other categories: first date, expression of emotions towards each other, intimate behaviors (i.e. touching, kissing), and exhibitionism. The categories in this section were based on the assumption that programs that make private behavior more accessible will be more likely to appeal to the voyeuristic tendencies of television viewers. The content and discourse analysis of episodes of the two marriage programs demonstrated that *The Bachelor* enables its viewers to witness the intimate interactions between couples that would otherwise be inaccessible to the audience or the viewers. *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* on the other hand does not allow couples to be intimate in front of the cameras. Although the participants are able to reveal their emotions, their behavior remains very discrete in terms of their sexuality.

Considering these differences of the two shows, it can be easily said that objectifying the human body is much more efficient in the shows broadcast in USA. In *The Bachelor* focusing and zooming in to fragments of the bodies of participants are as important as showing their whole bodies. In *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*, exhibitionism

seems not to be happening among the major facts, given that in this show, participants are not limited only to physically attractive individuals. On the contrary, older, less attractive or even disabled people can participate in *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*. This show is considered as one of the most conservative reality dating shows that has ever appeared on Turkish television. It is not surprising that the show is quite significant for revealing how the mainstream ideologies and traditional practices of marriage are negotiated against the changing socio-economic realities of modern Turkey. The two marriage programs – *TheBachelor* and *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* examined in this research situated themselves within the drama of real people and real events. These programs illustrate a hegemonic view of love and relationship by assuming and forwarding an unquestioned, common-sense worldview that romantic relationships require some kind of official and public acknowledgement. When the couples decide to marry to be together, they aim to follow the traditional wedding format with special apparel, a ceremony in which vows and rings are exchanged, and some kind of party to mark the event. In both cases men are expected to propose with an engagement ring, asking her to marry him on bent knees. These programs contribute to a hegemony regarding love and marriage with the wedding or the marriage proposal serving as a required step toward making a relationship "legitimate".

The boundaries of private intimate life and official public life obviously began to disappear with the effects of TV. "Reality TV" or "Popular factual television" has exploded over the past ten years both as a programming category and as an object of academy research. Academics discuss the phenomenon of reality TV, in the value of contents and effects of it to our social and cultural life. Marriage programs as a variety of reality TV has rapidly come to occupy a place at the forefront of contemporary television culture. The study is significant for studying the complicated and often polemical terrain of marriage programs and considering their effect on the privacy perceptions of two different societies: the United States of America and Turkey. Despite its significance in comparative media studies, it is also important to highlight an important limitation of this research.

An issue that has characterized and plagued the medium of television and reality TV has been stereotyping and especially traditional gender stereotyping. These gender stereotypes exist both on a personal level as well as a cultural level, for example as reflected in the media. Due to the carefully plotted and contrived nature of many reality shows, the reality television genre is not immune to gender stereotyping. From the time girls begin to speak and start playing with their peers, culturally they are taught certain roles. For instance in Turkey, the "marriage game" is one of the most popular children's games for the girls. In these games each child plays a role from real life. Although the boys are included in these games too, they are usually chosen as the fathers, brothers, or the breadwinners of the "imaginary marriage". On the other hand, girls like to play the role of being a mother of the house. They usually cook with cake pots and imaginary ingredients, take care of the children, and serve the father. Actually these "marriage games" of the girls can be seen as the mirror of the Turkish society. Although women have started to be more visible in the working life, the culturally rooted gender roles continue and persist. Most of the women who start working after graduating from college or high school quit their jobs once they have a child and they prefer to take care of the children rather than sending them to a child care center. The gender inequality in wage-led families to a decision for woman to sit at home; because women's salary often times does not contribute to families income and the man as the breadwinner prefer their wives to be stay at home moms. It would take a longer for small girls' marriage games in Turkey to involve working moms once the role models of working moms increase. This marriage game story is not far different in the U.S. culture. In the American culture Hollywood films and television shows have long given audiences their versions of "dream" and "fairy tale" weddings with luxurious costumes, undying love of bride and groom. The marriage shows, in addition to film industry and the soap operas aim to show real couples getting ready for their realistic weddings and give to the audience the power of gazing, and opportunity to observe authentic love stories of ordinary couples. The girls in the U.S. are also taught to be in a romantic relationship that will fulfill their every need. Through Barbie houses,

playing with Barbie and Ken (the male version of the Barbie doll) they are taught that being paired in a romantic relationship is the ultimate goal. Another aspect that has to be mentioned in regards to *The Bachelor* and individualistic and more exhibitionist American culture is that in order to attract a man or a woman, the person has to be handsome or beautiful. In *The Bachelor* we can see the extreme form of this bias. In this program in order to get a rose the woman should look like a model and the women selected to participate in the show generally look like models. There are no alternative depictions of beauty in terms of age, weight, hair, and body shape and also for this season of the show there is no racial diversity. Although there is no published data on the sizes of the women chosen for the show, any viewer can see the women are of smaller than average women sizes. Most of them seem size 36 (size 6 in US) or smaller than this size. Almost all of them have long blonde hair. Just like the Barbie dolls, the women selected for the program are thin, tall, and physically attractive. Thus, it would not be wrong to argue that *The Bachelor* house is a Barbie house with a fantasy world of relationships with expensive gifts and tropical vacations.

