

DELEGITIMATION OF A CULTURAL PRODUCT:
THE CASE OF TURKISH TELEVISION DRAMA BEHZAT Ç.

A Master's Thesis

by
ANIL SUPHİ İŞİSAĞ

Department of Management
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University
Ankara
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Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
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ANIL SUPHİ İŞİSAĞ

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ANKARA

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I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science in Management.

Prof. Dr. Güliz Ger
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science in Management.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Olga Kravets
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science in Management.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eminegül Karababa
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Erdal Erel
Director

ABSTRACT

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İşisağ, Anıl Suphi

Master's, Department of Management

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Güliz Ger

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This thesis examines the de-legitimation of a cultural product. Although legitimization of consumption practices and products and its role in formation of markets has been studied in consumer research, scant attention have been paid to cases in which practices and products are de-legitimated. Using an array of qualitative methods, I focus on the case of Turkish television drama Behzat Ç., which was criticized and scrutinized by a group of actors including parliament members and regulatory institutions. Drawing on the concept of legitimacy in institutional theory and Bourdieu's conceptualization of homologies between fields, I investigate de-legitimation, its consequences for the producers and viewers of the drama, and reverberations for the Turkish TV dramas market (organizational field level) and Turkish society in general (societal level). I map out the relations between different actors in legitimization-de-legitimation dynamic, mechanisms utilized in de-legitimizing Behzat Ç., and the ways in which de-legitimation damages the marketplace presence of the drama. I demonstrate the role of changes in prevailing norms and values at the organizational field and societal levels in de-legitimation. I discuss the implications of my findings for the legitimization-de-legitimation dynamic, consumer resistance, and relations between definitions of legitimacy at different levels.

Keywords: Legitimacy, De-legitimation, Isomorphism, Homologies Between Fields, Organizational Field Level, Societal Level, Television Drama, Behzat Ç., Resistance.

ÖZET

BİR KÜLTÜREL ÜRÜNÜN GAYRİMEŞRULAŞTIRILMASI: TÜRK TELEVİZYON DİZİSİ BEHZAT Ç. VAKASI

İşisağ, Anıl Suphi

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Bu tez bir kültürel ürünün gayrimeşrulaştırılmasını incelemektedir. Tüketici araştırmalarında tüketim pratiklerinin ve ürünlerin meşrulaştırılması ve bunun piyasalar kurulmasındaki rolü çalışılmış olmasına rağmen, pratiklerin ve ürünlerin gayrimeşrulaştırıldığı vakalara yeterince ilgi gösterilmemiştir. Bu tezde bir dizi nitel metod kullanarak, içerisinde milletvekilleri ve düzenleyici kuruluşların bulunduğu bir grup aktör tarafından eleştirilen ve mercek altına alınan Türk televizyon dizisi Behzat Ç.'ye odaklanıyorum. Kurumsal teoride geçen meşruiyet kavramı ve Bourdieu'nun alanlar arasında özdeşlik kavramsallaştırmasını kullanarak gayrimeşrulaştırmayı, bunun dizinin yapımcıları ve izleyicileri için sonuçlarını ve Türk televizyon dizileri piyasası (örgütsel alan düzeyi) ve genel olarak Türk toplumundaki (toplumsal düzey) yansımalarını inceliyorum. Meşrulaştırma-gayrimeşrulaştırma dinamiğinde farklı aktörlerin ilişkilerini, Behzat Ç.'nin gayrimeşrulaştırılmasında kullanılan mekanizmaları ve gayrimeşrulaştırmanın hangi yollarla dizinin piyasadaki varlığına zarar verdiğini ortaya koyuyorum. Örgütsel alan ve toplumsal düzeylerde hüküm sürmekte olan normların ve değerlerin değişiminin gayrimeşrulaştırmadaki rolünü gösteriyorum. Bulgularımın meşrulaştırma-gayrimeşrulaştırma dinamiği, tüketici direnişi, ve farklı düzeylerde meşruiyet tanımları arasındaki ilişkilerle alakalı çıkarımlarını tartışıyorum.

Anahtar kelimeler: Meşruiyet, Gayrimeşrulaştırma, Eşyapılılık, Alanlar Arası Özdeşlik, Örgütsel Alan Düzeyi, Toplumsal Düzey, Televizyon Dizisi, Behzat Ç., Direniş.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The trajectories of consumption practices depend on their perceived congruence with the common norms, values, and rules that prevail within the field they are situated as well as the society at large. This congruence comes to mean that these practices are appropriate according to the predominant definitions of legitimacy, and since legitimacy is necessary for their perpetuation, marketers and other institutional actors utilize certain tactics to gain, extend, and maintain legitimacy (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975; Giesler, 2008; Giesler, 2012; Humphreys, 2010a; Humphreys, 2010b; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Press and Arnould, 2011; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010; Suchman, 1995). These tactics may come in the forms of compliance with,

association with, or alteration of the definitions of legitimacy, and as a result consumption practices strengthen their foundations within the field and the society.

Legitimacy of consumption practices have been studied in consumer research and especially in consumer culture theory (CCT) (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Joy and Li, 2012). The particular focus in this stream of research was on formation of new markets as a process of legitimation. Accordingly, consumption practices become legitimate through the operation of normative, regulatory and cultural-cognitive mechanisms as well as alterations in public discourse (Humphreys, 2010b). In the process, groups of actors with divergent interests, and conflicts and negotiations between them are implicated (Giesler 2008; Giesler, 2012; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Thompson, Rindfleisch and Arsel, 2006). The process may be facilitated if networks of (political and economic) actors that are powerful enough to challenge the prevailing (taste) structures act as legitimating actors (Sandıkçı and Ger, 2010). Multiplicity of discourses to derive legitimating tactics/strategies from (Karababa and Ger, 2011) and connotations with commonly-held cultural imaginaries (Press and Arnould, 2011) may also help legitimation. The noted studies rigorously explicate how a consumption practice gets legitimated and new markets are formed concomitantly.

On the other hand, there are other consumption practices which do not comply with, cannot get associated to, or cannot alter the definitions of legitimacy, and these are usually eliminated. Consider the gradual disappearance of rave which lacked

legitimacy in the neoconservative political climate of Thatcherite Britain (Goulding, Shankar, Elliot and Canniford, 2009: 762):

From the late 1980s through the early 1990s, thousands of raves were held across Britain, evoking moral panic in the media (Thornton 1995). The emergence of rave was viewed largely as an antisocial practice and therefore a threat to public order. In particular, rave became a target for the right-wing press, such as the *Sun* and the *Daily Mail*. Rave existed in opposition to and represented the antithesis of middle-class conservative values... Raves and ravers did not fit in with a Thatcherite view of Britain, and the moral panic whipped up by the right-wing press was an attempt to "control . . . these 'threatening' aspects of popular culture" or the "enemy within" (Hill 2002, 90). As media hype concerning raves mounted, in 1989 the police forces in and around London set up a special unit to monitor and control raves. In 1990, Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government responded with legislative amendments to the Entertainment (Increased Penalties) Act (Hill 2002). By early 1994, part five of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act was drafted to specifically target raves, and on November 3, 1994, the act was passed into law and raves were made illegal (Collin 1997; Hill 2002; Reynolds 1998).

While the consumption practice of rave lacked a certain level of legitimacy in the first place, its legitimacy was gradually decreased with negative media coverage, police monitoring, and legislative amendments. Similar stories of how the legitimacy of consumption practices are challenged and decreased over time are prevalent in the marketplace whose dynamics are shaped by not only consumers and marketers, but also a diffuse network of institutional actors including the state, political institutions, regulatory bodies, media, activist groups, and society at large (Giesler, 2008; Giesler 2012; Humphreys, 2010a; Humphreys, 2010b; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Press and Arnould, 2011; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010; Thompson et al., 2006; Penaloza and Venkatesh, 2006).

Scant attention has been paid to such cases in which consumption practices are challenged and eliminated from the marketplace as a consequence of their inability to comply with, become associated with, and alter the definitions of legitimacy. This thesis aims to examine this reverse process called de-legitimation (Johnson, Dowd and Ridgeway, 2006). De-legitimation stands for the process through which a consumption practice is detached from the prevailing norms, values, and rules within a field and the society at large. Whereas legitimation is important for the perpetuation of consumption practices in the marketplace, I argue that de-legitimation damages the marketplace presence and may lead to the elimination of these practices.

De-legitimizing acts of opposing groups have been touched upon in the studies examining legitimacy (Giesler 2008; Giesler, 2012; Goulding et al., 2009; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010; Thompson et al., 2006). Doppelgänger brand images, defined as “famil[ies] of disparaging images and stories about a brand that are circulated in popular culture by a loosely organized network of consumers, antibrand activists, bloggers, and opinion leaders in the news and entertainment media” (Thompson et al., 2006: 50; also see Giesler, 2012), are exemplars of de-legitimizing imageries which become threats for the brands in question. However, these threats are not in any way profound as they are deemed manageable and can be turned to the brand’s advantage with necessary manoeuvres made by managers. In addition, there is another group of studies which mention governments’ direct engagement in de-legitimation of consumption practices (Goulding et al., 2009; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Sandıkcı and

Ger, 2010). However, instead of focusing on how consumption practices in question become illegitimate, these investigate the subsequent process during which changes in the government policies with respect to that consumption practice takes place. For example, Goulding et al. (2009) focused on the emergence of clubbing as the safeguarded form of rave which was facilitated by the government instead of paying attention to how rave was de-legitimated in the first place as summarized in the quote above. Similarly, Sandıkcı and Ger (2010) and Karababa and Ger (2011) focused on how governments play parts in legitimation of consumption practices due to the latter's congruence with their political projects or other benefits such as tax yields. All in all, a full-fledged study of how a consumption practice gets de-legitimated is lacking in the literature.

Using an institutional theory perspective, this thesis examines the de-legitimation of a cultural product, namely the Turkish TV drama *Behzat Ç. An Ankara-based Detective Drama* (Behzat Ç. here onwards). The drama which is known for its leftist, protest and anti-status quo tone was scrutinized by the regulatory body, parliament members, and public figures due to its incongruence with the conservative and religious politico-moral ideals of the current Turkish government. Throughout its 3-year broadcast time on Turkish televisions, it was subjected to administrative sanctions including warnings and a monetary fine, became a matter of parliamentary debate and written parliamentary questions, and reprimanded in public speeches, traditional and social media channels, and daily conversations. By the time it was discontinued by its TV

channel and production company, it was acknowledged that producing and/or broadcasting Behzat Ç. was illegitimate, i.e. incongruent with the common norms, values, and rules within the organizational field of Turkish TV dramas market and the society at large.

To illuminate the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç., I collected data via interviews, observations, archival and internet research from and about viewers, producers, TV critics and journalists, parliament members, the regulatory body, and public figures. In explaining the findings, I lean on the concepts of regulative legitimacy, normative legitimacy, and cultural-cognitive legitimacy borrowed from institutional theory (Humphreys 2010a; Humphreys, 2010b; Scott, 1995; Suchman, 1995). I examine the consequences of de-legitimation for the marketers, i.e. TV channel and production company, and consumers, i.e. viewers, of the drama as well as its reverberations for Turkish TV dramas market and societal dynamics drawing from Bourdieu's (1993) discussion of homologies between different fields.

The thesis is structured as follows: In the next chapter, I review the institutional theory literature on legitimacy, legitimation, and other related concepts and highlight the linkage between definitions of legitimacy at different levels. Then, I go over the studies relating to legitimacy and legitimation in consumer research and CCT literatures and relations between definitions of legitimacy in different levels in these studies. In the third chapter, I give details about the empirical context and the methodology. I first explicate the context of the Turkish TV dramas market and Behzat Ç., and then go

into detail about the data collection from and about different actors, and data analysis. The fourth chapter is devoted to the findings of the study. I present the mechanisms utilized in the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. and the consequences of de-legitimation for the TV channel, production company, and viewers along with the reverberations for the Turkish TV series market and the society at large. I finish with the discussion of the findings by comparing and contrasting them with prior studies.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the theoretical toolbox I use in making sense of the de-legitimation of the production and broadcast of Behzat Ç. My overview will focus on the notion of legitimacy. I will first explain legitimacy and the related concepts of institutionalization and isomorphism drawing from institutional theory. Then I will highlight the linkages between definitions of legitimacy at different levels focusing on the organizational field level and the societal level. In so doing, I will lean on Bourdieu's (1993) discussion of homologies between different fields. In order to make sense of de-legitimation at the societal level, I will briefly mention Weber's (1978) notion of legitimate authority and Gramsci's (1971; 2006) theory of cultural hegemony. I will also examine the literature on managing legitimacy and legitimation as a process. After that, I will go over the studies relating to legitimacy and

legitimation in consumer research and CCT literatures. I will review the prior studies that investigate the relations between definitions of legitimacy at different levels. Before moving on to the context and methodology, I will touch upon the literature on television programming in media and cultural studies and consumer research.

2.1. The Notion of Legitimacy

In this section, I will focus on the notion of legitimacy and some other related concepts in institutional theory. Then, I will dwell on the extant literature on the relations between definitions of legitimacy at different levels. Lastly, I will mention the strategic take on legitimacy which treats it as an asset of the organization and also mention the process of legitimation.

2.1.1. Legitimacy and Related Concepts in Institutional Theory

Institutional theory, also known as new institutionalism in organizational sociology, is a body of research which extensively inquires “the ways in which action is structured and order [is] made possible by shared systems of rules” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991: 11). Accordingly, these shared systems of rules are “highly rationalized myths” (Meyer and Rowan, 1977) which are first constructed and then shared and

objectified by different types of actors (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). They become taken-for-granted over time. According to Jepperson (1991: 145), an institution comes to stand for “a social order or pattern that has attained a certain state or property” and we consider an order institutionalized if divergences from that order are “counteracted in a regulated fashion, by repetitively activated, socially constructed controls”. With their cognitive, normative, and regulative pillars, institutions appear to individuals as impersonal and objective, although these individuals themselves are the ones who constructed and maintained these institutions in the first place (Scott, 1995).

Within institutional theory, legitimacy is extensively studied as it is closely related to institutionalization. The way legitimacy is conceptualized in institutional theory stems from Max Weber’s usage of this notion. According to Weber, in order for a social relationship to be called an order, i.e. institution, it has to be “oriented toward determinable maxims” (Weber, 1978: 31). Furthermore, in order for that social order to be deemed legitimate, the orientation towards these maxims should result from individuals’ consideration that this orientation is “in some way obligatory or exemplary” for them, not merely from custom or self-interest. Similarly, in institutional theory, legitimacy is defined as “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman, 1995: 574). Based on this definition, the way to assess the legitimacy of an entity is not solely to check its legality, but to examine the prevalent values and norms in a society and see whether it is fit with

them as well (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975). In this regard, one important aspect of legitimacy to be stressed here is that it is a generalized perception and thereby it is of a collective nature (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Johnson et al., 2006; Scott, 1995). However, it is also important to note that although it is a generalized perception, legitimacy, as is institutional reproduction, is closely linked with the demands of certain powerful actors who have the ability to mold public opinion (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). After all, social power is the determinant of whose values it is that defines legitimacy (Stinchcombe, 1965 in Scott, 1995).

According to institutional theory, there are three pillars of legitimacy which correspond to the three pillars of an institution, which are regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive (Scott, 1995; cf. Suchman, 1995). Regulative legitimacy refers to the extent to which an entity (a practice or an organization) conforms to the set of rules established by a higher-order organization, such as the state. Normative legitimacy refers to the extent to which the activities the entity engages in are consistent with the widespread norms and values. Since it denotes to a deeper level beyond legality and assesses the moral acceptability of the entity, the corresponding set of rules is more likely to be internalized by individual actors, and the incentives for conformity consist of intrinsic in addition to extrinsic awards. Cultural-cognitive legitimacy refers to the extent to which the entity is taken-for-granted. It is, in other words, the extent to which the entity can be grasped and made sense of according to the commonly-used cultural and cognitive frames of reference, i.e. "widely held beliefs and taken-for-granted

assumptions that provide a framework for everyday routines, as well as the more specialized, explicit and codified knowledge and belief systems promulgated by various professional and scientific bodies" (Scott, 1995: 81). As the definitions suggest, a shift in cultural-cognitive legitimacy is harder to attain and more time-demanding compared to a shift in regulative or normative legitimacy.

Another important concept from institutional theory which is closely linked with legitimacy is isomorphism. Starting with the question why organizations are becoming more and more homogenous, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) conceptualize isomorphism as a process which enforces entities to resemble others that face similar environmental conditions. Following this definition, legitimacy and isomorphism can be said to be going hand in hand. If legitimacy is the extent to which the actions of an entity are appropriate according to the established norms and values, it can be inferred that entities get more and more homogenized as they attain legitimacy. In a similar vein, three mechanisms of institutional isomorphic change, proposed by DiMaggio and Powell, show resemblances to aforementioned pillars of legitimacy. The first mechanism called coercive isomorphism "results from both formal and informal pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectations in the society within which organizations function" (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 150). While the first part of this definition clearly reminds of regulative legitimacy, the second part is more of a cultural-cognitive nature. The second mechanism called mimetic isomorphism functions when the environment creates ambiguity

and organizations model themselves after other organizations which they regard as legitimate or successful. The third mechanism works via normative pressures which specify the way things ought to be in the environment. These two mechanisms are both interrelated with normative legitimacy. While the latter is linked to how factors external to the entity pressurize its normative legitimacy, the former is linked to the entity's internalization of predominant norms and values in order to attain normative legitimacy.

2.1.2. Legitimacy at Different Levels

Legitimacy, along with institutionalization and isomorphism, can be analyzed in varying levels. In order to account for these different levels it is necessary to introduce the Bourdieuan concept of field, which institutional theorists draw upon in conceptualizing organizational field. In Bourdieu's account, fields are networks of relations between different positions which are objectively defined in accordance with their current and potential status (Bourdieu, 1993; Swartz, 1996). Within fields, production, exchange and accumulation of valued resources, i.e. specific types of capital, take place between actors occupying these different positions. There is a specific type of capital that prevails in each field. For example, while intellectual capital is the valuable type of capital within the field of artistic production, economic capital is the coin of

the realm in the business world. Actors gain access to certain profits that emanate within fields thanks to the specific types of capital they invest in and accumulate.

Drawing upon the Bourdieuan concept of field, DiMaggio and Powell (1983: 148) define organizational field as “those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products”. The uniqueness of this level of analysis is that it focuses on the totality of relevant actors within the field. While organizational field is the key level of analysis in institutional theory, Scott (1995) mentions four other levels. These are world system level, societal level, organizational population level, and organizational level. Of special interest to the current study are the organizational (or entity) level (the drama itself), the organizational field level (the Turkish TV dramas market), and the societal level (the societal dynamics) and the relations between these different levels with respect to legitimacy.

According to Bourdieu (1993), actors gain access to specific profits according to their level of capital within fields and thus fields may be thought of as arenas of struggle between actors in different hierarchical positions. These actors aim not only to accumulate capital, but also to define what the most valuable form of capital within the field is. As this struggle suggests, fields can also be described as arenas of struggle for legitimacy. In his writings on the field of cultural production, Bourdieu (1993) further asserts that struggle of legitimacy within a field, particularly the field of cultural

production, is linked to struggles of legitimacy within the field of class relations and the field of power, i.e. the dynamics within the society and politics. He puts forward that (44):

[t]he field of cultural production produces its most important effects through the play of homologies between the fundamental opposition which gives the field its structure and the oppositions structuring the field of power and the field of class relations... [T]he logic of the homologies between the two spaces means that the struggles going on within the inner field are always overdetermined and always tend to aim at two birds with one stone.