This study did not examine the depiction of stereotyped gender roles on the reality television shows *The Bachelor* and *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle* to determine if gender stereotypes are reinforced within these shows. Given the significance of gender interactions to the plots of these shows, it is important to take a closer look at the reality dating show to discover if reality television is indeed continuing to draw on traditional gender stereotypes. Another additional research question can be if there are significant differences between privacy perceptions of males and females. This research did not take gender differences in revealing privacy into consideration, and this topic should be examined with further research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
Participants of *The Bachelor*, Season 16,

APPENDIX B

Broadcast Streaming of the *The Bachelor*[7]

Episode date: 02.01.2012 (Season 16, Episode 1)

Channel: ABC (USA)

Total show duration: 01:25:01

The Bachelor of the season – Ben Flajnik

1 min. 40 sec. Summary of the previous season. Opening with the scene in which the Bachelor Ben Flajnik proposes to a lady on a beach. She refuses.

1 min. 30 sec. The summary video goes on.The Bachelor talks about his life after, what he did after the refusal. And then he goes on telling that he is ready to love again, ready to find another partner.

1 min. 10 sec. The summary video goes on. The Bachelor comes to L.A. where the show is shot. He says he is happy for being the Bachelor and a part of this show.

1 min. 13 sec. Summary video of the upcoming episode runs. We can see the contestants coming to the studio and meeting the Bachelor, Ben Flajnik. And then the first night party is about to begin.

1 min. Presenter, Chris Harrison welcomes the audience. He talks about the previous season briefly. He mentions that the refusal of the Bachelorette happens to be one of

7 Note: The Bachelor, Season 16, Episode 1. Videolink: http://www.tubeplus.me/player/1969940/ The_Bachelor/season_16/episode_1/Week_1_(S16)/%22

the most emotional scenes of the show. Then he announces the video presenting the new candidates.

48 sec. The first contestant, Lindzi C., begins to speak about herself. She mentions her ex-boyfriend and how they have split up.

48 sec. The second contestant, Amber T., begins to speak about herself and her life in Nebraska.

53 sec. The third contestant, Kacie B., starts to talk about herself and the previous season of the show. She says she has been watching the season and liked watching Ben very much. She adds that when the Bachelorette refused Ben, her heart was broken too.

56 sec. The fourth contestant, Courtney, starts to talk about herself. She says she has been a model for 10 years and she knows competition very well.

1 min. 10 sec. The fifth contestant, Jamie, starts to speak. She mentions her childhood and adolescence briefly. She says that she had a tough life because of the death of her father. While she speaks, she bursts in tears.

45 sec. The sixth contestant,Lyndsie J., begins to speak. She mentions the countries she lived in before because her father is a diplomat. She is even wearing some traditional clothes of the countries like Japan, Filipinas etc. during the video. Finally, she addresses Ben in Japanese telling him: "You're mine!"

1 min. 16 sec. The seventh contestant, Jenna, begins to talk about herself. She says that she is a blogger and writes about love. She wonders about whether she will find love one day. At the end of her speech, she talks to Ben directly, saying; "Ben, I'm coming for you!"

1 min. The eighth contestant, Shawn, begins to speak about her life and her profession. She speaks about her son, Gavin, and how the missing piece of her life is the person which she will spend her life with.

1 min. 15 sec. The ninth contestant, Nicki, begins to speak about herself and the possible relationship between her and Ben. She claims that they are good for each other because she had some experiences with men like Ben. She mentions her ex-husband and the relationship they had.

1 min. A summary video of the episode which shows the contestants coming and meeting Ben and the very first moments of the party can be seen in the video.

32 sec. After this video, comes another clip of Ben suiting up and getting ready for the night. While he is preparing, he talks about his feelings and expectations.

20 sec. The clip showing the contestants on their way to the studio in the limousines runs. They are having champagne.

17 sec. The presenter announces that ladies are on their way coming to the studio. And then he presents the Bachelor of the season: Ben Flajnik .

48 sec. Ben comes to the studio in a limousine. Presenter welcomes him and they start a conversation about the night. Then they go inside the studio house together.

2 min. 32 sec. In the house, they sit on a comfortable sitting unit and talk about the previous season of *The Bachelorette*. The presenter asks questions about his feelings, his father and the situation he was in when the bachelorette refused to marry him. He answers the questions. After their conservation, the presenter mentions the 25 ladies coming to the studio only for him.

12 sec. While they are going outside to welcome the ladies, an image presenting the web site of the show appears on the screen. (bachelor.abc.com)

30 sec. A short conversation between the presenter and Ben takes place. They talk about Ben's impressions. And then the first limousine arrives.

40 sec. Ben is standing still. The door of the limousine opens and the first contestants, Rachel, comes out. She walks towards Ben. They hug and start talking. Rachel tells her name and then goes inside.