Accordingly, homologies between the fields signify that definitions of legitimacy within the field of cultural production are always shaped by those within the higher order fields. Therefore, the legitimacy of a cultural product is assessed based on its congruence with the commonly-held norms and values not only in the field of cultural production, but also in the field of class relations and the field of power. In the case of Behzat Ç., this comes to mean that the legitimacy of Behzat Ç. is based not only on the definitions of legitimacy within the Turkish TV dramas market, but also on those circulating within Turkish society and politics.

The shaping of definitions of legitimacy within the field of cultural production by these higher-order fields is closely related to Gramsci's thesis on cultural hegemony. According to Gramsci (1971; 2006), supremacy of the dominant class within a society is ensured not only via economic domination, but also by means of intellectual and moral leadership. The latter comes to mean that the dominant class manipulates the culture of the society so that its worldview is accepted by other groups as common

sense and its norms and values are regarded as true, normal and moral. In so doing, it furthers the belief in its legitimacy and justifies its domination (Weber, 1978). According to Weber, any form of domination needs to justify itself and therefore attempts to establish and then improve the belief in the legitimacy of its authority. Since justification is the building block of domination itself, the dominant continuously engages in actions of self-justification by bringing the principles of its legitimation to the forefront. Therefore, while Behzat Ç. and the organizational field of Turkish TV dramas market is shaped by the struggles within the Turkish society and politics, legitimacy within the former field is an important tool for the political authority to justify its domination within the latter field.

2.1.3. Managing Legitimacy, Legitimation, and De-legitimation

The account of legitimacy presented above mainly aimed to introduce the concept, the way it is dealt with in institutional theory, and its pillars, and relations between the ways in which legitimacy is defined and assessed at different levels/fields. This section will add to the understanding of legitimacy by discussing the ways and processes of attaining, extending, maintaining and defending legitimacy and some challenges to it. While in the former sections legitimacy was reviewed with an institutional lens, this section takes more of a strategic perspective treating legitimacy as an asset of the entity (organization or company) and also looks at the dynamic process of

legitimation. In the next three subsections, I will discuss legitimation by paying attention to how legitimacy is gained/attained and extended, what possible challenges to it are, and how it is maintained and defended against these challenges.

Gaining/attaining and extending legitimacy. In order to attain legitimacy, entities employ certain tactics such as conforming to the environment, selecting which environments to enter, becoming connoted with what is legitimate, and manipulating the environment as to what counts legitimate (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975; Suchman, 1995). First of all, when there are strongly established norms and values that shape the definitions of legitimacy within the environment, the entity can choose to conform to the environment (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975). Secondly, rather than simply conforming to the definitions of legitimacy within an environment, the entity can choose to select and subsist in environments in which its activities are deemed appropriate in the first place (Suchman, 1995). Thirdly, the entity can choose to employ communication strategies which will help it to be identified with legitimate norms, values and institutions, without altering its actual activities too much (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975). Last but not the least, another tactic to be employed is to alter what is defined as legitimate in the environment.

Once legitimacy is attained, it can be extended by strengthening the establishment of the entity in its particular environment or by entering and gaining legitimacy in new environments (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990). However, entities should be careful in their attempts to extend legitimacy as they “run the risk of “protesting too much”, of

being perceived by constituents as precisely the opposite; manipulative and illegitimate, and thereby decreasing legitimacy” (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990: 186). Once the desired level of legitimacy is reached, it is important for the entity to maintain and defend it. However, the entity should first be aware of possible challenges to its legitimacy. The following subsection will first account for these challenges and then discuss the ways to maintain and defend legitimacy.

Challenges and Maintaining/Defending Legitimacy. Legitimacy of an entity consists of three pillars which are regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive. While cultural-cognitive legitimacy is a much more subtle phenomenon which can be attained or challenged after a long period of changes in regulative and normative legitimacy, more immediate changes are possible in the latter two. Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) put forward that challenges to legitimacy are linked to the dynamic between the entity and the environment. Firstly, the alterations in predominant values and norms within the environment constitute a motivation for change and source of pressure for legitimacy. It is also important to note that alteration in values and norms in higher-order fields can also be regarded as a source of pressure for legitimacy, as I have elaborated above. Secondly, competition is also a challenge to legitimacy. The rivalry between different entities is a source of pressure for legitimacy as each entity constitutes a threat to others’ legitimacy while trying to extend and maintain its own. Thirdly, the entity’s output, i.e. the type of activities it engages in, also constitutes a source of pressure for legitimacy,

since the assessments of legitimacy are based on comparisons between the entity's activities, those of others and the conventional norms and values within the environment.

While there are constant challenges, it is important for entities to maintain and defend their legitimacy. The efforts to maintain legitimacy start just after the entity reaches a level of legitimacy that is sufficient for ongoing activities, while the efforts to defend legitimacy come to the forefront in situations where the entity's legitimacy is challenged (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Suchman, 1995). Maintaining legitimacy requires the entity to perceive the change in the environment and audiences and to protect what it has accomplished in terms of legitimacy so far. Defending legitimacy, on the other hand, requires a process of repairing by going back to basics of gaining legitimacy.

Legitimation and De-legitimation. The aforementioned ways in which entities can manage legitimacy and possible challenges they may come across with constitutes a strategic perspective on the concept of legitimacy and an introduction to the dynamic nature of this phenomenon. To further comprehend this dynamic nature, it is important to account for the process of legitimation. Legitimation is characterized by “the interactive and often iterative process of social construction, negotiation and labeling” (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990: 186) between different groups of actors. According to Johnson and colleagues (2006), this process comprises of four stages, which are denoted as innovation, local validation, diffusion, and general validation, respectively. The first stage starts with the introduction of a social innovation, while the second stage is

the period during which the innovation is accepted at its immediate local level. The third stage remarks the diffusion of the locally accepted innovation into other contexts. The last stage of the legitimation process witnesses the general validation of the social innovation, i.e. its establishment as an element of the society's shared culture. The ways to manage legitimacy and challenges entities come across with can be observed throughout the legitimation process.

While this strategic take on legitimacy and the stages summarized here explicate the process of legitimation in a compelling way, the focus on legitimation obfuscates the equally crucial process of de-legitimation to a great extent. Johnson and colleagues (2006) remark that their analysis of the legitimation process has some implications for de-legitimation as well. They put forward that “de-legitimation of an [entity] might begin with a change in the structural conditions that currently undergird [it]” (p. 73). Problematizing the focus on legitimation, the current thesis examines how a (cultural) product (the TV drama *Behzat Ç.*) gets de-legitimated. Taking inspiration from Johnson and colleagues, I pay attention to the structural conditions within the Turkish TV dramas market in which the common norms and values are undergoing a change.

2.2. Legitimacy and Legitimation in Consumer Research and CCT

In this section, I will review consumer research and specifically CCT literature on legitimacy to point out the ways in which this notion is utilized and the ways in

which legitimacy is further conceptualized in relation to consumption and markets. I will also focus on how the relations between different fields are taken into account in prior research.

2.2.1. Legitimation and De-legitimation of Products¹

Legitimacy with respect to consumption and markets has been studied in consumer research and especially in CCT literature. Legitimacy of brands and products such as Botox Cosmetic (Giesler, 2012), Absolut, Coors and Levi's (Kates, 2004) and Starbucks (Thompson et al., 2006); and consumer practices such as music downloading (Giesler, 2008), raving/clubbing (Goulding et al., 2009), Islamic veiling (*tesettür*) (Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010), gambling (Humphreys, 2010a; Humphreys 2010b; Humphreys and Latour, 2013) and Ottoman coffeehouse consumption (Karababa and Ger, 2011) has been studied. Legitimacy of corresponding industries of clubbing (Goulding et al., 2009); casino gambling (Humphreys, 2010a; Humphreys, 2010b; Humphreys and Latour, 2013), Ottoman coffeehouse (Karababa and Ger, 2011) as well as community supported agriculture (CSA) (Press and Arnould, 2011) has been examined. In addition, legitimacy of consumers such as Star Trek fans (Kozinets, 2001); Fatshionistas, i.e. plus-sized fashion consumers (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2013), music downloaders

¹ From this point onwards, when talking about legitimacy with respect to consumption and markets, I will briefly use the word "product". Legitimacy, legitimation or de-legitimation of products will stand for legitimacy, legitimation or de-legitimation of products and brands, consumption practices, and industries in a broad sense. The other terms will be used whenever necessary.

(Giesler, 2008), women with *tesettür* (Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010) and gay consumers (Kates, 2004) has also been discussed.

Among the studies on legitimacy, of special interest to this thesis are the ones that investigate market formation as a process of legitimation. Accordingly, legitimation process of a product unfolds as changes in semantic associations go hand in hand with changes in regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive structures (Humphreys, 2010a; Humphreys, 2010b). The process may be facilitated if networks of (political and economic) actors that are powerful enough to challenge the prevailing (taste) structures act as legitimating actors (Sandıkcı and Ger, 2011). Multiplicity of discourses to derive legitimating tactics/strategies from (Karababa and Ger, 2011) and connotations with commonly-held cultural imaginaries (Press and Arnould, 2011) may also help legitimation. One common point in these studies is that legitimation is never a smooth process. In the process, groups of actors with divergent interests, and conflicts and negotiations between them are implicated (Giesler 2008; Giesler, 2012; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Thompson et al., 2006). As there are groups of actors with divergent interests, there is a legitimation-de-legitimation dynamic such that while certain actors make an effort to legitimate a particular product, there are others who try to undermine its legitimacy.

Among the studies that touch upon this dialectical relationship between legitimation and de-legitimation, Thompson and colleagues' (2006) and Giesler's (2012) studies on doppelganger brand image particularly focus on de-legitimizing actors.

Doppelganger brand image refers to “a family of disparaging images and stories about a brand that are circulated in popular culture by a loosely organized network of consumers, antibrand activists, bloggers, and opinion leaders in the news and entertainment media” (Thompson et al., 2006: 50). Doppelganger brand images are exemplars of de-legitimizing imageries which become threats for the brands in question. In both of these studies, these threats are regarded as manageable, and strategies to cope with them and use them for the brand’s advantage are presented. Therefore, their de-legitimizing influences are not deemed intensive. This is stemming from the fact that in both cases the brands (Starbucks and Botox) and the companies owning them were more powerful than the de-legitimizing actors, so that they could turn the doppelganger brand images to their advantage by adjusting their brand strategies accordingly. Therefore, these imageries do not result in full-fledged processes of de-legitimation because of the relative impotency of the actors enacting them.

Another group of studies that touch upon legitimization-de-legitimation dynamic briefly mention governments’ engagement in de-legitimation of consumption practices (Goulding et al., 2009; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010). Goulding et al. mention the role of conservative media and Thatcher government in de-legitimizing rave. Karababa and Ger touch upon the Ottoman state and the religious institution’s scrutiny of coffeehouse consumption as the practice was regarded immoral for an ideal Ottoman Muslim. Sandıkcı and Ger mention the role of republican ideology of Turkish Republic and its promotion of modern Turkish identity in stigmatization of Islamic

veiling in the first place. However, instead of analyzing the de-legitimation process, these studies primarily focus on the subsequent processes during which governments make concessions and facilitate legitimation and market formation. Goulding et al. find that clubbing emerged as a site of contained illegality in which illegitimate practices of rave were transformed into more predictable and manageable forms with the initiation of marketers and the government. Karababa and Ger find that multiparty resistance by consumers and marketers (along with benefits such as tax yields) made the sultan and the religious institution make concessions from their earlier position and become more favorable towards coffeehouse consumption. Sandıkcı and Ger find that the rise of political Islam and the ascent of Islamist Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* in Turkish; the AKP hereafter) in Turkish political arena played a part in the legitimation of Islamic veiling. All in all, a full-fledged study of how a product or consumption practice gets de-legitimated is lacking in the literature.

In this study, I define de-legitimation as the process through which a product is detached from the predominant rules, norms, values and frames of reference by using regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive mechanisms. Whereas legitimation facilitates the formation of new markets and is significant for the perpetuation of products in the marketplace, I argue that de-legitimation damages the marketplace presence and may lead to the elimination of these products. Focusing on a cultural product (the Turkish TV drama *Behzat Ç.*) which was scrutinized by parliament members, the

regulatory body, and public figures because of its allegedly explicit content, I investigate de-legitimation via normative and regulative mechanisms.

De-legitimation of a (cultural) product brings the homologies between different levels and the linkages between the definitions of legitimacy at different levels to the forefront. In the next section, I will discuss the studies that touch upon the definitions/perceptions of legitimacy within different fields and their interactions.

2.2.2. The Relations between Legitimacy at Different Levels

Reciprocity of legitimacy, as it is accounted for in consumer research, comes to mean that while a consumer or a group of consumers attribute(s) legitimacy to a product, this particular product also legitimates this consumer or group of consumers in turn (Kates, 2004). Similarly, allying with institutional entrepreneurs may facilitate illegitimate consumers' quest to become legitimate, and at the same time increase the legitimacy of these entrepreneurs (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2013). While legitimacy of products and brands, consumption practices, consumers, and marketers may be reciprocal within a field, what is regarded legitimate may also be shaped by perceptions of legitimacy within different fields.

Bourdieu (1993) notes that fields can be regarded as arenas of struggle for legitimacy. In his account, the oppositions within the field of power and the field of class

relations are never independent of each other and they are also influential in shaping the struggles within other (lower-level) fields. A similar relation is also prevalent between the organizational field level and societal level, as described in institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Scott, 1995). The homologies between these the fields at these two levels suggest that a change in the struggles for legitimacy at the societal level would be effective in shaping the struggles at the organizational field level. In this thesis, while focusing on the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç., I also touch upon how the replacement of secular and modern norms and values with religious and conservative ones at the societal level has shaped the organizational field level, namely the Turkish TV dramas market.

Prior research has briefly mentioned the relations between different fields with respect to legitimacy. Scaraboto and Fischer (2013) find that oversized consumers find support in adjacent fields such as the one constituted by the Fat Acceptance Movement in their quest for participation in mainstream fashion markets. Sandıkcı and Ger (2010) acknowledged the role of the AKP's ascent in the field of power in the legitimation of Islamic veiling for urban middle-class consumers. The current study contributes to this line of research by explicating the linkages between definitions of legitimacy within fields at different levels, namely the organizational field level and the societal level. It seeks out the relations between the legitimacy of Behzat Ç., legitimacy within the Turkish TV dramas market and legitimacy at the societal level, by focusing on the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç.

Before continuing with the context and methodology, I will go over the literature on television programming in media and cultural studies and consumer research.

2. 3. Television Programming

Television programming has primarily been the subject matter of media and cultural studies, and particularly of television studies. Two streams of research prevalent in this field have been textual analyses of television programs and similar media texts and empirical research on how audiences receive these texts (Ang, 1991; Fiske, 1987; Morley, 1992). While the first stream draws from a text-based semiotics tradition, the second one regards audiences as active social actors that make meanings through engaging with media texts. Drawing from Hall's thesis ([1980] 2006) that while encoding (by producers) provides the general framework that can be utilized in making sense of media texts, viewer interpretations built through decoding diverge from the ones intended by producers; it opts for empirical (ethnographic) research of audience reception. Henry Jenkins (1992) takes the idea of active audiences a step forward and discusses the ways through which television fans not only actively make meaning out of media texts, but also construct a culture of their own by borrowing from these texts to create parallel fictional stories, songs, poems, etc.

Although sporadic, there have also been investigations of television programming and audiences in marketing and consumer research literature. In line with the two

streams in television studies, research has focused on textual analyses of consumption meanings in television texts and also ethnographic investigations of viewers (blurring or neglecting the line between consumption and viewership)². An early example of the textual analyses was Hirschman's (1988) study of TV dramas *Dallas* and *Dynasty* as carriers of consumption ideology in which she investigates the messages about secular and sacred consumer behaviors within these texts. Other studies from this stream focus on consumption's role in resolving and resulting in tensions related to countervailing discourses of gender as represented in TV dramas (Zayer, Sredl, Parmentier and Coleman, 2012) and mobilization of audiences' emotional engagement with reality shows by TV producers for profit-making (Bonsu, Darmody and Parmentier, 2010). One path taken by consumer researchers that employ ethnographically-informed studies of audience reception has been examining the interpretive strategies of consumers in their engagement with television and other media texts (Hirschman and Thompson, 1997; Russell, Schau and Crockett, 2013; Schau and Russell, 2004). Hirschman and Thompson identify three strategies, which are inspiring and aspiring, deconstructing and rejecting, and identifying and individualizing. Similar to the third strategy offered by them, Russell et al. introduce the term *homophilization*, which comes to stand for consumers' relating to TV texts by associating certain elements of them with their

² According to Graeber (2011), TV viewing should not be regarded as a form of consumption. While consumption is, in the very basic sense, a metaphor of eating (Wilk, 2004), there is no reason to extend the metaphor this far to include viewership. While Wilk points out that we should consider how far we really want to extend the metaphor, in consumer research as well as in media studies many scholars use the term "TV consumption". Throughout this thesis, I refrain from this usage and regard the Behzat Ç. followers as viewers (and fans). As I will explicate below, I do not dwell primarily on the viewing practices, but focus on the interactions between different actors in the Turkish TV dramas market and specifically those surrounding Behzat Ç.

everyday (consumption) experiences. The second path taken in ethnographically-informed studies has been studying the tensions and paradoxes consumers encounter with or resolve in their TV viewership (Kjeldgaard and Storgaard Nielsen, 2010; Rose and Wood, 2005). These studies have focused on consumers' tensions and negotiations related to countervailing discourses of gender within the dramas they watch (Kjeldgaard and Storgaard Nielsen, 2010) and paradoxes they encounter with in their quest for authenticity in viewing reality TV. On the other hand, Kozinets's (2001) study of Star Trek consumers is possibly the greatest example of viewer ethnographies in consumer research. This study takes into account not only interpretive strategies and tensions and paradoxes of consumers, but also how these are shaped by producers, subcultures and wider cultural meanings that circulate in the Star Trek culture of consumption. In addition to textual analyses and ethnographic investigations of audience reception, there are also quantitative studies that employ survey methodology focusing on the context of TV programming in consumer research. The relationship between TV viewing and consumer perceptions of social reality (Shrum, Wyer and O'Guinn, 1998) and the relationship between TV viewing and consumer beliefs about the pervasiveness of products and consumer practices that connote an affluent consumer style are examined (O'Guinn and Shrum 1997). A connectedness scale which measures consumers' level of engagement with a TV program and its characters is developed (Russell, Norman and Heckler, 2004).

As Jansson (2002) proposes, it is possible to conceive of the contemporary society as an image culture, a term which draws upon the interlinkages between what we call consumer culture and media culture. Therefore, it is not unusual to see consumer researchers examining media contexts, particularly those of TV programming. Although the aforementioned studies investigated different aspects of TV texts and audiences' reception of these texts, there hasn't been to date a study which focuses on TV markets, rather than TV texts and viewership. Although Kozinets (2001) does a good job in examining the interactions between consumers, subcultures, producers and widespread cultural meanings; he emphasizes on how all these practices shape consumer interpretations of Star Trek texts and objects instead of focusing on market-level implications. As Bagozzi (1975) points out, TV markets are systems of complex exchange in which relationships between various actors are played out. Therefore, focusing on one such market, it is possible to answer Penaloza and Venkatesh's (2006) call for studying markets as social constructions in which consumers, marketers, and other actors can be investigated as constituting parts of social groups. In an attempt to address this issue, I utilize a relational approach to examine Behzat Ç. viewers, producers, broadcasting TV channel, the regulatory body, and other actors within and beyond the Turkish TV dramas market throughout the de-legitimation process (Penaloza, 2001).

The research questions that direct this study are as follows: (1) How does a (cultural) product, namely the TV drama Behzat Ç., get de-legitimated? (2) What is the

role played by different actors, such as consumers, marketers, media, and the government, in de-legitimation? How do these actors shape legitimation-de-legitimation dynamics? (3) How does de-legitimation shape the practices and interpretations of these different actors? What are the reverberations of de-legitimation at the organizational field (the Turkish TV dramas market) and the societal levels? How do definitions of legitimacy within these different levels relate to each other? In the next chapter, I will detail the empirical context and the methodological tools utilized to address these research questions.

CHAPTER III

CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will first talk about the context of the study: Turkish TV dramas market and especially the Behzat Ç. case. Then I will explicate the data collection and analysis methods utilized. I will finish with methodological and contextual limitations.

3. 1. Context

The broad empirical context of the study is the organizational field of the Turkish TV dramas market³. In order to make sense of the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç., it

³ Throughout this thesis, I use “drama” as an umbrella term. I refrain from using the term “series”, because Turkish dramas contain elements from both “series” and “serial” genres. While series comes to mean a single story broken into different episodes, serial refers to a show with the same characters but a

is important to understand the dynamics of this field, how it is shaped by the political authority and the position Behzat Ç. occupies in it. Therefore, I will first make a brief introduction to the emergence and the current state of Turkish TV dramas. Then, I will briefly mention the current government and its attempts to shape media environments including the Turkish TV dramas market with recourse to its politico-moral ideals. Lastly, I will describe Behzat Ç. and the ongoing debate about it.

3. 1. 1. The Turkish TV Dramas Market

The first examples of domestically-produced TV dramas met Turkish audience in the state-run TV channel TRT (abbreviation of Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) in mid-1970s (Çelenk, 2010; Yağcı, 2011). While many dramas in both serial and series formats were produced and broadcasted by TRT in late 70s and 80s, the actual proliferation of Turkish TV dramas became possible when private TV channels started broadcasting in early 1990s. The wave of liberalization initiated by the center-right nationalist Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi*) which was in power from 1983 to 1991 had important impact on media. With the initiation of Turgut Özal, the founding leader of the party (PM from 1983 to 1989 and President from 1989 to 1993), 12 private TV channels were founded from 1990 to 1993 (Serim, 2007). The audience

different story each episode. Although they are rare when compared to dramas, there are also comedies (especially sitcoms) broadcasted in Turkish televisions. When I use the term Turkish TV dramas market, I also refer to them.

interest in TV dramas, which was even prevalent in fan letters sent to TRT in 1970s, came to the forefront in 1990s with the establishment of private TV channels and paved the way for the proliferation of domestically-produced TV dramas (Çelenk, 2010). Late 1990s and early 2000s witnessed the rise of a TV dramas industry in Istanbul which has developed to an unprecedented magnitude in a short span of time. For the viewers, watching Turkish TV dramas has become the most common practice of evening entertainment and way of spending time with family. By the second half of 2000s, in order to attract audience attention, get high ratings and thereby guarantee a bigger slice of the advertisement cake which amounts to approximately 4.5 billion Turkish Liras, national TV channels filled the prime-time with TV dramas, an episode of which lasts for 85 to 120 minutes. During the 2013-2014 television season, approximately 60%-65% of primetime schedules was occupied with Turkish TV dramas and 50%-55% of top 5 programs in rating lists was comprised of the dramas (Deloitte, 2014). Especially the period between 2005 and 2008 witnessed the boom of Turkish TV dramas (ISMMMO, 2008). In 2008, 63 domestically-produced dramas were broadcasted in 11 national channels, while the size of the industry amounted to 1 billion Turkish Liras. At the same time, the boom in the industry paved the way for Turkish TV dramas to become export commodities to Middle East, Balkans, Middle Asia, and then Northern Europe.

Since Turkish TV dramas are produced and broadcasted with the aim of scoring high ratings to charge high prices for advertisement slots, they are intended to reach

the widest possible public. As such, external demand from audiences and investment profitability are important concerns that direct the cultural production of Turkish TV dramas, which limits the autonomy of the producers. The two key stakeholders within the organizational field of the Turkish TV dramas market are the national TV channels and independent production companies (Deloitte, 2014; ISMMMO, 2008; ISMMMO, 2010). While some TV channels undertake the production of the dramas they broadcast, 90 percent of Turkish TV dramas are produced by independent production companies and marketed to the channels. Producers generally make agreements with the TV channels on the basis of rating forecasts; the competition is so fierce that if the targeted level of ratings is not achieved, a drama gets cancelled after only a few episodes. In the production of each drama, 60 to 100 cast and crew members, including (executive) producers, directors, actors and actresses, and musicians, work collaboratively.

Although the Turkish TV dramas industry has reached a non-ignorable size via the transactions between the aforementioned stakeholders and there are lucrative domestic and foreign markets for its products, dramas broadcasted in major TV channels have been thematically bound with certain discourses and thereby similar storylines are repeated over and over again. For one thing, a conservative discourse which sacralizes “the traditional Turkish family” has been an important pillar of Turkish TV dramas starting from the early 1990s (Yağcı, 2011). Similar conservative sentiments can be observed in mafia dramas (*Deliyürek* [Crazy Heart], 1998; *Kurtlar Vadisi* [Valley of the Wolves], 2003), dramas that portray the still-continuing feudal system in

Southeast Turkey (for example *Asmalı Konak* [The Mansion with Wines], 2002; *Sıla*, 2006] and crime-dramas that are adorned with messages which foster a positive image of police department in the society (for example *Yılan Hikayesi* [The Story of the Snake], 1999; *Arka Sokaklar* [Back Streets], 2006). Although conservative and also religious sentiments are widespread in these dramas, it is important to note that TV dramas in Turkey are still founded on a liberal and secular basis as per the language of television programs (such as dramas, reality shows, quiz shows, etc.) in general (Tayfun Atay, ‘Televizyon Seküler Sever’, *Radikal*; October 30, 2012⁴).

On the other hand, 2000s are regarded as a period during which Turkish TV dramas have become “politicized” (Emre Çetin, 2014). Politicization took place through the emergence of dramas that deal with contemporary political issues (*Kurtlar Vadisi Pusu* [Valley of the Wolves: Ambush], 2007; *Sakarya Fırat* [2009]), dramas that settle accounts with the past (*Çemberimde Gül Oya* [Rose Embroidery on My Hoop], 2004; *Öyle Bir Geçer Zaman Ki* [As Time Goes By], 2010;), neo-Ottoman costume dramas (*Muhteşem Yüzyıl* [The Magnificent Century], 2011; *Ertuğrul: Diriliş* [Resurrection], 2014) and the introduction of piety and Islamic worldview in storylines (*Kurtlar Vadisi Pusu*, 2007; *Huzur Sokağı* [Peace Street], 2012). However, the politicization of TV dramas has been far from democratizing Turkish television; on the contrary, it paved the way for interventions from the government which directly target the content of the dramas. In the next section, I will illustrate how the political authority

⁴ Retrieved from http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/tayfun_atay/televizyon_sekuler_sever-1105844

shapes the Turkish TV dramas market. I will briefly mention the transformation in Turkish society and politics initiated by the current government and its attempts to shape TV dramas along with other media products with recourse to its politico-moral ideals.

3. 1. 2. The Political Authority Shaping the Turkish TV Dramas Market

According to Gramsci (1971; 2006), supremacy of the dominant class within a society is ensured not only via economic domination, but also by means of intellectual and moral leadership. The dominant class manipulates the culture of the society, so that its worldview is accepted by other groups as common sense and its beliefs and values are regarded as true, normal, or moral. In Bourdieu's account this corresponds to the shaping of the inner field of cultural production by the field of power (Bourdieu, 1993). Starting with the AKP's coming to power in 2002, attempts for an ideological domination of this sort has been accompanying the economic developments in Turkey. In the economic domain, the party furthered the neoliberal transformation of the country which was initiated in 1970s when the Turkish economy started to expand and become globalized (Emrence, 2008). The AKP's commitment to neoliberalism brought about economic policies that are favorable for the bourgeoisie, especially Islamic oriented Anatolian groups which are referred to as "second generation bourgeoisie" (Bozkurt, 2013). Accordingly, flexible labor is legalized, welfare policies are

weakened and as a result the state's welfare provision duties are subcontracted to the private sector. In order to legitimate these neoliberal policies which render millions in the country vulnerable, the AKP appealed to ideological domination by way of neo-conservative discourse and policies (Bozkurt, 2013; Brown, 2006; Harvey, 2005). Neoconservatism sees "morality as the necessary social glue to keep the body politic secure" in a neoliberal order in which individual entrepreneurial freedoms are brought to the forefront (Harvey, 2005: 82). While in theory conservative inclinations were to be curbed in order for neoliberalism to proliferate, neoconservatism has been the antidote to the resolution of society due to neoliberal policies. At the end of the day, neoliberal governments needed neoconservatism to appeal to the electoral base and remain in power.

The AKP's recourse to conservatism, nationalism, Ottomanism and Islamism stems from a similar concern (Bozkurt, 2013; Çınar, 2011; Ertuğrul, 2012). Accordingly, traditional and religious values and morality were needed to legitimate the current socio-economic order (Ertuğrul, 2012). This quest for legitimation has led to the party's project of transforming Turkish politics and society in line with its conservative and religious (Islamist) politico-moral ideals. It envisions an essentially Muslim and Ottoman national identity for the country and presupposes the Turkish society as a culturally homogenous people/nation whose common denominator is being Muslim (Çınar, 2011; Ertuğrul, 2012). In this sense, the party is against secularism and aims to replace republican and secular norms and values that shaped everyday life with

conservative and religious ones. The sociocultural policies of the party brought fixed traditions, historical consciousness and religion to the forefront. Its authoritarian right-wing policies led to the stigmatization of those who do not share these values. At the end of the day, the socio-economic policies of the party include a mixture of neoliberalism and neoconservatism.

Influence of the authoritarian right-wing politics of the AKP can be seen in media environments, especially after the party's second electoral victory in 2007 (Akser and Baybars-Hawks, 2012). Starting with this period, changes in media ownership took place and media assets passed into the hands of groups friendly to the government. At the same time, a number of tools have been utilized by the AKP government to pressurize media critical of its policies. First of all, government-imposed fines over taxes which were overlooked until then started to be enforced whenever media companies became critical of the government. Secondly, journalists were prosecuted for their statements (critical of the AKP government) in print and online media as well as in phone conversations which were monitored. Thirdly, the Turkish Information and Communication Technology Authority (*Bilgi Teknolojileri ve İletişim Kurumu*), a governmental regulatory body which regulates the internet, applied bans on certain websites including YouTube because of the allegedly explicit contents (see also Yalkın, Kerrigan and von Lehm, 2013). While these kinds of attempts at censoring and silencing opposing views and media content incongruent with the conservative and religious ideals of the government are prevalent in different fields in media

environments, the Turkish TV dramas market is also bound up with the political authority such that the legitimate form of cultural production (within the organizational field of Turkish TV dramas market) is shaped by the government (i.e. the field of power) (Bourdieu, 1993). Throughout this thesis, “the political authority” stands for the government and its constituents such as parliament members, regulatory bodies, public figures, and etc. which suppress Behzat Ç. and the Turkish TV dramas in general in line with the conservative and religious ideals.

After the politicization of the scripts, domestic TV dramas have become a topic of debate in the parliament (Emre Çetin, 2014). Dramas such as *Muhteşem Yüzyıl*, *Kurtlar Vadisi* and *Behzat Ç.* were under constant scrutiny. Concerns were primarily raised about whether the dramas are appropriate according to Turkish family values, whether they represent Turkish government officials and historical figures properly, and whether they are harmful for the physical, mental and moral development of the children and youth. Even the Prime Minister Erdoğan and Deputy Prime Minister Arınç got involved with in these debates by reprimanding certain TV dramas in their public speeches (Carney, 2014). While parliament members from the AKP have taken part in these debates, those from the MHP (Nationalistic Movement Party; *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*) have also been vocal⁵.

⁵ MHP is a right-wing political party which defends the Turco-Islam ideal and Turkish nationalism. Currently the party is the third largest group in Turkish National Assembly after AKP and CHP. Although critical of AKP’s (especially neoliberal) policies, there are intersections in the politico-moral ideologies of the two parties.

Apart from direct reprimands by politicians, an important mechanism through which the government has influenced the production and broadcasting of TV dramas is RTUK (Radio and Television Supreme Council; *Radyo ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu*). RTUK is an extra-governmental body with administrative and financial autonomy, which monitors and regulates radio and television broadcasting in Turkey. It was established in 1994, when its predecessor Radio and Television High Council fell short of regulating private radio and TV broadcasting that emerged during the liberalization movement. It allegedly uses its authority and fulfills its duties independently; however, over the years concerns were raised about its affinity to current political authorities and its usage as an ideological tool in ensuring cultural hegemony (Gramsci, 1971; Serim, 2007). The 9 members of the supreme council are selected by the Turkish National Assembly according to the proportion of political parties in the assembly, which casts doubt on its autonomy. According to Law No. 6112 titled The Law for Establishment and Broadcasting Services of Radios and Televisions which entered into force in 2011, RTUK has the authority to give warnings and impose administrative fines, and cease broadcasting of programs when broadcasting services are detected to violate the principles of public responsibility stated in the law. However, according to the same law, broadcasting and the content of broadcast services cannot be monitored or interfered with before broadcasts took place. This means that radio and TV programs are first broadcasted and then monitored and (if necessary) sanctioned, resulting in a high visibility of censorship (also see Karaca, 2011 for censorship policies in Turkey). The monitoring of broadcasting is carried out directly by RTUK experts and also by taking

into account viewer complaints and requests which are received via RTUK Call Center and the council's website and e-mail addresses (RTUK Strateji Geliştirme Dairesi Başkanlığı, 2012). The importance of RTUK for the Turkish TV dramas market lies in the fact that most of the viewer complaints and requests and the council decisions are focused on TV dramas. According to RTUK's 2012 activity report, 47% of the 103,067 notices made by viewers were about TV dramas. While this proportion is regarded as a very large number when compared to the proportion in 2011, which was 29%, it is noted that this is due to the excessive number of notices made about a particular TV drama, the name of which is not disclosed. On the other hand, it is stated that RTUK held two meetings with television and film producers and scriptwriters in order to discuss the problems related to the storylines and also the general problems of the industry in 2012, which further indicates the council's attempts to be closely involved with the cultural production.

While the proliferation of TV dramas which reached its peak in 2008 and the politicization of TV dramas paved the way for the production and broadcast of Behzat Ç., the government's attempts to suppress views incongruent with the conservative and religious ideals and media critical of its policies resulted in its de-legitimation. In the next section, I focus on Behzat Ç. and explain its content, position among other Turkish TV dramas, and the on-going debate around it as well as different parties involved in this debate.

3.1.3. Behzat Ç. An Ankara-based Detective Drama

Behzat Ç. An Ankara-based Detective Drama (*Behzat Ç. Bir AnKara Polisiyesi*) is a detective drama based on Emrah Serbes's two novels, *Each Contact Leaves a Mark* (*Her Temas İz Bırakır*, 2006) and *The Last Excavation* (*Son Hafriyat*, 2008). It was produced by an independent production company named Adam Film and broadcasted on Star TV from September 2010 to May 2013. Episodes were written by Ercan Mehmet Erdem with Emrah Serbes contributing in every 10th episode and directed by Serdar Akar, Doğan Ümit Karaca, Zekeriya Kurtuluş and Sadullah Şentürk. Erdal Beşikçioğlu played the leading character Behzat Ç. and was supported by Canan Ergüder (Prosecutor Esra), Fatih Artman (Harun), İnanç Konukçu (*Hayalet*, “The Ghost”) and Berkan Şal (*Akbaba*, “The Vulture”). The drama lasted for three seasons and 96 episodes and accompanied by two motion pictures, *Behzat Ç. I Buried You In My Heart* (*Behzat Ç. Seni Kalbime Gömdüm*) which was in theaters on 28 October 2011, just before the second season kick-off and *Behzat Ç. Ankara is Burning* (*Behzat Ç. Ankara Yanıyor*) which was in theaters on 1 November 2013, 5 months after the drama finale.

The drama is mainly about the adventures of chief inspector Behzat Ç.⁶ and other police officers at the homicide bureau of Ankara police department. A regular episode

⁶ While Ç is the first letter of the main character's surname, the remaining letters are unknown throughout the drama. There are many speculations for what it is; however, no one but the author of the Behzat Ç. books knows the actual surname. No matter what the actual surname is, Ç is read like Che in Che Guevara and some fans and TV critics regard it as a reference to Guevara.

starts with a murder case and concludes with Behzat and his team solving the case, and therefore the drama has certain features that resemble the series format. On the other hand, the storyline also has features which are attributed to the serial format, such as Behzat's ongoing investigation of his daughter's murder, his and other main characters' love affairs, the serial killers introduced each season, and the relations between the state, mafia and business world which the main characters come across with while dealing with supposedly ordinary crimes. Therefore, Behzat Ç. can be classified as a hybrid TV drama which combines elements of series and serial formats (Yörük, 2012).

The drama is known for its leftist, protest and anti-status quo tone. The main character Behzat, who is described as an anti-hero by the producers of the drama and TV critics is a bad-tempered, alcoholic chief inspector. He frequently goes against his superiors and digs cases which involve misconduct of government officials and businessmen although he is told to step back. The stories involve Behzat's and the other officers' dealing with incidents of nepotism, bigotry, debauchery, and corruption of government officials. Moreover, the drama often raises controversial political and social issues, including police brutality, Kurdish issue, honor killings, imprisoned journalists, and murders of LGBT people, which are generally not discussable in Turkish TV dramas. At times, the drama brings implicit criticisms to the current and former governments and different political ideologies from left to right. Throughout the drama, Behzat and other officers in the homicide bureau are seen drinking excessively (sometimes on duty), using profane words quite frequently, beating suspects during

interrogation, and engaging in extramarital affairs (see pictures of related scenes from the drama in appendix A).