40 sec. The second contestant, Erika, comes out of the limousine. She walks towards Ben. They hug and start to talk. Erika makes jokes about Ben. They hug again and then she goes inside.

37 sec. The third contestant, Amber walks towards Ben. They shake hands and hug. They start to talk. Ben kisses her hand. She mentions being Canadian. Then the lady walks inside.

22 sec. The fourth contestant, Elyse, walks towards Ben. They hug and begin to talk.

Then she walks inside.

50 sec. The fifth contestant, Jenna, walks towards Ben. They hug and start a conversation. Jenna mentions the previous season and tells him she understands him. Then she walks inside.

30 sec. Jenna is the last lady from the first limousine. When she walks inside, we see the five ladies chatting in the house.

40 sec. The second limousine approaches. The sixth contestant, Courtney, comes out from the limousine and walks towards Ben. While walking she says hello. They start to talk and she pats Ben's hair. They complement each other and then she walks inside.

50 sec. The seventh lady, Emily approaches Ben. They start to talk and she takes out an antibacterial cream. She applies the cream herself and then Ben does the same. After that she takes out a disinfectant spray, applies it herself and then gives it to Ben. Afterwards she says: "This will be the first kiss of the night" and kisses Ben. Ben is surprised. And then she walks inside.

24 sec. The eighth contestant, Samantha, comes out the limousine. She is wearing a beauty pageant sash. They hug and start to talk. After that she walks inside.

18 sec. The ninth contestant, Casey, walks towards Ben. They have a short chat and then the lady walks inside.

27 sec. The tenth contestant, Amber T., walks toward Ben. They have a short conversation and then she walks away. But she misses the entrance and then walks to Ben again. She adds one more thing and then walks inside.

40 sec. The eleventh contestant, Holly, comes out from the limousine. She has a huge hat and at first Ben can't see her face. Then they start to talk. After a short chat, they hug and she walks inside.

17 sec. The twelfth contestant, Jamie, walks towards Ben. They talk a little then she walks inside.

34 sec. The thirteenth contestant, Shira, walks towards Ben. She says she knows that Ben is a wine maker and that she knows everything about wine. Shira wants him to ask a question. He asks her a question and it turns out that she doesn't know the answer,

but she adds that she wants to learn. And then she walks inside.

25 sec. The fourteenth contestant, Blakeley, walks towards Ben. They hug and start to talk. After a quick conversation, she walks inside.

1 min. 13 sec. The fifteenth lady, Sheryl, comes out from the limousine. She is 72 years old and walks with crutches due to an injury to her leg. Ben is really surprised. Then she starts to talk, explaining that she watched Ben during the last season and how she is madly in love with him. But then she says that she is there for her granddaughter. Then her granddaughter named Brittney comes out of the limousine. They talk a little and then Sheryl and her granddaughter Brittney walk inside.

50 sec. After the grandma and her granddaughter walk into the room, the ladies gathered inside are surprised. Then we can see some of the contestants speaking for the cameras one by one, giving comments about the situation.

22 sec. The presenter and Ben talk about the first 15 contestants. Then the presenter announces the third limousine.

28 sec. The third limousine arrives and the contestants continue to introduce themselves to Ben. Seventeenth contestant, Nicki walks out of the limousine. They hug and begin to talk. After a short talk, they hug again and Nicki goes inside.

33 sec. The eighteenth contestant, Dianna, walks towards Ben. She is so excited that she hesitates while speaking. Then they hug and she goes inside.

45 sec. The nineteenth contestant, Jennifer, comes out from the limousine. She talks about herself. She uses numbers for giving sneak peeks about her life; such as "Zero, I've been arrested. One, I've been in love.." Then she goes inside.

42 sec. The twentieth lady, Lindysie J. walks towards Ben. Right away she begins to read a poem which she has written for him. After the poem she hugs Ben and goes inside.

20 sec. The twenty-first lady, Anna, comes out from the limousine and walks towards Ben. She only says "Hi" without stopping and goes straight inside. Ben is shocked.

31 sec. The fourth limousine arrives. The twenty-second contestant, Monica, walks to the Bachelor. They start to talk and she makes a confession about her dog. She tells that

she misses her dog more than anything. Ben agrees with her and then she goes inside.

20 sec. The twenty-third lady, Jaclyn, walks towards Ben. They start a little conversation. And then they hug. She goes inside.

22 sec. The twenty-third lady, Shawn, approaches Ben. They talk a little and she taps his arm lightly. Afterwards they hug and she walks inside.

27 sec. The twenty-fourth lady, Kacie B. Comes out from the limousine. They start a little conversation. Then they hug and she walks inside.

22 sec. After Kacie walks inside, the cameras show what is going on inside of the house. Ladies are drinking champagne and talking to each other. At the same time, Ben is waiting for the last candidate.

55 sec. The last contestant, Lindzie C. comes to the scene riding a horse. Ben looks surprised and helps the lady off the horse. They talk a little and then then she walks inside.

50 sec. After the last contestant goes inside, we can see the other ladies talking about her. Some of them give comments, criticizing the beginning of the night and the other contestants.

33 sec. Ben and the presenter talk about the 25 women waiting for Ben inside. The presenter explains the "one rose" rule. According to this rule, Ben has to give the "one rose" to the lady he wants to keep close and get to know better. Finally Ben goes inside.

1 min. Ben gets in the house provoking a loud reaction among ladies. Ben starts to talk about his feelings and expectations. After his speech, all of them make a toast with their drinks.

10 sec. One of the candidates, Nicki, talks about Ben alone in front of the camera. She says she finds him gorgeous. While she is talking, we see Ben chatting with other ladies.

1 min. 40 sec. Ben talks to Rachel in the garden outside sitting on a bench. They talk about Rachel's life: where she is from originally, what her job is, how she lives etc. After a short conversation, Rachel gets in front of the cameras and declares she wants that rose.

1 min. 30 sec. Nicki goes to the garden to talk to Ben. Before they talk, we see Nicki in front of the cameras relating her impressions and emotions. They talk for a while. They talk about Nicki's life and old relationships. When the conservation is over, we see Nicki in front of the cameras again talking about her feelings.

1 min. 6 sec. Lindzie C. comes to the garden to talk to Ben. First they talk about her entrance on a horse. After a short conversation, we see Lindzie in front of the cameras. She is describing her feelings.

2 min 20 sec. After Lindzie's appearance, we see the other contestants talking to each other about Brittney's grandmother. According to what they say, it seems they are not quite happy with the idea of having Sheryl competing among them. Ben approaches Sheryl and her granddaughter Brittney. They talk about feelings and love. Sheryl explains how she finds him suitable for her granddaughter. Then she asks Ben to take her to the car. Ben and Sheryl go to the limousine.

20 sec. After Sheryl is gone, Ben returns to Brittney to talk to her. They talk for a while. As they are talking we can see Sheryl back in the limousine. Brittney is explaining her feelings for Ben in front of the cameras.

32 sec. Ben and all of the contestants are waiting in the lounge drinking and talking to each other. Then the presenter enters the lounge with a single rose in his hand. Everybody gets excited. Ben gets to talk for the cameras. He expresses his feelings about the rose. He claims that it is too hard to choose only one lady among 25 beautiful contestants.

12 sec. The image representing the web site of the show appears on the screen. (bachelor.abc.com)

36 sec. The cameras show what is going on inside the lounge. Only one contestant gets the rose. The others get nervous about it.

1 min. Shawn and Ben walk out with a soccer ball in Shawn's hands. They play for a while and then we see another contestant, Blakeley, talking about Ben and the rose. After her intervention, Ben and Blakeley are talking in the lounge. The lady shows her tattoo to Ben while talking about herself. Afterwards, Elyse talks about Ben in front

of the cameras. As she speaks, the scenes of two of them spending time together in the lounge are displayed. Ben is doing sit-ups. In the following scene, Ben and some contestants try to dance *sirtaki* with the help of Kacie B.

1 min. Dianna and Ben are sitting on a couch. Dianna has a red ribbon and a bag in her hands. She explains they are about to play a game including these objects. She blindfolds Ben's eyes with the red ribbon. There are candies in the bag. She gives the candies to Ben one by one and wants him to guess what the candy is made of. We see another contestant criticizing Dianna and her little game.

1 min. 15 sec. After the game we see Ben and another contestant, Emily, going out to the garden hand in hand. While they are walking the scenes of Emily talking to the cameras appear. She expresses her feelings about Ben and explains how important the rose is to her. When they get to the bench in the garden, Emily reads out loud the hip-hop song she has written for him. Ben listens.

15 sec. After listening to the song Ben explains being bothered by the contestants' behaviors in their attempts to get the rose.

1 min.10 sec. Another contestant, Courtney, shows up and talks to Ben about her life and feelings. She mentions the last season of the show. They have a short conversation, after which Courtney admits feeling quite comfortable around Ben.

3 min. 39 sec. Jenna talks to another contestant, Monica. She asks her about her feelings for Ben. She answers her question by saying "nothing". Jenna looks shocked. After this short conversation, we see Jenna talking alone for the cameras. She claims some contestants are not there for the right reasons. Monica is speaking about Jenna. She finds her too nervous and aggressive. In the following scene, Monica and Blakeley are sitting on a couch and having a heart-to-heart conversation. Monica compliments and flatters her. She constantly insists on how she finds her amazing. Jenna is watching them, feeling uncomfortable about their open behavior.

40 sec. Jenna, Monica and Blakeley scene goes on. Jenna talks to other girls about them and some of the contestants call them lesbians.

12 sec. Ben asks a contestant about what is going on between the ladies. She says that

she doesn't know anything about it.

3 min 40 sec. We see Jenna talking to Rachel about Monica. She claims that Monica does not care for Ben. She is there only to cause drama. After their conversation, Rachel talks about the situation in front of the cameras alone. She says that she wants to stay away from this conflict and drama. Anyway she gets together with the ladies. They talk about the situation a little and nothing gets solved. After this Jenna becomes even more aggressive and upset. She cries and talks to some contestants, especially Rachel. She claims that nobody in her life talk to her the way Monica did.