The drama occupies an exceptional position among Turkish TV dramas in many respects. First of all, its depiction of Turkish police is far different from the ones in other crime-dramas which aim to foster a positive image of police department in the society. Secondly, the social and political issues included in the drama and the perspective from which these issues are taken into account makes it even more distinctive. 2000s have been a period during which a number of TV dramas that settle accounts with the past appeared on Turkish televisions, and therefore Behzat Ç. is not the first example in this regard (Emre Çetin, 2014; Yörük, 2012). TV dramas such as *Çemberimde Gül Oya*, *Hatırla Sevgili* (Remember Darling, 2006) and *Öyle Bir Geçer Zaman Ki* are important examples which employ a leftist language while dealing with politically and socially charged issues. However, all of these are period dramas; their storylines take place in Turkey's late history (Yörük, 2012). What distinguishes Behzat Ç. from them is that it takes place in today's Ankara and it deals with current political and social issues in addition to the ones from late history. On the other hand, it is important to note that there were other TV dramas which were broadcasted in late 2000s and which dealt with the Kurdish issue, such as *Sakarya Fırat* and *Tek Türkiye* (One Turkey, 2007). However, these dramas took on a perspective close to the official political discourse on the issue, unlike Behzat Ç. Thirdly, during its broadcast life Behzat Ç. has been the only prime-time drama that takes place in Ankara and this in itself is

regarded as a resistance to the hegemony of Istanbul-based dramas in Turkish televisions (Tuncer, 2012). Moreover, the drama uses Ankara not only as the city where the story takes place, but it also treats the city as a character in itself which shapes the plot. Last but not the least, instead of marketing Behzat Ç. to the widest possible audience as is the case with other Turkish TV dramas, Star TV interestingly chose to position the drama as a quality product and appeal to a niche market which consists of individuals which normally “remain distant to TV programs” (Yörük, 2012: 256). This positioning strategy which prioritizes prestige over high ratings is evident in the TV channel’s insistence on broadcasting Behzat Ç. for three seasons in spite of low to mediocre ratings and its efforts to emphasize that the drama is based on the two novels by Emrah Serbes. All in all, Behzat Ç. was an exceptional TV drama which found itself a place in Turkish televisions thanks to Star TV’s positioning strategy which distinguished it from others. However, its main characters’ lifestyles and its dealing with current political and social issues from a perspective incongruent with the conservative and religious ideals made it a target of scrutiny by the current government.

The political authority scrutinized the drama for undermining the ideal of a policeman (and also other government officials) as a paragon of morality, a defender of societal values and a loyal servant of the state. As such, the characters’ drinking habits, extramarital affairs, and extensive use of profane words were matters of debate as they were believed to be inappropriate according to Turkish family values and harmful especially for the physical, mental and moral development of the children and youth.

Furthermore, the drama was accused to be misrepresenting Turkish police and other government officials. The RTUK subjected the drama to administrative sanctions including warnings and a monetary fine. The complaints about the drama even made it into the parliamentary agenda, parliamentary questions were raised about the (in)appropriateness of the drama for TV broadcasting, and some parliament members publicly reprimanded the series in their speeches. These led to the mobilization of public figures and concerned non-viewers who internalize the official viewpoint on the issue. While the former condemned the drama through different media channels including TV programs, newspapers and social media, the latter also vilified it in social media and daily conversations. As it is stated in the law that the content of TV programs cannot be monitored or interfered with before broadcasting takes place, TV programs are first broadcasted and then monitored and (if necessary) sanctioned, which was the case with Behzat Ç. as well. As evident from the RTUK's actions, "the manner in which silencing mechanisms work and are addressed in Turkey leads to a high visibility of censorship [which] at times also [leads to] to very visible responses" (Karaca, 2011: 180). These responses came from the viewers and TV critics.

While Behzat Ç. was never at the top of the rating lists except for a few episodes, it had a fairly strong fan base which consisted of "urban, educated [individuals] who despise Turkish TV dramas" and watching television in general (Yörük, 2012: 254), especially in Ankara. My participants and also TV critics stated that many of these fans are internet-savvy. Hit rates of Behzat Ç. episodes featured on Star TV's website also

show that there were a great number of people watching the drama on internet. At the same time, fans were exceptionally active on social media. They had been praising the drama on Twitter, Facebook groups, and other user-generated content sites starting from the first episodes. When there were rumors that the drama was to be cancelled after 13th episode due to low ratings, they ran an extensive letter-writing campaign and sent an excessive amount of e-mails to Star TV. In a number of newspaper interviews, producers stated that the support of their core audience (“*kemik kitle*”) was what kept the drama going on in the first season. Furthermore, when RTUK warned and fined the drama and parliamentary questions were raised in the national assembly, fans started protest campaigns on social media and also organized outdoor-watching events in downtown Ankara with the help of a CHP-led municipality⁷.

Behzat Ç. was also well-received by TV critics who frequently wrote about it in their daily or weekly columns in national newspapers. Although at times concerns were raised about the excessively profane and sexist language of the main characters and the drama’s role in legitimating police brutality, in general the comments by TV critics were positive as they regard Behzat Ç. a “realist and sincere” TV drama of high quality in terms of its narrative complexity and the way it deals with important social and political issues. When the drama was under the pressure of RTUK and parliament members, TV critics consistently declared their support in their columns with only a

⁷ CHP (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, Republican People’s Party) is the main opposition party in the Turkish Grand National Assembly. It is a Kemalist social democratic and social liberal party. Some of the participants I interviewed proclaim themselves as supporters of the party, while the drama is not explicitly affiliated with any political faction and at times criticizes CHP and its supporters as well.

few exceptions. Last but not the least, the cast and crew members of the drama reacted to RTUK's and parliament member's scrutiny in their interviews conducted by journalists and in TV programs in which they were hosted. Moreover, at times the very text of the drama was utilized to ridicule the preoccupations of RTUK, parliament members and public figures regarding the drama.

From the first to the third season, the airing time of Behzat Ç. has changed from 8.30 pm to 10 pm and then to 11 pm due to the pressures. While the profane language was bleeped starting from the first episode, alcoholic beverages started to be blurred as per the new RTUK law passed during the second season. The smart signs which appear on the screen just before each drama starts indicated that Behzat Ç. was appropriate for viewers at or over the age of 13 during the second and third seasons, while the first season was remarked to be appropriate for viewers at or over the age of 7. The broadcast life of the drama was ended with the third season during which the ratings significantly dropped due to the late airing time as well as the changed rating system⁸. There are multiple antecedents which paved the way for the termination of the drama including insufficient funds (because of the decrease in advertising revenues due to

⁸ The rating measurements in Turkey were carried out by AGB Nielsen until December 2011 when its contract was cancelled by *Televizyon İzleme Araştırmaları Komitesi* (Television Viewership Research Committee; abbreviated TİAK), the institution responsible for the measurements (Deloitte, 2014). There was no official rating measurement for an 8-month period since a new panel was designed and finally in September 2012, TNS started measuring the ratings with a different sample size and a different sample structure. Some journalists and TV critics claimed that, with the inducements of the political authority, the new panel was designed to give precedence to the preferences of the conservative and religious viewers and therefore the ratings of the programs changed accordingly when the new system started its operation (Tayfun Atay, *Televizyon Seküler Sever*, Radikal; October 30, 2012; retrieved from http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/tayfun_atay/televizyon_sekuler_sever-1105844).

late air time) and exhaustion of the producers; however, de-legitimation of producing and broadcasting Behzat Ç. had been a significant moment for the fate of the drama as well as for the changing face of the organizational field of the Turkish TV dramas market. In the next section, I present the methods of data collection and analysis utilized in making sense of the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç.

3.2. Methodology

In this section, I will first go into detail about my data collection from different actors and the different methods utilized in doing so. Then I will explain two different data analysis methods which I relied on in making sense of the data collected.

3.2.1. Data Collection

The study first started in October 2012 as a term project for the Qualitative Research course. While the initial purpose was to study Turkish TV dramas and viewers in general, my introspection and a preliminary observation of Behzat Ç. viewers shifted the focus to this particular drama and its viewers, both of which occupy a distinctive position among other dramas and their viewers respectively. Over time, the main focus of the study has become the de-legitimation of the production and broadcast of

Behzat Ç. as I realized that the distinctive position of the drama was enhanced by its de-legitimation and reactions to de-legitimation. Attempts to de-legitimize Behzat Ç. became prominent in May 2012 which corresponded to the last episodes of the second season of the show. October 2012 was a good point in time to start data collection as the pressures and the reactions of the viewers and producers were frequently reported in newspapers and online news media and thereby public opinion about the drama and the ongoing contestations were in the forming at that time. Data collection continued until June 2014 (approximately 1 year after the drama ended) in order to include the viewers' interpretations and assumptions about what actually happened –i.e. why the production and broadcast of the drama was de-legitimated – and media coverage in the aftermath of the drama's termination in the data set.

I watched almost all of the episodes starting from the very first one in September 2010. I regard myself as a fan, so I had been writing short memos throughout the research to reflect on my position as an aca-fan. Going back to these memos from time to time, I reflected on the decisions I made during different stages of the study. I tried to observe and keep out my bias and perceptions. Since I realized that I was resentful towards the political authority due to the pressures on Behzat Ç., I decided to watch the drama from the start with a critical eye during data collection and analysis. I tried to understand the perspective of the de-legitimizing actors as I watched the drama for this second time and I actually started to feel disturbed by certain scenes involving alcohol consumption, profanity, and police brutality. I found this exercise really helpful

as it made me aware of my situatedness and countervailing perspectives in the debate on the drama.

My own knowledge and experiences during the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. has been important in accessing data sources and guiding the study in general. While the study started with my introspection and an observation of Behzat Ç. viewers while watching the drama, multiple data collection methods including interviews, observations, archival and internet research were utilized afterwards. Using these methodological tools, data was collected from and about the RTUK, parliament members, public figures, TV critics, and producers and viewers of the drama. Therefore, by triangulating across data collection methods and data sources, the credibility⁹ of the data set was enhanced (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989). Table 1 illustrates the actors from which data is collected and the methods utilized in collecting data from these actors.

Table 1: Data Collection - Actors and methods

Actor	Method	Source
RTUK, parliament members and public figures	Archival and internet research	• RTUK resolutions • Parliamentary questions • Online news media and TV programs

⁹ A study is deemed credible if the representations of the constructions of reality studied are adequate and believable (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989). As a tool for assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative research, credibility corresponds to internal validity in positivist approaches to methodology.

Table 1 (cont'd)

Actor	Method	Source
Fans, viewers and non-viewers	Interviews Observations Internet research	• Interviews with fans, viewers and non-viewers • Observations: an outdoor-watching event, a fan-producer meeting, and watching an episode with a group of fans • Online news media • Reviewing social media (mostly EkşiSözlük)
Producers – the production company	Interviews Internet research Observations	• Interviews conducted by journalists (online news media) • TV appearances of producers • Observation at a fan-producer meeting
Media and TV critics	Internet research	• News reports and columns (online news media)

In the coming subsections, I will give further detail about data collection from and about different actors which was summarized in table 1.

3.2.1.1. RTUK, Parliament Members and Public Figures

The primary means to collect data about administrative sanctions by the RTUK and parliament members was examining official documents regarding Behzat Ç. which were accessible via internet. Over the course of its broadcast, the drama was given warning twice and fined once by the RTUK. I reached the resolutions of the council and petitions of objection by some council members about these warnings and the fine from the official website of the council (www.rtuk.org.tr). A yearly activity report (2012) of the council was also added to the data set in order to develop a general understanding of the way it operates. In the Turkish National Assembly, four parliamentary questions were raised by Bülent Belen, a parliament member from the MHP, to four ministers including the Minister of Family and Social Policy Fatma Şahin, the Minister of Justice Sadullah Ergin, the Minister of Interior İdris Naim Şahin, and Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç. The official documents of these questions and the responses given were accessed and collected via the official webpage of Turkish National Assembly (www.tbmm.gov.tr). In addition, the discussions initiated by Belen in the assembly were followed in online news media and relevant news reports were collected. Furthermore, Prime Minister Erdoğan and Deputy Prime Minister Arınç's reprimands of Behzat Ç. and other TV dramas were also followed in online news media and relevant news reports were collected as well.

The RTUK decisions to warn and fine and parliament members' reprimand of Behzat Ç. mobilized another group of actors. Public figures that are known with their

affinity with the AKP government were also active on different media channels including TV programs, newspapers, and social media. They further repressed the drama with statements similar to the ones raised by the abovementioned actors. Their criticisms were influential in molding public opinion and they also received reactions as can be seen in reader comments under news reports in online news media. Statements of these individuals were reviewed and sampled when regarded relevant and important.

3.2.1.2. Fans, Viewers and Non-Viewers

During the 20-month data collection period 13 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 15 viewers in total. They lasted for 1 to 3 hours with one exception (35 minutes) and took place in participants' houses or workplaces, the researcher's house, or various cafes. They were tape-recorded and transcribed by the researcher and an assistant. Transcriptions add up to 285 single-spaced pages in total.

Snowballing was used in recruiting participants (Kuzel, 1992; Mason, 2002). Accordingly, key participants directed me to other Behzat Ç. fans or viewers whose interest in the drama they were aware of and/or with whom they had watched or chatted about Behzat Ç. At the same time, sampling decisions were made purposively. Participants with different backgrounds (see table 2) and unique experiences –such as playing a supporting role in the drama, managing a Facebook page about the characters of the drama, organizing outdoor-watching events, and participating in these events –

were included in the sample (Kuzel, 1992; Mason, 2002). Since these kinds of experiences require a further engagement with the drama, these participants' narratives, especially those of resistance to de-legitimation, contributed to my understanding of the phenomenon.

According to almost all of my informants (also see Yörük, 2012), the fan base of Behzat Ç. consists of urban, educated, left-leaning viewers who normally do not prefer watching Turkish TV dramas. At the same time, as became evident during the interviews, almost none of these individuals share the conservative and religious ideals of the current government. In terms of their demographic and socio-economic backgrounds, the participant profiles are representative of this imagined community of Behzat Ç. fans and viewers. While this concentration of individuals are regarded to be the primary actors in resisting de-legitimation in social media and outdoor-watching events and thereby can be considered as providers of first-hand knowledge, lack of participants from less educated or rural backgrounds and from the factions of the society that share the noted conservative and religious ideals can be noted as a limitation of the study.

University students are believed to constitute the backbone of this imagined community and thereby the highest proportion in my sample (6 out of 15) consists of university students. The remaining of the sample was chosen from individuals with different occupations such as medical doctor, sales assistant, and filmmaker, and from different age groups ranging from 20 to 60 in order to represent the members of the

imagined community other than university students. Since the drama takes place in Ankara and represents the city in a positive light, it is especially liked by people from Ankara (Tuncer, 2012). Consequently, ten of my participants were deliberately recruited among viewers who were residing in Ankara during the drama was broadcasted. The remaining five were residing in different cities (3 Adana, 1 Istanbul, 1 Trabzon), which helped me compare the ways in which the drama and its de-legitimation were perceived by fans and viewers from Ankara and elsewhere. While 12 of the participants proclaimed themselves as fans, two (Ergin and Güner) defined themselves as viewers and one (Gözde) reported that she has seen only a few episodes, but had constantly heard about the drama from friends and family. Participant profiles can be seen in table 2 below:

Table 2: Participant Profiles

	Name	Age, Gender	Occupation	City of residence	Fan/viewer
1	Güler	41, female	Medical Doctor	Ankara	Fan
2	Hakan	40, male	Regional Manager at a Pharmaceuticals Company	Ankara	Fan
3	Ergin	44, male	Filmmaker and University Professor	Ankara	Viewer
4	Sedat	24, male	State-Employed Specialist, Central Bank	Ankara	Fan

Table 2 (cont'd)

	Name	Age, Gender	Occupation	City of residence	Fan/viewer
5,6	Gözde and Remzi	22, female 24, male	University Student, METU University Student, Ankara University	Ankara	Watched a few episodes Fan
7,8	Melda and Songül	60, female 55, female	Retired Retired	Adana	Fan Fan
9	Çağatay	27, male	Civil Engineer	Trabzon	Fan
10	Güner	29, male	Civil Engineer	Adana	Viewer
11	Refik	20, male	Sales Assistant at a Clothing Shop	Ankara	Fan
12	Hande	23, female	Master's Student, METU	Ankara	Fan
13	Kemal	22, male	University Student, Istanbul Technical University	İstanbul	Fan
14	Burak	23, male	University Student, METU	Ankara	Fan
15	Melis	22, female	University Student, Ankara University	Ankara	Fan
	TOTAL	31.87; 6 female, 9 male	6 Students, 9 Others	10 Ankara, 3 Adana, 1 İstanbul, 1 Trabzon	12 Fans, 2 Viewers, 1 Watched a few episodes

Informants were briefed that the study was about Behzat Ç. and its fans and viewers in general. After they were informed that their identities will be safeguarded by using pseudonyms, the interviews started with grand-tour questions about their general opinions Behzat Ç. and other Turkish TV dramas (McCracken, 1988). They continued with more specific questions about informants' opinions about and reactions to the pressures on the dramas, their media follow-up and conversations with other viewers and non-viewers. Further probing was made when informants touched upon the central issues the study addresses. A complete list of pre-prepared questions can be found in the interview protocol provided in the appendix B.

Another means utilized in gathering data regarding fans and viewers was observations. Three observations were conducted: (1) watching an episode with a group of fans at one of the participant's house; (2) at a fan-organized outdoor-watching event; (3) at a university event in which the scriptwriter and one of the producers met with viewers and answered their questions. While the first two observations took approximately 3 hours each (30 minutes before, 2 hours during, and 30 minutes after the episode watched), the third one took 1 hour and 15 minutes. Field notes taken during the observations add up to approximately 20 pages in total. The scantiness of the observations may be regarded as a limitation of the study. There are two reasons why further observations were not conducted. Firstly, I deliberately chose not to conduct another observation like the first one. My experience during the first observation had shown me that watching an episode with Behzat Ç. fans is not informative about the fans'

opinions and reactions about de-legitimation. While it is good for seeing the momentary reactions of the fans to the incidents taking place in the drama and their conversations among themselves as well as their para-social conversations with drama characters, it is not directly linked to the focal phenomenon of the study. Secondly, the events during which the second and third observations were conducted were rare and I believe they are representative of the other ones leaning on my participants' accounts and informal conversations I had with other viewers and fans who had been to these events. Plus, I collected pictures taken and a video recorded by other viewers during other fan-organized outdoor-watching events from internet (see pictures from the events in appendix A). The second and third observations were significant in keeping the track of certain aspects of the fans' and viewers' experiences and opinions which were not revealed in interviews. They were telling about the reactions of viewers to restrictions. During the outdoor event, I witnessed viewers' protests of these restrictions and government policies in general, especially while they were shouting pro-Behzat Ç. slogans during ad breaks. Similarly during the producer-viewer meeting, a great number of questions were raised about censorship efforts and a discussion took place about possible ways to evade them. All in all, particularly the second and third observations constituted a useful source to supplement interview data.

Thirdly, as there were lively discussions about the drama and its de-legitimation on internet, viewer and fan comments on social media were collected employing a netnographic approach (Kozinets, 2002). Facebook groups, Twitter timelines, letter-

writing campaigns, and reader comments at webpages of national newspapers were reviewed retrospectively. I reviewed the period starting from the early September 2010 (three weeks before the first episode) until December 2013 (a month after the second motion picture). However, since these narratives were not really intelligible and were more in the form of momentary reactions, I sampled only a few chunks of data (11 pages in total). The attention was rather focused on the popular Turkish user-generated content site *EkşiSözlük* ('the Sour Dictionary') (Yalkın et al., 2013) which provided more intelligible comments about the drama and its de-legitimation. This website is a collaboration of moderator-approved authors from different walks of life that contribute to it by inscribing entries on a wide variety of topics including politics, everyday life experiences, popular culture, and etc. under nicknames. It was particularly fruitful in terms of making sense of viewer and fan experiences of, opinions about, and discussions on de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. as it is known as a platform for "politically charged discussions and disquiet generated among a diverse set of people – from columnists to artists – and is a key site of contestation and creation of shared meanings in Turkey" (Yalkın et al., 2013: 277). Furthermore, *EkşiSözlük* is known for supporting Behzat Ç. from the very start of the drama and producers, Serdar Akar and Erdal Beşikçioğlu, acknowledged in their interviews conducted by journalists that their support and letter-writing campaigns they initiated had been influential in Star TV's decision of not cancelling the drama despite low ratings during the first season. Entries under the headings of '*Behzat Ç.*', '*Behzat Ç. 'ye rekor ceza*' ('Record penalty for Behzat Ç.') and '*Behzat Ç. destek kampanyası*' ('Behzat Ç. support campaign') were

reviewed retrospectively, which amounted to 2,397 pages of entries (approximately 24,000 entries) written from September 2010 to June 2014. Entries which were not directly about de-legitimation of the drama (for example, entries about the content of the drama, the books and/or the movies) were eliminated and the remaining was sampled for further analysis (138 pages). Overall, data from social media was in parallel with interview data in terms of viewers' experiences, opinions and reactions to de-legitimation. Moreover, it helped to observe viewers' timely and emotionally-charged comments and dynamic discussions on several incidents such as public reprimands, censorship and fines by regulatory bodies and fan-organized support events.

Although I had informal conversations with individuals who regard the drama as inappropriate for TV broadcasting (most of whom didn't watch the series at all), I didn't choose to interview them. Most of these individuals had watched either an episode or only parts of an episode. Throughout this thesis, I refer to these individuals as (concerned) non-viewers. I observed that in general their knowledge of the drama and de-legitimation process was limited. An interview with a non-viewer would barely contribute to the general understanding of de-legitimation process and I relied on short entries inscribed by these individuals in social media and my informants' accounts of their experiences of conflict with these individuals instead.

3.2.1.3. Producers – The Production Company

The third group of actors about whom I collected data is producers of Behzat Ç. In this study, I use *producers* as an umbrella term to refer to the executive producer, the general director, the directors, actors/actresses, the scriptwriter, the author of the books, corporate communications representative of the production company and the other members of the crew. I had off-the-record telephone conversations and exchanged e-mails with corporate communications representative of the company, and also had a chance to talk briefly to the scriptwriter Erdem and the general director Akar at the university event I observed. While these brief interactions set the stage for understanding the experiences, opinions and preoccupations of producers about de-legitimation of the drama, data from my observation at the producer-viewer meeting, interviews conducted with producers by journalists, TV programs in which they appeared as guests, and their social media accounts enriched this initial understanding. Since producers were not as accessible as viewers, I wasn't able to conduct interviews with them myself. However, I had the chance to fill this gap especially with the observation I conducted at the viewer-producer meeting at a university and with journalist interviews. My observation at the university event was insightful as I have closely observed the interactions between producers and viewers, and also noted down the answers given by producers to various questions about the drama and de-legitimation efforts, some of which were asked by myself. Journalist interviews with the leading actors (Erdal Beşikçioğlu and Fatih Artman), the scriptwriter (Ercan Mehmet Erdem),

the author of the books (Emrah Serbes), and the general director (Serdar Akar) constituted a significant source of insight about producers' views on a variety of issues. Since over time the questions and the answers given by producers started to repeat themselves, one or two interviews per individual was sampled (7 interviews, 34 pages in total). Videos from TV programs including talk shows (*Disko Kralı*, *Beyaz Show* and *Burada Laf Çok*) and news shows (*5NİK*, *Söz Sende Her Şey* and *Gece Gündüz*) which hosted cast and crew members (actors/actresses, the scriptwriter and the author) were recorded or watched on YouTube and TV channels' own websites (357 minutes in total) and relevant parts were transcribed for further analysis. To my knowledge, these videos constitute the population of the cast and crew members' TV appearances for promoting Behzat Ç. Twitter accounts of the leading actor, the scriptwriter, the author and the communications representative were reviewed retrospectively and tweets were sampled when deemed relevant and insightful.

3.2.1.4. Online News Media and TV Critics

Online news media constituted an important data source for the study, because it included data about each and every actor that played a part in the de-legitimation and resistance. Data collected about viewers were supplemented by examining news reports about the fan base of Behzat Ç. and fan-organized outdoor-watching events and also reader comments on various news reports about the drama. Latest news about

producers and journalists' interviews with them appeared frequently in newspapers and also in websites of newspapers. Dissemination of the news regarding the council decisions and parliamentary questions about Behzat Ç. had also been possible mainly thanks to online newspapers. Therefore, online news media had an important role in mediating and at the same time shaping de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. as it had been the number one source of information about the issue. I reviewed the period from September 2010 to December 2013 retrospectively looking at news reports, interviews and columns of TV critics, directly or indirectly related to the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. At the same time, to discursively compare and contrast the stance of the government and media on Behzat Ç. and other popular social and political issues of the same period – for example, the 2012 law restricting alcohol sales and promotion – news reports about these issues were also reviewed. All in all, I sampled 269 pages of written material from the websites of ten newspapers with highest daily circulation (Zaman, Posta, Hürriyet, Sözcü, Sabah, Türkiye and Milliyet [Fotomaç and Fanatik were excluded since they include sports news only]) and also from newspapers which are known to be close to the current government (Yeni Şafak and Yeni Akit) and newspapers and web-based platforms which are known to be dissenting to the government to different degrees and featuring news reports related to Behzat Ç. frequently (Cumhuriyet, Radikal, Sol Gazetesi, Bianet and Birgün).

The general tendency among the newspapers with high circulation was to publish neutral news reports about the drama and also include the criticisms by parliament

members and public figures. Newspapers close to the government had generally featured negative criticisms of these public figures or the reporters although they rarely included any news reports about Behzat Ç. On the other hand, newspapers dissenting to the government touched upon the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. quite often and most of the times their mention came in the form of columnists' criticism of the government's de-legitimation efforts. The drama was also highly praised by TV critics (Tayfun Atay [Radikal], Yüksel Aytuğ [Sabah], Sina Koloğlu [Milliyet], Cengiz Semercioğlu [Hürriyet], Orhan Tekelioğlu [Radikal], Mesut Yar [Posta]), most of whom write daily columns at high-circulation newspapers, while they criticized the drama for only a few times. In order to account not only for the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç., but also for the changes led by the government in the Turkish TV dramas market, I included TV critics' comments on the industry in general, rating measurements, contents of different TV dramas, and general tendencies in viewing habits as well. To sum up, textual material from a wide variety of online newspapers and web-based platforms served as a rich data source for making sense of the de-legitimation and resistance in the context of Behzat Ç. and transformation of the industry in general.

3.2.2. Data Analysis

Data analysis started just after the very first observation was conducted and continued concurrently with data collection. Therefore, analysis informed further data

collection and vice versa. Two different methods of data analysis were utilized to understand the phenomenon of de-legitimation: hermeneutic approach and grounded theory approach. Firstly, a hermeneutic approach was employed and several part-to-whole iterations were made at two levels (Thompson, 1997). At the first level, intra-textual analysis was carried out in order to make sense of the each text (interview transcripts, field notes from observations, textual material from archival and internet sources) in its entirety. At the second level, an inter-textual analysis was conducted and comparisons were made between different texts to look for similarities and differences across data. Inter-textual analysis was especially fruitful in comparing and contrasting the practices and narratives of different actors that shape and are shaped by the focal phenomenon and how different actors make sense of their and others' actions. Secondly, data from interviews, observations, archival and internet sources were coded following grounded theory procedures (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Each chunk of collected data was first open-coded; that is, divided into pieces, examined, compared/contrasted with other pieces, and categorized. The second stage was axial coding during which comparisons were made between different categories and data was put back together in novel ways by relating subcategories to categories. In the third stage named selective coding, the main category was selected and the remaining categories were connected to it in a systematic way. Two data analysis methods were employed concurrently in order to take advantage of the best practices of each. While hermeneutic approach provided a holistic understanding of the focal phenomenon, this understanding was supported by grounded theory's strength in linking peripheral categories to the main category in a

rigorous manner thanks to its sophisticated coding techniques. In addition to these methods, a discourse analytical approach was utilized in order to find linkages between de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. and de-legitimation of ways of living and viewpoints incongruent with the politico-moral ideals of the government. With the help of this approach, an intertextuality between the statements of parliament members and public figures regarding Behzat Ç. and their statements regarding other political and social issues – for example, the 2012 law restricting alcohol sales and promotion – of the same period was identified, which will be explained in detail in the next chapter. Relevant literature was consulted whenever necessary in order to make sense of the data and there was a constant move back and forth between data and theory. The emergent account presented in the next chapter is, thereby, a combination of emic accounts of different actors in the cultural milieu of Behzat Ç. and the researcher's etic interpretations built upon relevant theoretical frameworks.

3.3. Limitations

While the immediate context of the drama consists of Behzat Ç. producers and viewers as well as the Turkish TV dramas market, the current state of Turkish society and the AKP government's mixture of neoliberal and neoconservative policies constitute the context of context (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011). While this idiosyncratic context is fruitful in illuminating the phenomenon of de-legitimation, it

also has limitations. In different countries, neoliberal and neoconservative policies are enacted in different ways (Harvey, 2005). For example, looking at the US context, it is possible to come across with detective dramas similar to Behzat Ç. (in terms of their depiction of police brutality, corruption, and a series of other sociopolitical issues) such as *The Shield* (2002-2008), *The Wire* (2002-2008) and *Southland* (2009-2013) which came across with much less top-down pressure although there were criticisms raised. When this is the case, examining cases of de-legitimation in different countries where different forms of neoliberalism (and neoconservatism) prevail might provide different findings and interesting points of comparison.

Another limitation is the duration of the study. My data analysis during the broadcast life and the aftermath of the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. corresponds to a three and a half-year period. While this period is sufficient for seeing the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. and getting a glimpse of the transformation of Turkish TV dramas market, a longitudinal analysis that covers a longer period (for example several decades as in Humphreys's study [2010b] on casino gambling) would bring new insights in understanding dynamics of legitimation and de-legitimation within the field and provide a better understanding of the market transformation.

Lastly, I will mention a limitation in data collection. This study takes the accounts of the viewers as well as official documents into accounts. When it comes to the viewpoints of producers I rely on secondary data sources, as the producers are not as accessible as viewers. My interview requests were evaded professionally by the

communications representative of the production company. Collecting primary data from producers (i.e. marketers) would definitely contribute to our understanding of the de-legitimation process. The future studies on de-legitimation may focus on the marketers' perspective paying special attention to their strategies in coping with/resisting de-legitimation. Furthermore, advertisers who are among the key power brokers of the TV dramas market are missing in this study. I primarily focus on the dynamic between the viewers, producers and the government in this study; however, the advertiser's perspective and reactions to de-legitimation may also be a fruitful research avenue.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, I go over the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. The second section is spared for the consequences of de-legitimation for the production company, TV channel and the viewers of the drama. The third and fourth sections are about the reverberations of de-legitimation for the organizational field and societal levels respectively.

4.1. The De-legitimation of Behzat Ç.

Throughout its broadcast life, there had been many attempts to undermine the legitimacy of Behzat Ç. by multiple actors including the RTUK, parliament members,

public figures, and concerned viewers and non-viewers. The complaints were usually about the main characters' excessive alcohol consumption, profanity, brutality, and extramarital affairs which were deemed as improper behaviors according to an imagined understanding of "Turkish family values". Furthermore, since the main characters of the drama are police officers and a prosecutor, the drama was condemned on the grounds that it misrepresents Turkish government officials. On the whole, the drama was believed to be harmful for the physical, mental and moral development of the children and the youth and has been a topic of debate in daily conversations and social media as well as conventional media outlets such as newspapers and television.

After being broadcasted for three seasons, Behzat Ç. was finished on May 17, 2013. There was a multiplicity of interlinked reasons for the decision to finish the drama including the decline in the ratings, lack of funds, and the drama's becoming illegitimate for TV broadcasting. While leading to discomfort among the producers about carrying on the production the drama, the pressures also made it impossible for any TV channel to broadcast Behzat Ç. Emrah Serbes, the author of the books, explained this in a talk show a year after the series finale (Burada Laf Çok, CNN Türk; July 2, 2014):

Sometimes they ask if it is possible for Behzat Ç. to continue. No, it is not. Right now, major TV channels cannot dare to broadcast a drama of that kind... For that reason, there may be new novels, or a new project; then it can continue. But with the current television system it can't, it is not possible.

Bazen diyorlar Behzat Ç. devam eder mi? Edemez. Büyük televizyonlarda şu an o tarz bir işe cesaret edecek bir durum yok...Onun

için belki yeni bir roman olur, yeni proje olur; o zaman devam edebilir.
Ama bu televizyon [düzeninde] olmaz, mümkün değil.

The statement of Serbes demonstrates that the pressures on Behzat Ç. have reached to a point where it was regarded unthinkable to continue the story as a TV drama. Although novels and motion pictures were possible ways for Behzat Ç. producers to meet the audience, Behzat Ç. as a TV drama was de-legitimated.

My findings show that the attempts to undermine the legitimacy of the drama came through different but closely linked mechanisms. In the next section, I will explicate these attempts in two categories: attempts to undermine regulative legitimacy and attempts to undermine normative legitimacy. Since changing the definitions of cultural-cognitive legitimacy is a much more subtle and time-consuming process which takes place at the organizational field level, I will focus more on the normative and regulative mechanisms when accounting for the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. These mechanisms intersect at many points and different de-legitimation efforts trigger one another. Particularly, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. started with normative pressures and continued with regulative sanctions which paved the way for further normative pressures on the drama. In addition, while the primary target of these attempts was the drama itself, de-legitimation was also taking place at two other levels. At the organizational field level, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. had also come to mean the de-legitimation of similar TV dramas with content deemed incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals of the government. At the societal level, it came to signify the attempts to de-legitimize ways of living and points of view incongruent with these

ideals. De-legitimation had different consequences and reverberations at different levels and at the end of the day consequences at different levels intermingled in real life as well as in informants' accounts. The model below (figure 1) presents a simplified outline of the main findings.

In the next sections, I will go into detail on the undermining of different forms of legitimacy and de-legitimation at different levels.

4.1.1. Setting the Stage for De-legitimation: Initial Normative Attempts

The debate about whether Behzat Ç. was (in)appropriate for TV broadcasting because of its explicit content started from the very first day of its broadcast life, especially in social media and newspapers. For its viewers and for most of the TV critics who write daily columns in national newspapers, it was deemed especially successful in depicting real life situations that Turkish police officers encounter with and their reactions to these situations. It was contrasted with other detective dramas broadcasted on Turkish televisions (mostly with *Arka Sokaklar*) and also with American dramas of the same genre (such as *CSI*) in which police characters were portrayed as “handsome individuals who treat even criminals politely, don’t beat anybody, don’t swear and don’t drink alcohol” (Author 1, EkşiSözlük; November 9, 2010) according to Behzat Ç. viewers.

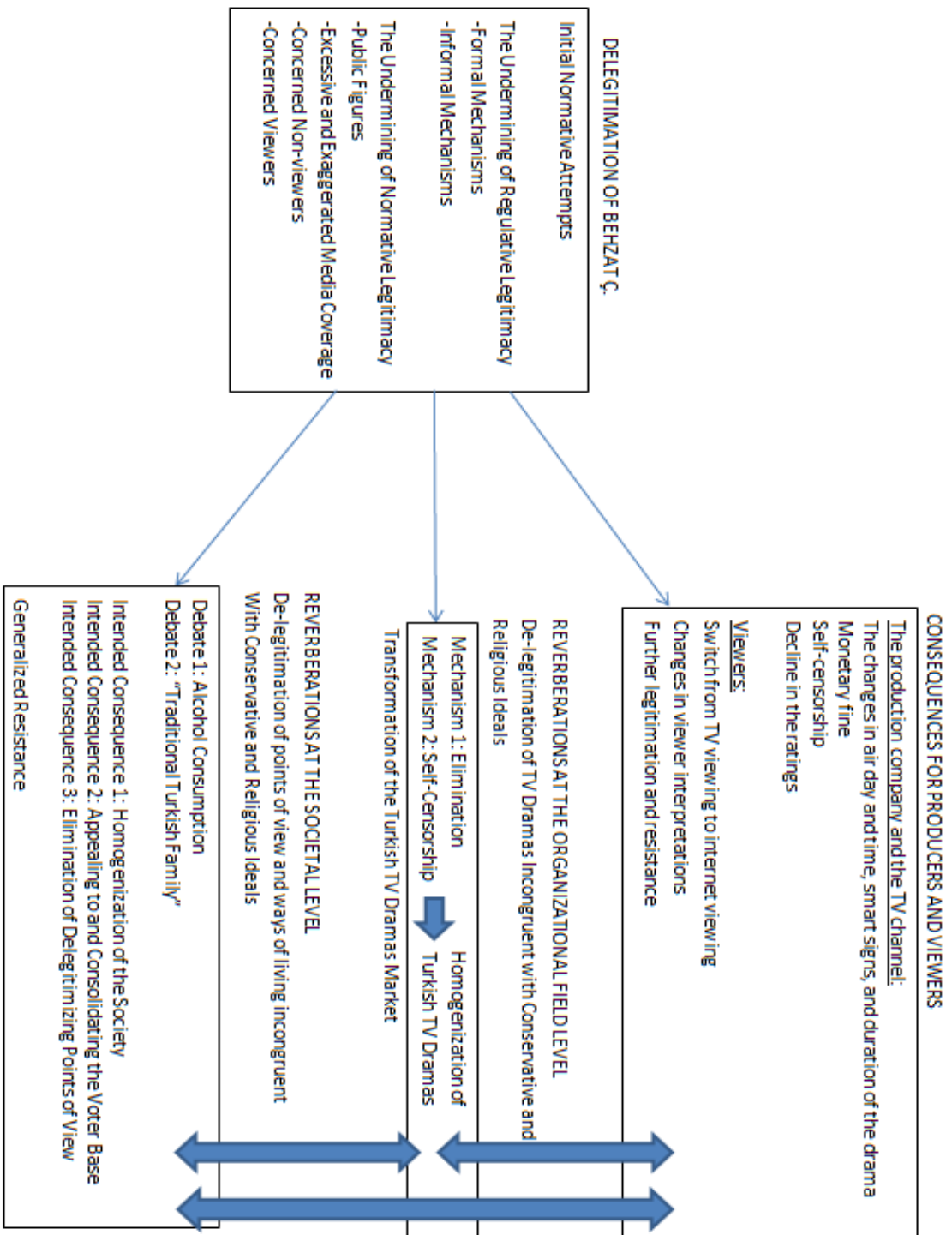


Figure 1: De-legitimation of Behzat Ç. and its Consequences and Reverberations

It was praised as an indigenous “detective drama which is not fake (“*çakma*”) or American-wannabe (“*Amerikan özentisi*”) like other TV dramas including *Arka Sokaklar*, *Gece Gündüz* (Day and Night) and *Adanalı*” (Author 2, EkşiSözlük; September 22, 2010). Three features attributed to the drama’s script and characters, that I came across with in interview, observation and archival data, were ‘realism’, ‘naturalness’ and ‘sincerity’.