1 min. 40 sec. Ben approaches Jenna and another contestant. He asks her about the situation and how she feels. Jenna doesn't say anything about the situation and assures him that she is fine. In the meantime Ben talks about Jenna in front of the camera alone about her emotional situation. He says things like this happen due to high expectations and all the pressure on the first night of the show.

2 min. 31 sec. Jenna goes to the restroom and cries. We can hear her muttering. She says that she does not want to act that way. At the same time, Ben takes the rose and starts walking towards the contestants. Finally he finds the lady he was looking for, Lindzie C. She is the girl who came to the studio riding a horse. Ben asks her to follow him to the garden. Ben and Lindzie go to garden hand in hand. Ben explains why he wants to give that first impression rose to her. He gives her the rose and they go back inside together.

1 min. 8 sec. The presenter enters the lounge to get Ben. The ladies are getting nervous and excited. While these events are taking place in the lounge, Jenna is still in the restroom crying.

1 min. 46 sec. The presenter and the contestants standing in a row in front of him are in the lounge. Jenna is still absent. Finally, she gets out from the restroom and walks into the lounge, taking her place. The presenter is standing next to the roses explaining the course of the rose ceremony. He says that there are 17 more roses to be given, except for the first impression rose handed in to Lindzie. He adds that 7 contestants will have to leave the show tonight. He invites Ben to join them in the lounge.

6 min. 25 sec. Ben gives a speech in front of the contestants and starts giving out the roses. During the ceremony, he calls out names of the contestants he wants to keep, one by one. When a contestant approaches him, Ben asks her to "Except this rose", before she goes back and takes her place again. After giving out 16 roses, Ben stops for a while. During this break, the presenter enters the lounge and explains to Ben that he is waiting for his final move. Then Ben gives his last rose to Jenna.

2 min. 36 sec. The seven contestants who weren't lucky enough to get a rose leave the studio. Each of them hugs Ben saying "Nice to meet you." One of the rejected contestants gets emotional and starts crying.

17 sec. Ben and the chosen contestants are standing in the lounge with champagne flutes in their hands. Ben makes a toast and they all say "cheers".

6 min. A video consisting of sneak peeks about the upcoming episode? season runs. The episode finishes with this video.

APPENDIX C

Broadcast Streaming of the Show *Esra Erol'da Evlen Benimle*[8]

Episode Date: 29.06.2012 (The Season Finale)

TV Channel: ATV (Turkey)

Total Show Duration: 02:14:08

20 sec. Opening jingle

30 sec. Excerpts from the episode

36 sec. The show starts with a song played by the orchestra, the presenter Esra Erol is dancing and singing.

(The studio is large, packed with audience. There is a major stage including two chairs and the folding screen between them. On the left from the major stage 18 candidates sit in their own compartment. The space on the right is reserved to the orchestra. At the back of the stage, there is another compartment including a comfortable sitting unit for the presenter and the assistants of the show such as lawyers and psychologists.

1 min. The presenter welcomes the audience. She describes quickly the content of the show. While she is speaking, suit brand, hairdresser and make-up artist advertorials appear at the bottom of the screen, followed by the studio's telephone/fax numbers.

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[8]Note: Esra Erold`da Evlen Benimle, Season Finale Videolink: http://esraerol.atv.com.tr/Videolar/ Bolumler/29062012/a116ba33-f8a1-413d-86f7-9f5e7ff27377

23 sec. The presenter asks if anybody from the audience would like to speak and gives the floor to a lady.

1 min. 15 sec. The lady hesitates to speak and the presenter looks for another speaker. She simultaneously mentions Facebook fan page of the show. The orchestra plays a song.

25 sec. A man starts talking and mentions Facebook fan page of the show.

15 sec. Another audience member starts to talk mentioning her acquaintance who likes the show and the presenter a lot.

20 sec. Another audience member starts to talk explaining that she is the daughter of one of the musicians in the orchestra, so the presenter starts a little conversation with the musician.

20 sec. A lady from the audience gets permission to speak. She admits coming all the way from Australia only for the show. She quickly mentions the Turkish community in Australia who like and follow the show.

10 sec. Another audience member is given the chance to speak; she talks about how she and her family like the presenter and the show.

15 sec. A woman working in a hospital takes the floor. She explains that all the hospital workers like and watch the show.

25 sec. A young woman takes the floor. She talks about her birthday. She has been taking notes about the show. Esra Erol takes her notebook and starts reading.

1 min. 40 sec. Esra Erol reads out loud the notes about the previous shows including descriptions of Esra Erol's clothes, her nail polish etc. After reading the notes, Esra Erol announces advertorials.

30 sec. The orchestra plays a song and then the opening jingle comes in before the advertorials.

(Advertorials)

2 min. 30 sec. After the advertorials, opening jingle comes in again. A collage clip made of the previous episodes' excerpts runs.