On the other hand, according to public figures who are known to be close to the AKP government and concerned non-viewers sharing similar religious and conservative ideals, its content was deemed improper for TV broadcasting based on the grounds that it included elements contradicting with the traditional Turkish family values and thereby could negatively affect the physical, mental and moral development of children and youngsters. Complaints were made about characters’ usage of profane words, their extramarital affairs, and excessive alcohol consumption. In addition, since the main characters are police officers and a prosecutor, the drama was accused of misrepresenting Turkish government officials in general.

The newspapers were divided on this debate. While TV critics in major national newspapers praised the drama because of the realism and naturalness of its characters and important social and political issues it touches upon, at times they were critical of the portrayal of police brutality in the drama as they regarded these scenes as normalizing police brutality. On the other hand, news reports featuring public figures’ criticisms to the drama could be seen in national newspapers, some of which are known to

be close to the government and sharing the same religious and conservative ideals. The following news report featuring the criticisms of Muharrem Balcı, the president of the Turkish Green Crescent Society, which appeared in a newspaper known for its affinity with the government (then) (Çağlar Avcı and Serkan Sağlam, 'Alkolik Polis İmaji Gençlere Kötü Örnek' Zaman; February 23, 2011¹⁰) is telling in this regard:

Police officers' continuous alcohol consumption in the TV drama named Behzat Ç., which is broadcasted on Star television, not only makes the viewers question 'how they are doing their job', but also draws reactions from the Green Crescent members. Muharrem Balcı, the president of the Turkish Green Crescent Society, who is especially disturbed by the portrayal of police officers who are role models for the youth as 'alcoholic', states that "this kind of a TV drama is an insult to police department and constitutes a bad example for youngsters". Balcı raises the question whether the police force or the Ministry of Internal Affairs is aware of these scenes. Stating that this topic was a matter of discussion in his meeting with president of the RTUK a couple days ago, Balcı goes on to say that "the board pays attention to citizens' complaints in this issue. Citizens should exercise their right and file complaints to the RTUK".

Star televizyonunda yayınlanan "Behzat Ç." adlı dizide polislerin sürekli alkol almaları akıllara 'İşlerini nasıl yapıyorlar?' sorusunu getirmekle kalmıyor, Yeşilaycıların tepkisini çekiyor... Özellikle gençlere rol model olan polislerin 'alkolik' gibi gösterilmesinden rahatsız olan Yeşilay Genel Başkanı Muharrem Balcı, "Bu diziler polis teşkilatına hakaret, gençlere de kötü örnektir." diyor...Yeşilay Genel Başkanı Muharrem Balcı, diziyle ilgili 'Emniyet teşkilatı veya İçişleri Bakanı bu tip görüntüleri görmüyor mu?' şeklinde bir soru yöneltiyor. Geçtiğimiz günlerde Radyo ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu (RTÜK) Başkanı ile yaptıkları görüşmede bu konunun da gündeme geldiğini aktaran Muharrem Balcı, "RTÜK, vatandaşların bu konudaki şikâyetlerine büyük önem veriyor. Vatandaşlar hakkını kullanıp RTÜK'e şikâyetle bulunmalı." ifadesini kullanıyor.

¹⁰ Retrieved from http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_alkolik-polis-ima-ji-genclere-kotu-ornek_1097491.html

This quote is an example of how a public figure and also the newspaper reporting his criticism make an attempt to mold public opinion about the drama. In so doing, the newspaper report not only quotes what Balcı says about Behzat Ç., but also conveys the opinion of the reporters and the newspaper about the drama by making moral judgments on behalf of the viewers (e.g. “makes the viewers question ‘how [the police officers in the drama] are doing their job’”). With recourse to the religious and conservative moral ideals, it undermines the normative legitimacy of the drama by pinpointing the elements in its content which are regarded problematic within the “socially” and politically “constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” attributed to Turkish society (Suchman, 1995: 574). In this regard, the drama is discredited as per its characters’ alcohol consumption. Furthermore, it is also scrutinized on grounds that it damages the image of the police department by depicting police officers as alcoholic. The news report also sets the stage for attempts to undermine regulative legitimacy since Balcı raises the question whether the police force or the Ministry of Internal Affairs are aware of the explicit scenes. He calls citizens to file complaints to the RTUK, and the council to apply necessary sanctions. His assertion that this issue was discussed in his meeting with the president of RTUK is an act of intimidation. Therefore, this news report along with others that appeared in national newspapers during the first season of the drama can be regarded as calls for undermining the regulative legitimacy of the drama.

During the same period the content of the drama had also been widely discussed in social media. Whether the drama was appropriate for TV broadcasting had already become a matter of debate in EkşiSözlük as well as other social media platforms including Twitter and Facebook. The viewers of the drama were vocal on such platforms posting comments that defended the drama since they believed that it was under scrutiny, and at the same time, individuals disturbed by what they saw in the initial episodes were posting criticisms. Refik, who is one of the administrators of a Facebook page that has been a site of lively discussions among viewers, notes the debate going on during the first season:

Researcher: ...What was the debate going on about Behzat Ç. in the page? You told me that there was a lot of [debate] going on during the initial period...

Refik: A lot of swearwords, a lot of alcohol consumption [in the drama]. There is also alcohol consumption in other TV dramas, but it doesn't catch attention. It is a little disturbing for them to see Behzat Ç. drunk all the time; because he always has a bottle of beer in his hand, he drinks all the time. Besides, he has a closet in his office, where he keeps his whiskey; he pours the whiskey in a water glass, that's how he drinks it. We witnessed a lot of reaction in that matter. That period, constant reactions... Some people didn't want it; they said "This is a TV drama. Why are you reacting?"

Araştırmacı: ...Behzat Ç'yle ilgili tartışma ne dönüyordu sayfada? İlk dönemlerde de çok oluyor demiştin...

Refik: Çok fazla küfrediliyor, alkol içiliyor. Diğer dizilerde de içiliyor bu alkol, ama çok fazla göze batmıyor. Behzat Ç'nin sürekli sarhoş gezmesi onlar için biraz rahatsız edici; çünkü Behzat Ç'nin elinden bira hiç eksik olmuyor, her zaman içer. Hatta odasında bir dolabı vardır, viskisi oradadır, su bardağına viskisini doldurur, öyle içer. O konularda çok tepki aldık. O dönem sürekli tepki göstermeleri... Bazı insanlar istemiyordu, "dizi bu. Neden tepki gösteriyorsunuz?" diyordu.

Intertextuality can be observed between points of disturbance raised in the Facebook group and the ones accounted for by Muharrem Balcı; they are mainly criticizing the alcohol consumption of the characters. On the other hand, as Refik highlights above, many fans defended the TV drama remarking that “at the end of the day, this is just a TV drama and [they] have this pleasure for only two hours once a week” (Author 3, EkşiSözlük; November 9, 2010). By so doing, they put forward that the ongoing debate about the drama is an insignificant and futile one. However, contrary to their belief that the debate is futile, it was to exacerbate with the RTUK’s and parliament members’ attempts to undermine regulative legitimacy.

4.1.2. The Undermining of Regulative Legitimacy

While the stage was being set with sporadic attacks on Behzat Ç.’s normative legitimacy as exemplified above, attacks on regulative legitimacy started a couple of weeks before the first season finale. Throughout its broadcast life the drama had been subjected to disciplinary sanctions including warnings and a monetary fine by the RTUK. In addition, it was the topic of a parliamentary discussion and four written parliamentary questions at the national assembly. These mechanisms utilized to undermine regulative legitimacy can be categorized as formal and informal (Scott, 1995). The formal mechanisms are the ones assigned to specific actors such as regulatory bodies. In the case of Behzat Ç., the RTUK is an example of such bodies with its

authority to regulate and inspect Turkish television and radio broadcasting. The informal mechanisms, on the other hand, operate via reprimand and exclusionary activities of official authorities. In the case of Behzat Ç, the parliament members engaged in this kind of actions, as will be explicated below.

The first formal attempt to undermine Behzat Ç's regulative legitimacy was the RTÜK's decision to give warning to Star TV which came out on May 10, 2011 at the week of 33rd episode of the first season (38 episodes in season one in total). The warning was given as the drama was identified to "violate the 2nd paragraph of article 8 titled 'Broadcasting service principles' of the law no. 6112, which reads as "in radio and television services, programs with content that can hurt the physical, mental and moral development of children and the youth cannot be broadcasted in time slots during which they are awake, without using protective symbols", in the episode broadcasted on March 13, 2011". According to the same law, "the content of broadcasting cannot be inspected or interfered before broadcasting". Therefore, programs are first inspected; and warned and/or fined when deemed necessary only after they are broadcasted. The way the board acted in the Behzat Ç. case is an exemplar of this situation: While the episode in question was broadcasted on March 13, 2011, it was inspected by the board afterwards and the warning was given on May 10, 2011. Rather than being an attempt to complete suppression such as prohibiting the broadcast of the drama, this warning was more in the form of discouraging and de-legitimizing (Karaca, 2011). It was, at the same time, a harbinger of further sanctions to come if due precautions are

not taken such as revising the script of the drama, changing its broadcast time, and/or using the necessary protective symbols in accordance with the stated law. This being the case, the protective signs shown just before the generic of the drama were changed after the warning: While the signs remarked that the drama is appropriate for viewers over 7 years old during the first season, the signs were changed to indicate that it is appropriate for viewers over 13 years old for the second season. Similarly, the broadcast time of the drama, which was 8 pm for the first season (with the exception of two episodes), was changed to 10.30 pm for the second season. However, the producers refused to make any modifications in the script in accordance with the criticisms addressed. During the university event I participated, in which the scriptwriter Ercan Mehmet Erdem and the general director Serdar Akar were present, questions were raised to Erdem about the extent to which he was free in writing the drama and whether the pressures (especially by the RTUK) led him to limit himself, i.e. self-censorship. Admitting that self-censorship is a fact in TV dramas industry, he claimed that he resisted self-censorship even if it was hard at times and he believed that he was not affected by the pressures. He stated that Akar acted as a bridge between him and the TV channel executives and as a shield against censorship efforts by arguing against any attempts of intervention. Therefore, there was no significant change in the main characters' usage profane words, alcohol consumption, or extramarital affairs in the second season. The script was still charged with explicit or implicit political issues which are normally not discussable in Turkish TV dramas.

Apart from the RTUK, some parliament members also actively took part in undermining the regulative legitimacy of Behzat Ç. Especially the debate in the national assembly about Behzat Ç. which took place during the talks for Draft Law on Protecting the Family and Preventing Violence against Women is a good example of how parliament members undermined regulative legitimacy through informal mechanisms. The following quote from a news report featured on an online news platform reveals the debate in the parliament regarding the issue (Ayça Söylemez, 'Sevdiğinle Yaşamayacaksın, Kiminle Yaşayacaksın?', Bianet; March 8, 2012¹¹):

The TV drama Behzat Ç. was at the forefront in talks regarding the Draft Law on Protecting the Family and Preventing Violence Against Women. Bülent Belen, parliament member of MHP from Tekirdağ, started the debate by claiming that “the drama is planting dynamite at the core of the Turkish family”. Belen asked Fatma Şahin, Minister of Family and Social Policy: “In this drama a prosecutor and a police officer live together without getting married. The officer behaves very badly towards the woman that plays the role of the prosecutor for the sake of the role. Did you take any action regarding this?” The minister granted Belen right and complained about the public: “I am also disturbed by TV dramas that render women as subordinate and encourage violence, as I am a mother myself. The public complains about these dramas and yet watches them.” Şahin told that studies are needed to raise social consciousness in this issue and also added “or we need to strengthen the complaint mechanism. If the civil initiative is strengthened, a mechanism of pressure may be established to ban the broadcasting of this type of TV dramas. I believe that the number of studies to strengthen the social consciousness in these domains should be increased.”

"Ailenin Korunması ve Kadına Karşı Şiddetin Önlenmesine Dair Kanun Tasarısı"yla ilgili görüşmelerde, televizyon dizisi Behzat Ç. başroldeydi. Meclis Genel Kurulu'nda tasarıyla ilgili söz alan Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP) Tekirdağ Milletvekili Bülent Belen, söze

¹¹ Retrieved from <http://bianet.org/biamag/ifade-ozgurlugu/136791-sevdiginle-yasamayacaksin-kiminle-yasayacaksin>

"Behzat . adlı diziyle Trk ailesinin temeline dinamit konuluyor" diye bařladı. Belen, Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanı Fatma řahin'e sordu: "Bu dizide biri savcı ile diğeri emniyet görevlisi evlenmeden, nikahsız birlikte yaşıyorlar. Emniyet görevlisi rol geređi savcı rolndeki bayana ok sert davranıyor. Bununla ilgili bir girişiminiz oldu mu?" Bakan řahin de Belen'e hak verdi ve toplumdan yakındı: "Kadını ikincil hale getiren ve řiddeti zendirici dizilerden bir anne olarak ben de rahatsızım. Toplum hem řikayet ediyor hem izliyor." Bu konuda toplumsal bilinci ykseltici alıřmalar yapılması gerektiđini syleyen řahin, "Ya da řikayet mekanizmasını glendirmek gerekiyor. Sivil inisiyatif glendirilirse bu tarz dizilerin yayından kaldırılmasına ynelik bir baskı mekanizması kurulabilir. Bu alanlarda daha toplumsal duyarlılıđı artıracak alıřmaların glendirilmesi gerektiđini dřnyorum" dedi.

While Belen’s utterance of his criticism about the drama made it to the news, his statement that “the drama is planting dynamite at the core of the Turkish family” hit the headlines. Later on, it was also mocked in the drama: In a scene where police officers were interrogating a suspect, one of the officers, after learning that the suspect had an extramarital affair, uttered “he planted dynamite” in a low voice. Whereas the target of Belen’s complaint is specifically Behzat ., řahin points out that the main problem is “dramas which render woman as subordinate and encourage violence” in general. At the same time, she problematizes the public’s behavior noting that they watch the TV dramas although they complain about them. One common point that we come across in Belen and řahin’s accounts is their understanding of Turkish public as a homogenous entity, which is evident in Belen’s concerns about *the Turkish family* and řahin’s statement that *the public* complains, but still watches. The interview and internet data shows that this understanding is questioned by Behzat . fans. Since the parliamentary discussions do not directly result in binding sanctions to the drama and

the TV channel, they can be regarded as indirect attempts to undermine regulative legitimacy. However, particularly Şahin's suggestion of strengthening the civil initiative in order to establish a mechanism of pressure to ban the broadcasting of this type of TV dramas demonstrates the ideas of the government about TV dramas. It implies the attempts to initiate a transformation in Turkish TV dramas with recourse to values and norms of the imagined homogenous public that stem from the conservative and religious ideals.

After the discussion took place in the assembly, Bülent Belen also directed parliamentary questions in writing to four ministers. The questions were addressed to Fatma Şahin as well as the Minister of Interior İdris Naim Şahin, the Minister of Justice Sadullah Ergin, and Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç. The question texts started with a common paragraph which reads as:

In the TV drama named Behzat Ç. which is broadcasted on a private television channel, the characters that are state employees, and therefore represent the state, drink [alcoholic drinks] while on duty, live together [with their partners] although they are not married, and engage in behaviors which are not appropriate according to Turkish family and social life rules.”

Özel bir televizyon kanalında yayınlanmakta olan Behzat Ç. isimli dizide devlet görevi yapan, dolayısı ile dizide devleti temsil eden karakterler, görev esnasında alkol alıyor, evli olmadıkları halde beraber yaşıyor ve Türk aile ve sosyal yaşam kaidelerine uygun olmayan davranışlar sergiliyorlar.

and continued with Belen's specific questions to ministers, such as whether they think the drama in question and similar programs may decay the Turco-Islamic family structure (to Fatma Şahin), what they think about the way “police officers who provide the

security of our society, who are watchers of safety and peace” are represented (to İdris Naim Şahin, since the police department is under the Ministry of the Interior), and whether their ministries initiated any investigation regarding the drama. To Bülent Arınç, to whom the RTUK reports, he particularly asked the number of complaints received by the RTUK and if there are any sanctions applied. The written responses given to parliamentary questions pointed out that the competent authority that inspects TV broadcasting is the RTUK. Arınç appended a document from the RTUK to his written answer, which stated that the council sanctioned the drama twice and continues to monitor it carefully.

Belen’s informal and formal attempts made the inappropriateness of Behzat Ç. for TV broadcasting a matter of debate in national assembly and were effective ways of raising public awareness about the issue, which is evident from the excessive media coverage and reactions on social media that rose immediately afterwards. They created unrest among the viewers who regarded the parliamentary discussion on Behzat Ç. as a serious threat to the broadcast of the drama as well as to their freedom of choice. On the other hand, it led the drama to be a matter of debate in media, with certain public figures known to be close to the government reprimanding it in different mediums, and therefore undermining its normative legitimacy.

Almost a month after the parliamentary discussion on Behzat Ç. and two weeks before the second season finale, the RTUK’s decision to give another warning and also

to fine the TV channel came out (June 6, 2012). The reason given for the fine was repetition of the improper behaviors of characters in spite of the earlier warning:

In the TV drama named Behzat Ç., which is aired in protected time slots during which children and youngsters are watching TV (5 am to 12 am), the main characters which have occupations that are reputable in society such as policeman and prosecutor engage in behaviors that can set bad examples such as alcohol consumption and usage of profane words and these are broadcasted in a careless manner. It is understood from the board records that the stated institution was given warning before due to its broadcasts on March 13, 2011 in accordance with the 2nd paragraph of article 8 titled “Broadcasting Service Principles” of the law no. 6112 with the board’s decision no. 18 made on its meeting no. 2011/128 on May 10, 2011. Therefore, in accordance with the 2nd paragraph of article 32 of the same law, the decision is made to sanction the drama with “administrative penalty fine”.

Görüldüğü üzere çocukların ve gençlerin televizyon başında olduğu korumalı saat dilimi içinde (05:00-24:00) yayınlanmakta olan Behzat Ç adlı dizide, toplumda belli bir saygınlığı olan komiserlik, savcılık ve polislik görevlerini ifa eden ana karakterlerin alkol kullanma, kaba ve küfürlü konuşma gibi çocuklar ve gençler açısından olumsuz örnek oluşturabilecek nitelikteki davranışları özensizce ekrana taşınmaktadır.” Söz konusu kuruluşa 13.03.2011 tarihli yayınları nedeniyle evvelce Üst Kurulun 10.05.2011 tarih ve 2011/28 sayılı toplantısında alınan 18 nolu kararıyla 6112 Sayılı Kanunun 8 inci maddesinin ikinci fıkrası uyarınca uyarı yaptırımını uygulandığı Üst Kurul kayıtlarından anlaşılmakla, Kanunun 32 nci maddesinin ikinci fıkrası hükmü uyarınca, anılan Yayın Kuruluşu hakkında “İdari Para Cezası” yaptırımının uygulanması,... kanaatine varılmıştır.

As the quote demonstrates the alterations in protective signs and broadcast time were not regarded sufficient by the RTUK. Actually, in this decision text, there is no mention of protective signs; the main complaint is about the drama still being broadcasted during the protected time slots, which are specified as 5 am to 12 pm. Therefore, the change in the air time from 8 pm to 10.30 pm did not suffice to save the drama from being scrutinized further and fined eventually. This fine had tremendous repercussions

in print and social media as it was seen as a serious attempt to dissuade the broadcasting of the drama. Most of the websites of national newspapers reported the fine with the title “Record fine to Behzat Ç.!” and declared that the amount of the fine was 273.710 Turkish Liras, which approximately equals the average cost per episode of a Turkish TV drama (which is 300.000 TL according to ISMMMO, 2010). The debate between Behzat Ç. viewers and concerned non-viewers disturbed by the drama was heated. The following quotes taken from reader comments on a news report about the fine illustrates the opposing perspectives on the topic (‘Behzat Ç’ye rekor ceza!’, Vatan; June 18, 2012¹²):

Reader 1: Excellent. The drama has become disgusting. I never came across with an individual who speaks this ‘dirty’ and who is this much alcoholic, and I never saw a police officer like this. The fine should be even more.

Reader 2: I don’t believe that the RTUK does its job in a sincere way. [The drama] is broadcasted at a late hour and all the warnings [protective signs] are made before it starts. [There are other dramas in which] there is a lot of blood and indiscreet affairs, but only alcohol is a bad example.

Okuyucu 1: Çok iyi olmuş. Dizi çok iğrenç hale geldi. Hiçbir yerde bu kadar pis konuşan ve bu kadar alkolik insana ratlamadım. Ve böyle polis de görmedim. Hatta cezası az bile olmuş.

Okuyucu 2: RTÜK’in samimi bir şekilde işini yapmak istediğine inanmıyorum. Geç saatte yayınlanıyor ve dizi başlamadan tüm uyarılar yapılıyor. Kan gövdeyi götürsün, çarpık ilişkiler olsun ama alkol kötü örnek oluyormuş.

¹² Retrieved from <http://haber.gazetevatan.com/behzat-cye-rekor-ceza/458575/8/magazin>

The complaints of the first reader show parallelism with the decision text of the RTÜK, as s/he states his/her disturbance with profanity and alcohol consumption of the drama's characters. Furthermore, s/he remarks that in real life s/he has never come across with such police officers, which is in line with the council's disapproval of the main characters' explicit behaviors particularly stressing that they "have occupations that are reputable in society such as policeman and prosecutor" and that the way they are represented in the drama is incongruent with how Turkish police and government officials behave in real life. On the other hand, the second reader states that s/he doesn't believe in sincerity of the council, pointing out that there is double standard in their decisions: There are other TV dramas which include bloody scenes and indiscreet relationships, but Behzat Ç. is the one that is fined, because alcohol consumption among other things was deemed as setting a bad example. S/he also remarks that the drama was already broadcasted at a late hour and the due warnings were made before it starts, which is a common point raised in interviews I conducted as well. Regardless of the viewers' opinion on this issue, the broadcast time of the drama was changed once more and the show started at 11 pm, or at times later, during the third season. At the same time, from season 1 to season 3 there was a noticeable increase in the scenes blurred by the TV channel. While similar scenes were deemed normal during the first season, the boundaries of self-censorship were enlarging over time, with the fear of further warnings or monetary fines.

4.1.3. The Undermining of Normative Legitimacy

The undermining of the normative legitimacy of Behzat Ç. transpired via attempts by public figures, excessive and exaggerated media coverage, and the complaints of concerned non-viewers and well as some viewers and fans. In the next four subsections, I will focus on these respectively.

4.1.3.1. Attempts by Public Figures

The efforts of public figures to undermine the normative legitimacy of the drama proliferated especially after the RTÜK fined the drama in June 2012, and continued throughout the third season of the drama which ended in May 2013. Some visible attempts were made by Muharrem Balcı, the president of Turkish Green Crescent Society; Yiğit Bulut, an economist and newspaper columnist (later to become a consultant to the Prime Minister); and Şamil Tayyar, a journalist and parliament member from the AKP. These figures utilized multiple media channels in their effort to discredit the drama. Bulut reprimanded the drama in a news show he hosts, Tayyar tweeted negative comments about it, and Balcı made statements to newspapers. One common concern that I came across with in the accounts of these public figures is the characters' alcohol consumption. Although the drama started to be broadcasted at 11 pm with protective signs which remarked that it was appropriate for viewers over 13 years

during the third season, criticisms which stressed the negative effects of the characters' alcohol consumption on viewers, especially the children and the youth, continued. The following quote by Bulut was transcribed from an episode of the news show he hosts (Moderatör, 24; November 26, 2012):

Bulut: A policeman from Ankara... I watched one of those last night; I came across with it [while zapping], [because] I couldn't sleep. The guy drank *rakı* for 45 minutes in the drama. He finished one, made them buy another one, finished another one, and made them buy one more. 45 minutes in the drama, without leaving the armchair... The cost [of production] is zero; he never leaves the house in the episode. Is it Behzat Ç, something like that... I don't know the exact name. Now look at this: A guy drinks *rakı* in a TV drama for 45 minutes. Okay, let him drink, I'm not saying he can't drink. Let him drink for 5 minutes or for 1 minute... The episode has ended without leaving the armchair!

Bulut: Ankaralı bir polis... Bir tanesini dün gece seyrettim ben, rast geldim, uyuyamadım. Adam 45 dakika rakı içti dizide. Bir tane bitti, bir tane daha aldırıldı, bir tane bitti, bir tane daha aldırıldı. 45 dakika dizide, aynı koltuktan kalkmadan... Maliyet de sıfır dizide, hiç evden çıkmıyor aynı bölümde. Behzat Ç. değil mi, öyle bir dizi var. Tam adını da bilmiyorum. Şimdi bakın, 45 dakika dizide bir adam rakı içiyor. Ya içsin, içmesin değil. 5 dakika içsin, 1 dakika içsin. Aynı koltuktan kalkmadan bölüm bitti!

The episode Bulut talks about is known as a milestone by the fans (78th episode). It is an episode in which five leading characters that are police officers working at the homicide bureau come together in one of theirs' house and settle accounts with each other. Whereas a regular episode starts with a murder scene, progresses as the characters try to solve the murder, and, most of the time, ends with a culprit(s) taken into custody; this one focused solely on the conversations between these characters who were trying to solve some personal issues among themselves, and it took place in a single location. While a regular episode corresponds to a period of a couple of days, this one

comprised of a night only. Therefore, whereas the main characters drink alcohol in almost every episode, this episode was an exception during which they were seen drinking for nearly the entire episode. Hence, while Bulut's assertion that "the guy drank *rakı* for 45 minutes in the drama" is correct, this is not the case for all the episodes. On the other hand, his statement is an act of undermining normative legitimacy, as he questions the normalcy of a TV drama character's alcohol consumption for 45 minutes and asserts that normally it would be appropriate for this character to "drink for 5 minutes or 1 minute". Erdal Beşikçioğlu, the leading actor, responded to this statement in an interview (Can Dünder, 'Behzat Ç. bitiyor, ama sinemada devam edecek', *Milliyet*; December 2, 2012¹³):

Someone went on television, and criticized [us] saying "The guy makes money by drinking *rakı* for 45 minutes without leaving his seat." The guy drinks *rakı*, but what you need to question is why he drinks. Plus, he sits there for 45 minutes, but how does he perform [as an actor]? But our viewers wouldn't go without responding to such things... They immediately responded: "You are making a TV programme without leaving your seat for 45 minutes as well."

Biri TV'ye çıkmış, "Adam 45 dakika oturduğu yerde rakı içerek para kazanıyor" diye eleştiriyor. Kardeşim, adam o rakıyı içiyor da, sor bakalım neden içiyor? Hem 45 dakika orada oturuyor da, nasıl oynuyor? Ama bizim seyirci pabuç bırakmaz böyle şeylere... Hemen cevabı yaptırmışlar: "Sen de 45 dakika oturarak program yapıyorsun."

What Beşikçioğlu points out here is that Bulut's criticism is based on only a fragment of the drama, without taking the development of the whole story into account. He puts forward that in order to make sense of why the character drinks that much, it is

¹³ Retrieved from <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-behzat-c-bitiyor-ama-sinemada-devam-edecek-/pazar/haberdetay/02.12.2012/1635746/default.htm>

important to understand what happened beforehand. Beşikçioğlu's account also illustrates the affinity between the producers and the viewers of the drama and how they collaborate in resisting the efforts of de-legitimation. Beşikçioğlu's quoting the viewers' response to Bulut demonstrates that the producers are aware of the viewers' support in resisting de-legitimation and that they appreciate it.

4.1.3.2. Excessive and Exaggerated Media Coverage

Another form of the undermining of the normative legitimacy of Behzat Ç had been the excessive amount of media coverage about the drama especially in newspapers and online news media. Beginning with the first episode, the drama had been a famous topic in social media discussions and there have also been lively discussions going on about it in everyday conversations, both of which are fueled especially by media coverage about the drama. The media coverage came in four forms: (1) TV critics' columns in which they express their (mostly positive) views about the drama; (2) news reports about the pressures on the drama; (3) news reports about the reactions of the producers and the fans; and (4) news reports featuring the criticisms of public figures. Especially the second form of media coverage was voluminous; news reports of that kind appeared in national newspapers and online news media, newspapers and online platforms close to the government, and also left-leaning newspapers and online platforms. It led to the public opinion that Behzat Ç. was continuously being warned

and fined by the RTUK. The atmosphere created by these constant news reports about the demise of Behzat Ç. can be understood by looking at the following headings of some news reports that I sampled:

- The image of alcoholic policeman sets a bad example for the youngsters (Zaman; February 23, 2011)
- Reaction to the RTUK decision by Behzat Ç. scriptwriter! (Habertürk; June 8, 2011)
- A barrage of criticism to Behzat Ç. with cigarettes (Yeni Şafak; December 12, 2011)
- MHP's strong reaction to Behzat Ç! (Habertürk; March 9, 2012)
- Monitoring Behzat Ç. strictly (Milliyet; April 29, 2012)
- The bell tolls for Behzat Ç.! (Radikal; May 1, 2012)
- Behzat Ç. movement in Ankara streets (Hürriyet; May 28, 2012)
- Record penalty to Behzat Ç.! (Vatan; June 18, 2012)
- The only possibility for Behzat Ç. is finale! (Milliyet; March 8, 2013)¹⁴

¹⁴ Retrieved from http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_alkolik-polis-imaji-genclere-kotu-ornek_1097491.html, <http://www.haberturk.com/medya/haber/637923-behzat-cnin-senaristinden-rtuk-kararina-tepki>, <http://www.yenisafak.com.tr/gundem/sigarali-behzat-cye-elestiri-yagmuru-356362>, <http://www.haberturk.com/medya/haber/722651-mhpden-behzat-cye-sert-tepki-video>, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/behzat-c-ye-siki-takip/gundem/gundemdetay/29.04.2012/1533993/default.htm>, http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/canlar_behzat_c_icin_caliyor-1086642, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/magazin/televizyon/20640614.asp>, <http://haber.gazetevatan.com/behzat-cye-rekor-ceza/458575/8/magazin>, <http://cadde.milliyet.com.tr/2013/03/08/YazarDetay/1677559/-behzat-c-icin-tek-yol-final-> respectively.

Intertextuality can be observed between the headlines which remark a discourse that spoke as if Behzat Ç. had been under constant pressure and it had been warned and fined by the RTUK oftentimes during its broadcast life. This excessive amount of media coverage and exaggerated news stories led to the perception among the viewers (and non-viewers) that the drama (and therefore the TV channel) was subjected to monetary penalties repeatedly, which I came across in my interviews. In the following quote, my informant Kemal declares his opinion of what really happened:

There were a lot of penalty fines. I didn't hear anything like that; when subjected to a fine, one pays the fine; if it happens for a second time, then [the drama] is *shut down* ("kapatılır"). They allocated a portion of the budget to paying fines; [there were] fines constantly, they were paying fines constantly. At the end of the day, they are actors/actresses, but they are not working independently, they are working with production companies and TV channels. After a while, there were many many pressures that they had to... It is obvious that they did it under coercion. Erdal Beşikçioğlu said "we will try to continue the drama in internet". It didn't happen, I was expecting, but obviously they couldn't do it. They attempted to do that, then they shot movies. Again, I saw in an interview, "we want to continue with the movies." They want to do it, and they know the obstacles, they are not saying that they are going to do it, they say stuff like "we want to do it". It was *shut down* (kapatıldı) due to external pressures. It was obvious that it was finished [by external parties].

Bayağı para cezaları geldi hani. Ben öyle bir şey duymadım; hani para cezası gelince para cezası ödenir, ikincisinde kapanır. Bunlar bütçenin bir kısmını cezaya ayırmışlardı; hani sürekli sürekli ceza, sürekli sürekli ceza ödüyorlardı. Sonuçta bunlar tiyatrocı, oyuncu insanlar, ama bağımsız çalışmıyorlar, yapımcılarla kanallarla çalışıyorlar. Bir süre sonra da artık fazla fazla baskı görerek şey yapmak zorunda kaldılar. Zorla yapıldığı çok belli. Erdal Beşikçioğlu şey demişti, "internet üzerinden devam ettirmeye çalışacağız". Olmadı, bekledim, belli ki yapamadılar. Yani ona kalktılar, sonra filmler çekilmeye devam edildi. Yine bir röportajda şey okumuştum "filmlerin devamının gelmesini istiyoruz". Y yapmak istiyorlar, önlerindeki engelleri biliyorlar, yapacağız

da demiyorlar, yapmak istiyoruz falan diyorlar. dışarıdan gelen bir zorlama ile kapatıldı. Bitirildiği çok belliydi hani.

While Kemal asserted that the drama was subjected to repeated fines and the producers “allocated a portion of the budget paying fines”, the producers stated at different occasions that this is not the case. While Erdem and Akar expressed that the drama was not really under direct pressure in their newspaper interviews and also in the fan-producer meeting I participated; Tarkan Karlıdağ, the producer, made the following statement in a news report, when asked about the RTUK penalties (‘Pokemon, Ninja, Behzat Ç. kara listede’, Habertürk; June 15, 2012¹⁵):

We never commented on these issues. I just want to say this: There is a perception that Behzat Ç. An Ankara-based Detective Drama had been constantly subjected to warnings and fines by the RTUK. However, we are not constantly subjected to warnings or fines. Our drama was warned only once.

Biz bu konularda hiçbir zaman yorum yapmadık. Sadece şunu söylemek istiyorum; “Behzat Ç. Bir Ankara Polisiyesi”nin sürekli olarak RTÜK’ten uyarı veya ceza aldığı yönünde bir algı oluştu. Ne var ki biz sürekli olarak uyarı veya ceza almıyoruz. Dizimiz, RTÜK’ten sadece bir kez uyarı almıştır.

This quote, along with the accounts of other members of the production company, demonstrates the producers’ opinion that the news coverage about RTUK’s sanctions on the drama was exaggerated. While the council’s, parliament members’ and public figures’ attempts to undermine the regulative and normative legitimacy of the drama were continuing, this excessive coverage and exaggerative discourse on the drama were facilitating de-legitimation. A couple of days after Karlıdağ’s statement, the news

¹⁵ Retrieved from <http://www.haberturk.com/polemik/haber/750978-pokemon-ninja-behzat-c-kara-listede>

came out about RTUK's decision to fine Behzat Ç. in online news media, which multiplied the media coverage about the drama. This solidified the discrepant position of the drama among Turkish TV dramas, during a period when the production companies and TV channel executives were trying to adapt to the changing norms of the field brought into force with the changed rating system and the pressures of the government with recourse to its religious and conservative moral ideals. Excessive and exaggerated media coverage during such a period contributed to the undermining of normative legitimacy of Behzat Ç.

4.1.3.3. Concerned Non-viewers: Incongruence with Moral Ideals

Normative legitimacy of Behzat Ç. was also weakened by negative comments by concerned individuals, most of whom do not proclaim themselves as viewers, who specifically state that the drama is not appropriate for broadcasting on Turkish televisions. These negative comments started in the very first episodes of the drama in daily conversations between the viewers and non-viewers. Many of my informants, and especially Refik and Çağatay, recall these kind of negative comments from family members and friends and subsequent discussions they initiated to defend the drama from critiques. Negative commentary had also sprung up in social media at times when the regulative and normative legitimacy of the drama were scrutinized by the RTUK, parliament members, and public figures. These condemning comments were made on

Facebook and Twitter, EkşiSözlük, and also on reader comments sections of news reports in online news media.

The concerned non-viewers put forward that (1) the drama does not reflect the truth about how police officers act in everyday life, and (2) it is harmful for children, the youth and the society at large to watch. The aspects of the drama which were deemed problematic by these individuals were the characters' alcohol consumption, extramarital affairs, and profanity and the general misrepresentation of police officers in the drama; the same issues which were also criticized by political authority. The following excerpts were taken from reader comments on a news report titled "Hard Slap to Behzat Ç." and they illustrate the main points of contention of concerned non-viewers ('Behzat Ç.'ye Sert Tokat', Habertürk; June 18, 2012¹⁶):

Reader 1: The fine should be even more. I once watched it for 20 minutes, and I couldn't look at it anymore. These guys are swearing and drinking constantly. Or it shall be broadcasted after 1 pm.

Reader 2: I cannot really understand how you [fans] embrace this TV drama, which pushes the limits of morals and manners. Don't we have any national/moral or "ethical" values at all? This pure and simple inappropriateness should not serve as a model to our children/youngsters. The ones who defend this level of profanity and alcohol addiction, you have a permanent problem or something else! I didn't understand your contradictions about the logic of this drama. Is there anything else to embrace on top of all kinds of values!

Okuyucu 1: ceza az bile olmuş. ben bir kez 20 dk. seyrettim bir daha da bakmadım. bu adamlar sürekli küfür ediyor içiyor. yada gece 01'den sonra yayınlansın.

¹⁶ Retrieved from <http://www.haberturk.com/medya/haber/751702-behzat-cye-sert-tokat-video>

Okuyucu 2: ahlak ve terbiye sınırlarını zorlayan bu diziyi bu kadar sahiplenmeyi akıl erdiremiyorum. yani hiç mi milli/manevi yada "etik" değerlerimiz yok. sıfır kilometre düzeysizlikler çocuklarımıza/gençlerimize örnek olmamalı. bu kadar küfür alkol bağımlılığını savunanlar gerçekten sizde ya kalıcı bir sorun var yada başka bir şey! anlamadım bu dizi mantığındaki çelişkilerinizi nedir yani her türlü değerlerin üstünde başka birşey mi var sahiplenesi!..

As the quotes illustrate, the readers, who apprehend what kind of TV drama are normal - i.e. appropriate to be broadcasted on TV- based on their understanding of “national/moral [and] ethical values”, criticize Behzat Ç. “which pushes the limits of morals and manners”. Reader 1 puts forward that the penalty should be even more severe and asserts that broadcasting and thereby watching the drama would be appropriate if it was broadcasted after 1 am. Reader 2 deems the viewers’ defense of scenes including alcohol consumption and profanity problematic and directs his/her criticisms not only towards the drama itself, but also towards its “defenders”. As legitimacy is a reciprocal concept (Kates, 2004), such that legitimacy of Behzat Ç. is linked with the legitimacy of its viewers as a social group, attacks on the legitimacy of the viewers ensues attacks on the legitimacy of the drama and vice versa.

Interestingly, there was yet another group of individuals (including Melda and Songül among my informants as well), who proclaim themselves as Behzat Ç. viewers, but who were still critical of the excessive alcohol consumption and profanity in the drama which they found not really natural or realistic. Although this group was not sharing the religious and conservative moral ideals, they were still disturbed by what they deemed as explicit scenes in the drama. This second group was not willing to stop

watching the drama and they were discontented with the de-legitimation attempts; however, they stated that it would be better “if Behzat Ç would use less of profane words”. The common denominator of these two groups can be described as their disturbance with Behzat Ç’s not abiding by certain moral ideals they, as individuals, believe in. As this issue was raised in daily conversations and also in social media in periods during which Behzat Ç.’s regulative and normative legitimacy was scrutinized, it deliberately or unknowingly contributed to the de-legitimation.