20 sec. The orchestra plays a song and Esra Erol starts talking to the candidates.

Simultaneously, the studio's telephone numbers appear at the bottom of the screen.

40 sec. The presenter introduces the 18 candidates of the show. She announces their names one by one.

30 sec. Esra Erol introduces the lawyers and the psychologist who assist her in the show. She gives them the floor.

20 sec. The psychologist talks about previous episodes, especially about one particular female participant.

35 sec. The lawyer speaks about previous episodes as well. She explains that people call her office to ask her if she can arrange a meeting with one of the candidates.

26 sec. The other lawyer explains how rewarding it is to be part of the show.

25 sec. Esra Erol introduces a couple who has not yet decided about getting married. Before she calls them in, she announces the clip containing videos of their previous moments on the show.

30 sec. The clip runs. After the clip the couple walk in and take a seat.

1 min. 27 sec. Esra Erol asks the couple whether they decided to get married. The female candidate explains that she doesn't want to get married and evokes the reasons. Esra Erol wants to know more. The male candidate takes the floor and speaks for a while.

25 sec. A candidate from the audience interrupts them saying that they look good together; he says that his observation is made upon the excerpts from the picnic organized for the couple.

28 sec. Esra Erol asks the psychologist a question about this relationship. The psychologist answers the question. After that, Esra Erol asks the couple about their decision one more time.

43 sec. The couple replies their final decision is not to get married. The orchestra plays a song and the couple leaves the stage.

32 sec. Esra Erol announces a video about a social responsibility project organized in the course of the ongoing show's season.

1 min. 30 sec. The video runs. It is about a campaign for wheelchairs organized in

Turkey. The campaign consists of collecting blue water bottle caps and exchanging them for wheelchairs.

17 sec. After the video Esra Erol thanks the audience for collecting a great number of the caps.

52 sec. A tray with desserts is given to Esra Erol from the audience compartment. She expresses her gratitude and announces a man who hasn't picked a female candidate yet. She relates details from his previous relationship that didn't work out and adds that another candidate is willing to meet him.

1 min. 28 sec. The man comes to the stage accompanied by a song played by the orchestra. He takes a seat. He seems to be in his sixties. He is holding a flower bouquet for the candidate he is about to meet. Esra Erol starts asking questions about the previous candidate. Why didn't it work out? He replies the questions. He insists that the lady wanted him to refuse her in a private conservation. He keeps saying that the previous candidate wanted him to reject her while they were talking in private.

2 min 50 sec. Esra Erol invites the new candidate to the stage. She announces her name, where she is coming from and her age. The candidate enters the stage visibly excited and takes a seat. Esra Erol tries to calm her down. After a while the candidate can't manage to calm down and wants to leave the stage. Esra Erol gives her permission and she goes to the backstage while the audience breaks into applause.

1 min. Esra Erol explains the situation to the male candidate still waiting for his female peer. He admits being excited as well. Esra Erol promises the candidate they will meet again once the female candidate gains her courage back.

20 sec. Esra Erol announces a video containing images of previous shows in which prizes were distributed to the candidates.

2 min. 40 sec. The clip runs.

48 sec. After the clip, the orchestra plays a song and Esra Erol sings along. She has a little chat with the soloist. She announces another candidate and invites him on stage.

22 sec. Adil comes to the stage and takes a seat. In the meantime Esra Erol announces the female candidate that is supposed to meet Adil.

4 min. 38 sec. Adil and the candidate meet. They have seen each other on the show so the folding screen is lifted this time. They are talking about their lives and trying to get to know each other. Adil asks questions about her personality and her life. Esra Erol joins the conversation from time to time. After the conservation Mr. Adil requests to see the candidate in private. The female candidate then asks the first asks the first two candidates to express their opinions.

6 min 30 sec. The first candidate, Yıldırım, starts speaking. He's being interrupted by Esra Erol asking him about his adventures with the candidate he decided to kill time with. Suddenly, two other male candidates, one from the candidate compartment and the other one from the audience, join the conservation. Three men met each other on the show the previous day and now they are relating their experience with enthousiasm. Esra Erol tries to understand what has happened and keeps asking questions. After their conversation, Yıldırım challenges his friends to compete in sit-ups. He is the oldest among them, so the audience finds the challenge funny. After a while, Yıldırım gives comments about the female candidate and Adil.

1 min. The couple leave the stage followed by an applause and a song played by the orchestra. In the meantime, Esra Erol and Yıldırım are still talking, making jokes to each other. Esra Erol announces an engagement ceremony. A couple that met in one of the previous episodes decided to get engaged. The ceremony will take place in the studio. Esra Erol announces the ceremony to take place after the advertorials.

20 sec. After the orchestra plays a song and the opening jingle, advertorials start.

(Advertorials)

50 sec. An opening jingle and a video containing excerpts from previous episodes run.

40 sec. The orchestra plays a song and Esra Erol sings and dances along.

30 sec. Esra Erol announces a new candidate, a lady from Safranbolu. She has a suitor she will meet on stage. She comes to the main stage and takes a seat next to the folding screen, while the orchestra plays.

15 sec. Esra Erol introduces the suitor to the audience. The candidate shows up on stage and takes a seat on the other side of the folding screen.

2 min 50 sec. The candidates start talking. They are not able to see each other since the folding screen is closed. They are asking each other questions about their lifestyles and personalities. The lady keeps stressing her criteria in selecting a candidate.

25 sec. Esra Erol interrupts the conversation and asks the lady if she wants to hear opinions from the audience. Nobody seems willing to speak.

1 min. 30 sec. The female candidate then chooses two people from the audience who would give their opinion, a man and a woman. The woman from the audience speaks first. She suggests the candidate to have a tea with the suitor and decide afterwards. The male member of the audience agrees and suggests the same to the candidate. Consequently, the candidate accepts to meet him in private in the tea house. After the folding screen is lifted they actually meet for the very first time.

1 min. The lady asks some questions before leaving the stage with the suitor for a more private conversation.

54 sec. After the couple leaves the stage, Esra Erol reminds the audience about a project called "House of Hope", carrying her name. This project aims to provide accommodations for women victims of domestic violence. A number of lawyers and psychologists volunteer for this project trying to help women in need all over Turkey. Esra Erol introduces the head of the project, along with 2 lawyers and the psychologists present in the studio. She then announces a presentation video of the project "House of Hope".

35 sec. The presentation video runs. At the end of the video, the web site address of the project appears on the screen. (www.esraerolumutevi.com)

40 sec. Esra Erol makes comments about the video, thanking Ayşe Özyılmazel, creator of the jingle in the video. Esra Erol announces another video on the same project. The video runs.

3 min. 10 sec. The video is about women victims of domestic violence, and accommodations provided for them in some of the Turkish cities. The viewers can see Esra Erol helping and supporting the women in the video. Images of Esra Erol receiving awards for the project appear in the video as well.

30 sec. After the video, Esra Erol thanks the people who have supported the project accompanied by a song played by the orchestra. She then calls out Osman who was going to meet a female candidate earlier on the show, but he wasn't able to since she was overwhelmed and left the studio.

40 sec. Osman and his peer Fatma show up on the stage and take seats while the orchestra is playing. Osman gives the bouquet to Fatma and they start talking.

2 min. 20 sec. Osman asks her questions. She is talking about her future plans. Esra Erol asks Osman whether he would like to know Fatma better. He accepts saying he wants to take her out for a meal. They leave the stage followed by applauses.

22 sec. The band plays a song.

1 min. 18 sec. The previously announced advertisement for a shopping website is running.

33 sec. A video containing excerpts from previous episodes is running showing mostly Esra Erol.

4 min. 48 sec. After the video, a singer performs one of his songs on stage. His name and the name of his album are displayed at the bottom of the page, followed by phone numbers belonging to the show's studio. The artist encourages the audience to sing and dance.

1 min. 44 sec. Esra Erol and the singer named Cüneyt start a conversation. They are talking about how Cüneyt managed to release his album. One of the male candidates interferes claiming that the song played will be really successful, especially in touristic places such as Antalya or Çeşme. He adds that tourist will be delighted to hear this song in the clubs.

38 sec. The band continues to play Cüneyt's song. In the meantime Esra Erol introduces a female candidate who has a suitor. The lady walks to the stage and takes a seat.

6 min. 19 sec. The suitor shows up on the stage soon after and takes a seat on the other side of the folding screen. He introduces himself and they start a conversation. The female candidate is curious about her suitor's personality and asks some questions. Esra Erol joins the conversations with her own questions. They are trying to get

to know each other, when Esra Erol asks the female candidate if she wants to hear opinions from the other candidates in the audience. She accepts and asks two of the candidates to give her their opinions.

1 min. 37 sec. Four candidates speak about the suitor. They all agree that meeting him in private would be suitable. Two male candidates, Mr. Yıldırım and Mr. Hakan, are discussing about a joke they have made. Esra Erol then gives the floor to a man in the audience. 18.04

1 min. 30 sec. The man in question, Mr. Adnan, asks a question to the suitor. He is trying to answer the question and Esra Erol is assisting him. He then asks them whether they are ready to meet. The lady is curious about his height. He indicates that he is 1.83m tall. After hearing the female candidate says she now ready to meet her suitor.

1 min. The folding screen lifts while the audience is applauding and a song is being played by the orchestra. They see each other and shake hands. They take seats again. 20.40

3 min. immediately, a male candidate from the audience takes the floor. He expresses his opinion about the suitor, the female candidate and their potential relationship. He claims the suitor is not a suitable candidate for her because he does not have a strong character. Two male candidates in the audience, Adnan and Hakan object accusing him of having prejudices. Esra Erol agrees with the two men and asks Arda (the suitor) and Elçin (the female candidate) to talk to each other.

31 sec. Elçin stands up and thanks Arda for coming to see her. She invites him to have a cup of the at the tea house and they leave the stage accompanied by applause and music.

10 sec. Esra Erol makes some comments on the male candidate who interfered earlier about Elçin and Arda.

29 sec. Esra Erol announces a male candidate to meet his peer. Yıldırım comes on stage and takes a seat next to the closed folding screen.

1 min. 41 sec. Yıldırım speaks about the ongoing show's season. He thanks the producers of the show and the candidates. He explains that he very famous by courtesy

of Esra Erol's show and his name becomes a trademark. Afterwards Esra Erol begins to speak. She is surprised about his comments, because even she does not think that her name is a trademark. Then she introduces the female candidate who is about to meet Yıldırım. She is 42 years old and from Istanbul.

3 min. 9 sec. While the lady is walking to the stage to take a seat, Esra Erol plays a trick on Yıldırım: she announces a female candidate that Yıldırım has met before and who he doesn't want to encounter again. Having heard this Yıldırım tries to escape from the studio. Esra Erol then admits it was a joke and the female candidate takes the floor. After a short conversations Yıldırım evokes his criteria. He asks for the folding screen to be lifted.

30 sec. The folding screen is removed so they can see each other. Yıldırım presents a bouquet to the female candidate.

40 sec. Yıldırım takes the floor for a while. He asks the female candidate to comment on his looks. After her reply they leave the stage to have a private conversation, accompanied by applause.

30 sec. Esra Erol announces the couple who will get engaged in the studio. A video about their first encounter runs.

1 min. 42 sec. After the video the couple enters the stage along with the applause of the audience and the music played by the orchestra. Esra Erol evokes their first encounter and gives details about their relationship. She explains that their union was a big surprise. She gives the floor to the relatives of the two candidates, and after a short conversation, she offers them the engagement rings.

2 min. 46 sec. The couple is asked to exchange the rings and make best wishes to each other The engagement ceremony starts. After the ceremony the orchestra plays a song and the couple enjoys their first dance on the stage.

2 min. 14 sec. After the first dance, Esra Erol is curious to hear what they have to say. The male candidate speaks first. He thanks everyone involved in the production of the show. The female candidate takes the floor in turn and expresses her gratitude to everyone who was involved in providing her with the opportunity to finally be happy.

They announce the wedding which will take place next September. Esra Erol in turn announces a video which about another couple who got married in the show's studio.

7 min. 34 sec. The video is running.

32 sec. Esra Erol invites another male candidate, Soner on stage where he takes a seat next to the folding screen.

54 sec. Esra Erol is holding a bouquet of flowers. She reads out loud the love note attached and gives the flowers to a female candidate addressed. The candidate thanks her suitor. Esra Erol then announces the candidate Soner. The back sliding door opens and Seda enters the stage and takes a seat.

1 min. 45 sec. Soner asks her some questions. Esra Erol then enumerates personality traits of the female candidate. Soner still insist on hearing opinions from other candidates in the audience.

1 min. 43 sec. After three candidates express their opinions on Seda, the folding screen opens along with the music while the audience is applauding .

1 min. After the folding screen opens, they are able to see each other and Soner seems impressed. He is willing to have a tea with the candidate. They leave the stage accompanied by applauses and the music.

12 sec. Esra Erol announces a video about one of the candidates, Bahattin.

36 sec. The video is running. In the video, Bahattin expresses his wish to meet one particular female candidate. After the video, the candidate in question and Bahattin himself enter the stage along with the music and applauses. They take seats on the main stage.

1 min. Esra Erol, holding a tablet pc, draws attention to the Facebook fan page of her show. She then evokes the current number of fans. She talks about the comments made on the page, then turns to the couple and welcomes them.

2 min. 30 sec. Bahattin and his peer start a conversation on their potential relationship. They first met the previous day and the female candidate hesitates about getting to know him better. The conversation gets slightly tense due to some of the female candidate's observations. However, she finally declares feeling ready to get to know him better.

They leave the stage accompanied by applauses and the music played by the orchestra.

25 sec. After recalling the Facebook fan page once again, Esra Erol announces a surprise video made for her.

2 min. 41 sec. The video is about the presenter and her son. Esra Erol's baby son is starring in the video, and an imaginary letter written by the child is read. We can see the presenter get emotional and cry while the video is running.

5 min. 54 sec. She continues crying even after the video. She turns her back to the audience for a while and tries to pull herself together. She then starts giving details on her private life, she talks in particular about her son, her family, her childhood. She keeps crying. Some members of the audience and candidates cry as well, while the orchestra plays a slow song.

2 min. 24 sec. Esra Erol continues speaking. She talks about her co-workers and how successful they all are. After a long speech she announces advertisements then leaves the stage. The orchestra plays a song.

1 min. 6 sec. The advertisement is running begins. Esra Erol presents a detergent.

5 min. After the ads, the closing jingle runs and the stage is packed with people, employees of the show and some members of the audience. There is a celebration cake. Esra Erol makes a closing speech. This episode ends with a celebration, being a season finale. The orchestra starts playing again and the episode ends.