4.1.3.4. Concerned Viewers and Fans: Normalizing Police Brutality

Another form of criticism, which I came across with in TV critics’ columns, social media and one of my interviews (with Ergin), came from individuals who watched the drama and accepted that it is realistic and natural, but still believed that its content includes some harmful elements. What these individuals are primarily concerned with was not alcohol consumption, profanity or extramarital affairs. Instead, they criticized the scenes portraying police brutality as they regard them as means for normalizing these behaviors. Therefore, they believed that the drama actually plays a very dangerous role in affirming police violence in Turkey although this is just the opposite of what it intends to do in the first place. While some of these viewers support the idea that the drama should be banned, the others still believe that any kind of censorship is

unacceptable. The following excerpt taken from an EkşiSözlük entry is illustrative of the main concerns of this group of viewers (Author 4; November 23, 2010):

I watched Behzat Ç., and it is true that the drama is fun to watch. Is it realistic (“hayatın içinden”); yes, that’s right, Turkish police has this kind of manners... Okay, I accept that my friends [addresses the fans who react to criticisms], but aren’t you crying (*sic*) about maltreatment in police stations on every occasion? Aren’t you afraid of this kind of bandit-like police officers? How do you guarantee that s/he will only bother criminals, but never “clean” people like you? Think for a moment that the guy you quarrel with on the bus is a noncompliant plain-clothes police officer like this one [in the drama]... Now, how can the generation which is intensely affected (“yoğrulmuş”) by Behzat Ç. will stand against maltreatment in police station, how will they put pressure on the government regarding this? They will continue living a life, content to be oppressed and beaten and to lawlessness and utter the super-philosophic sentence “This is Turkey bro. This is how we are!” On the other hand, the ones who don’t accept this will continue to suffer because of the attitude of majority... Behzat Ç. is a nicely produced but bad TV drama, my friend. Drugs are also good at making you high, but you end up badly. Even if it is fun to watch it, it shall be banned, I don’t want it.

şimdi de behzat ç.. izledim, doğrudur, kendini izlettiriyor. hayatın içinden mi, evet doğru, polislerimizin böyle tavırları var... ya tamam da arkadaşım, sen her fırsatta karakolda kötü muameleden ağlamıyor musun? böyle eşkıya tipli polislerden tırmıyor musun? sadece suçlulara musallat olacağını, senin gibi "temiz" insanlara hiç bulaşmayacağını kendi kendine nasıl garanti ediyorsun. otobüste tartıştığın tipin böyle sivil gezen, kanun kural tanımaz bir polis olduğunu düşün bakalım bir an... şimdi behzat ç. ile yoğrulmuş nesil, karakoldaki hangi kötü muameleye tepki koyacak, hükümete bu konuda nasıl baskı yapacak? "burası türkiye abi, bizde böyle" süper felsefik cümlesiyle ezilmeye, dayığa, hukuksuzluğa gönülden razı bir hayat sürmeye devam edecek. bunu kabullenmek istemeyenler de çoğunluğun bu tavrı yüzünden bu eziyeti görmeye devam edecek... behzat ç. güzel çekilmiş ama kötü bir dizidir arkadaş. esrar da güzel kafa yapıyor ama sonu kötü. karşısına geçince izleyebilecek olsam bile kaldırılсын yayından, istemiyorum.

As the quote shows, the preoccupations of the author, like other individuals mentioned above, is different from the public figures or concerned non-viewers and viewers whose primary concern is incongruence with what they regard as the common moral ideals of the society. While he regards the script to be realistic and natural, he contends that it normalizes police officers' rude behaviors, maltreatment of citizens, and incompiancy. He believes that the factuality of an incident, such as police brutality, doesn't make it appropriate for TV broadcasting and adds that even if he regards Behzat Ç. as a TV drama of high quality, its broadcast should be discontinued. Although not as vocal or voluminous as the criticisms of other groups of concerned individuals, this group of viewers constituted another voice that questions the normalcy of Behzat Ç's broadcast. Therefore, they also undermined the normative legitimacy of Behzat Ç. by mentioning in social media and daily conversations that it is unsuitable according to their understanding of what the norms and values that organize TV broadcasting should be.

The aforementioned attempts to undermine the normative and regulative legitimacy of Behzat Ç. had implications for different actors such as the production company, broadcasting TV channel, and viewers. On the other hand, it also had reverberations at the Turkish TV dramas market and for the society at large, especially with respect to the tension between the secular and modern and the religious and conservative factions of the society. In the next section, I will explain the implications of the delegitimation of Behzat Ç. for its immediate surroundings. After that, I will explain the

reverberations at the organizational field level and the societal level, and how the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. comes to mean the de-legitimation of similar TV dramas and ways of living and viewpoints that are incongruent with the religious and conservative moral ideals.

4.2. Consequences of De-legitimation for the Producers and Viewers

The de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. had consequences for its immediate surroundings which consisted of the production company, TV channel and the viewers of the drama. In the next subsections, I will detail the consequences of de-legitimation for these actors.

4.2.1 Consequences for the Production Company and the Broadcasting TV Channel

The regulative and normative pressures on Behzat Ç. had visible consequences for the broadcast of the drama. The air time which was 8 pm during the first season was changed to 10 -10.30 pm for the second season and 11 pm (and at times even later) for the third season. While the original air day was Sunday for seasons 1 and 2, it was taken to Friday to make it possible for people who wake up early for work or

school on Monday morning to watch the drama. Also the duration of the drama was shortened; while it ran for 90 minutes per episode for seasons 1 and 2, each episode lasted for 65 minutes during the third season. The smart signs, which appear before TV programs start and indicate the age group for which the program is appropriate, were changed from 7+ to 13+ at the beginning of the second season. The monetary fine charged by the RTUK was paid. Furthermore, as a more subtle consequence, self-censorship on the part of TV channel proliferated over time with the fear of future warnings and fines. More scenes started to be blurred and more dialogues between the characters started to be bleeped before broadcast by the TV channel, although there was not a significant change in the number of explicit scenes or dialogues.

When it comes to self-censorship on part of the production company, different producers put forward different views. The scriptwriter Erdem mentioned that he is abstaining from self-censorship by all means, at the university event I observed. In the same event, the general director Akar explained that they only omit the parts which may be cases for lawsuits. They stated that apart from one or two rather unimportant occasions, they were never told by the channel executives to change the script. They expressed that self-censorship is a reality in Turkish TV series market; however, the work environment in which Behzat Ç. is produced is not contaminated. Nonetheless, there were also opposing views on self-censorship among producers. For one thing, Beşikçioğlu, who portrays the leading character Behzat, told a different story in some of his interviews. The following is his response to a question about the pressures and

self-censorship during a TV program he was hosted after the series finale (Söz Sende, Balçıçek İlter, NTV; May 18, 2013):

Of course we were annoyed. Constantly on this subject... You are creating a story, a character. You are presenting a story, outside of reality but as if it is real. And you take your audience from the real world [and bring them] to that world for 1 or 1,5 hours. And you do it with great pleasure. But when your feelings about reality is questioned by others, by people who you listen to; you pull yourself back and start being a little more pretending about the character. If you look at the 3-year journey of Behzat Ç. you can absolutely observe the process of change in the way actors/actresses act. I mean, they annoyed us.

Ya bizim keyfimiz kaçtı tabii ki. Devamlı bu konu üzerine... Bir hikaye, bir karakter yaratıyorsunuz. Bir öykü sunuyorsunuz, gerçeğin dışında ama gerçekmiş gibi. Ve siz seyircileri 1 saat, 1.5 saat gerçek dünyadan koparıp o dünyanın içerisine alıyorsunuz. Onun için de büyük bir zevkle yapıyorsunuz. Gerçeklik duygularınız başkaları tarafından da, sözünü dinlediğiniz adamlar tarafından da sorgulanmaya başlayınca o zaman siz biraz daha karakter konusunda geri çekilip biraz daha göstermecî bir şekilde oynamaya başlıyorsunuz. Behzat Ç'nin 3 yıllık sürecine baktığınızda oyuncular üzerinde oynama biçiminin değişim sürecini mutlak surette görebilirsiniz. Keyfimizi kaçırdılar yani.

Although there is no direct pressure from the TV channel or the executive producers, as put forward by Erdem and Akar, Beşikçioğlu's quote illustrates that some of the cast members, including the leading actor himself, internalized the pressures of the political authority and it led them to become pretentious in their acting. This means that while self-censorship was not regarded as an issue by the general director and the scriptwriter, it was actually shaping the drama as it affected the actors/actresses.

As explicated above, the attempts to undermine the normative and regulative legitimacy of Behzat Ç. had consequences such as changes in the air time and day, duration, and the smart signs of the drama as well as a monetary fine for the TV channel

and the production company. They also shaped the way the cast members felt about the drama and resulted in their being pretentious in their acting. Above all, de-legitimation can be regarded as one of the reasons why Behzat Ç. was finished after three seasons. While there was a multiplicity of interlinked reasons for the decision to finish the drama including the decline in the ratings and lack of funds; as Serbes's (see the section on The De-legitimation of Behzat Ç.) and other producers' as well as TV critics' and viewers' accounts illustrate, the drama became illegitimate for TV broadcasting. Therefore, a significant consequence of the de-legitimation for the producers was the part it played in the ending of Behzat Ç.

4.2.2. Consequences for the Viewers

The de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. also led to changes in viewers' practices and interpretations and a further legitimation of the drama in their eyes which paved the way for a resistance movement. In the next subsections, I will focus on these consequences.

4.2.2.1. Changes in Viewing Practices

While Behzat Ç. viewers were known for their strong presence in social media, it is also known that many of them followed the drama through online channels. While downloading the episode from illicit websites was a common practice, many viewers also frequented Star TV's website in which Behzat Ç. episodes were shared after they were aired on television. While the number of viewers who followed the drama on TV was not much to begin with when compared to viewers following the drama through internet, a further shift from TV viewing to internet viewing took place over the course of the drama and especially during season 3. This later shift had consequences for the drama's ratings and thereby for the production company and the TV channel. My interviews and data collected from social media demonstrate that the two primary reasons for the shift of audience from television to internet were the late air time and the (perceived) increase in censorship.

Firstly, for the second and the third season, the air time of the drama was problematic for the viewers. During the second season the episodes were broadcasted Sundays at 10 or 10.30 pm and some of my informants recounted that it was hard to keep up since they had to go to bed in order to be able to get up early for work or school the next morning. However, a bigger problem arose when Behzat Ç. was moved to Friday nights and started to be aired at 11 pm or later for the third season; it was so late that viewers started to fall asleep before or while watching the drama. At the same time, the day change was confusing as they had gotten used to watch it Sunday evenings for the

previous two years. The following quote from Hande illustrates the main preoccupations of Behzat Ç. viewers about the changes made in air day and time before the third season:

After all, the air time of the drama changed 3 times in 3 years, and also its day changed. It was in the prime time, then it was taken to 10 pm, in the end it was at 11 pm. The last year it was on Friday and it was at 11 pm, I was falling asleep after watching it for half an hour, I couldn't watch it after I came home from school. There was something going on with RTUK then, so they changed the air time. There were elements [in the drama] that criticized the government; the killing of the prosecutor, also bugs in the room which they couldn't actually find. Most probably they [the TV channel] thought that we'll air it at 11 pm so that it won't disturb *some people* and then we'll finish it. I was falling asleep after a while. This is why it is not convenient to change the air time of the drama.

Zaten dizinin saati 3 senede toplam 3 kere değişti, günü de değişti. Normal kuşaktaydı, ondan sonra 10'a alındı, en son 11'deydi. Geçen sene hem cumaydı hem 11'deydi, ben yarım saat sonra uyuyakalıyordum, izleyemiyordum okuldan sonra. O zamanlarda RTÜK'le ilgili bir şeyler vardı ki saatini ötelediler. Hükümeti eleştiren şeyler vardı; savcının ölmesi, odaya şey konulması; aslında bulunmadı ama odaya böcek koydular. Birilerini huzursuz etmesin diye gece 11'de yayınlayalım, sonra da bitiririz diye düşündüler herhalde. Ben uyuyakalıyordum bir saatten sonra. Dizinin saatini değiştirmek o yüzden sakat.

As with other informants, Hande recalls that she was unable to keep awake and watch the entire episode due to the changes in air time in third season. She contends that it is inappropriate to change the air time of a drama, since it may have such consequences. Moreover, she believes that the reason for the change in air time was the TV channel's intention not to disturb "some people" including the RTUK members.

On the other hand, viewers contended that during the course of the drama, more and more scenes, especially the ones involving alcohol consumption, started to be blurred and more and more dialogues, involving even little profanity, started to be bleeped. These self-censorship efforts were actually made by Star TV itself in order to abstain from warnings and monetary fines by RTUK. With the start of the third season, Star TV started to share the uncensored versions of the episodes without the bleeps and blurred scenes in addition to regular TV-friendly versions on its website. My informants as well as EkşiSözlük authors mentioned that they preferred to watch the uncensored version since it gave a full-fledged viewing experience. The following excerpt taken from an EkşiSözlük entry illustrates the reasoning for this preference (Author 5; September 22, 2012):

With the blurred beer bottles and increased censorship it is impossible to watch [Behzat Ç.] on television. If Star [TV] continues to broadcast the uncensored versions of the episodes in its website just like it did for this episode, my Behzat Ç. watching time will be Saturday mornings from now on.

mozaikli biraları, ağırlaştırılmış sansürü ile televizyadan izlemek imkansız. eğer star, bu bölümde yaptığı gibi, bundan sonra da bölümleri sansürsüz olarak kendi sitesinde yayınlayacaksa behzat ç. izleme saati cumartesi sabahına kaydırılmıştır tarafımdan.

As with this EkşiSözlük author, my informants explained that they watched the drama online and especially preferred the uncensored version to have a better viewing experience. Along with viewers' who fell asleep before or during the drama, viewers switching to internet to watching the uncensored version may be regarded as possible reasons for the decrease in the number of overall Behzat Ç. viewers who followed the

drama on TV. However, it is wrong to attribute the overall decrease in ratings to changes in air time and increase in (perceived) self-censorship solely. Another reason for the decline in the ratings of Behzat Ç. was the changes in the rating measurement system (see footnote 7 under the subsection Behzat Ç. An Ankara-Based Detective Drama). All in all, Behzat Ç., which was never a success story when it comes to ratings, started to score even worse during the third season with the introduction of the new system. While during season 1 and 2¹⁷ it was generally in top 20 in total viewers and in top 10 in AB group viewers, it was barely in top 30 in total and was moving between top 10 to top 20 in AB group during season 3. The drama finale ranked 22nd in total and 8th in AB group, which can be regarded as a low rating performance when compared to the first season finale which was ranked 2nd in total and 1st in AB group.

Apart from the consequences for viewing practices which led to the decrease in the ratings of Behzat Ç., the viewers' interpretations about the fate of the drama and therefore their emotional reactions were shaped by de-legitimation, as I will detail in the next section.

4.2.2.2. The Shaping of Viewer Interpretations

Apart from the changes in viewing practices, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. also shaped viewer interpretations about the fate of the drama and also their emotional

¹⁷ During the second season, the ratings were measured from September to December 2011 only.

responses. Accordingly, viewers interpreted that the script was being modified due to the pressures and that the political authority would eventually prohibit the drama. Leaning on these interpretations, viewers felt resented towards the political authority as well as the TV channel and the production company for giving in to the pressures.

First of all, it was believed by the viewers that the script of the drama was slightly modified in order to better accommodate the demands and criticisms of the political authority. These modifications were seen as steps which would lead to the cancellation of the drama. Interpretations in this direction started to be pronounced saliently during the second season when the main characters Behzat and Prosecutor Esra got married. One of the points of concern about the drama, emphasized particularly by the MHP parliament member Bülent Belen, was the extramarital affair between these two characters, one of whom is the chief inspector of homicide bureau while the other one is a prosecutor. Belen contended that the extramarital affair between these two characters is incompatible with the traditional Turkish family structure and it is a fallacious portrayal of Turkish government officials. A couple of weeks after his criticisms in the national assembly, these two characters got married in the drama. This led to disquiet among viewers who believed that the drama was getting softened. Particularly in social media, and especially in EkşiSözlük, viewers started to criticize the producers for giving in to the pressures. However, the producers explained, on several occasions that these reactions were redundant as they never actually gave in to the pressures and the drama is free of self-censorship on their part. In an interview for daily *Radikal*, the

scriptwriter Erdem gave the following answer to a question about whether the marriage was included in the script because of the pressures (Bahar uhadar, 'Polisiye benim iin ara', Radikal; December 2, 2012¹⁸):

There is no such thing. I had Behzat and Prosecutor Esra's marriage in my mind. I sent the episode in which Behzat proposed. A couple of days later this debate started: "They are living together out of wedlock..." Parliamentary question in the national assembly, parliament member from MHP spoke, Blent Arın said something. That's when I understood that everybody will think that we married them because of pressures! I called our producer Tarkan Karlıdağ. I said, "I've sent the script, Behzat will propose. And now it's all over the news, how Behzat and the prosecutor can live together... Now it will be interpreted as if we are doing this because of the pressures. What shall I do?" He said, "Ercan, if you listen to the people, you cannot tell your story. Your story is apparent, don't listen to anybody."

Alakası yok. Behzat'la Savcı Esra'nın evlenmesi vardı kafamda. Behzat'a evlenme teklif ettirdiğim bölümü gönderdim. Birkaç gün sonra bu mevzu koptu; "Bunlar nikahsız yaşıyorlar..." Meclise soru önergesi, MHP 'li milletvekili konuştu, Blent Arın bir şeyler söyledi. O anda şunu anladım: Baskı yüzünden evlendiriyormuşuz hikâyesi çıkacak! Yapımcımız Tarkan Karlıdağ'ı aradım. Dedim ki "Hocam, senaryoyu gönderdim. Behzat evlenme teklif edecek. Ve şu anda kıyamet koptu, Behzat'la Savcı nasıl birlikte yaşar diye. Şimdi baskı yüzünden yapıyormuş gibi algılanacak. Ne yapayım?" O da "Ercan insanları dinlersen hikâyenı anlatamazsın. Hikâyen belli, kimseyi dinleme" dedi.

Although Erdem as well as the other producers contended that they have never given up to the pressures and abstained from self-censorship throughout the broadcast of the drama, viewers still interpreted Behzat and Esra's marriage and (alleged) decrease in the amount of alcohol consumption and profanity in the drama as adjustments in accordance with the conservative pressures. While some viewers considered these

¹⁸ Retrieved from http://www.radikal.com.tr/hayat/polisiye_benim_icin_arac-1110189

perceived adjustments as submission to political authority and resented to the producers; others, who believed that they should support the producers no matter what, was critical of the former group.

Even a year after the series finale, I found out during my interviews that the viewers still had the impression that there had been small modifications in the script in order to escape the attention of the political authority. This particular way of interpreting the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. couldn't be broken despite the producers' insistent statements that it was not the case.

In addition, based on their interpretation of the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç., the viewers were worried about the fate of the drama and believed that it would be/was eventually prohibited/cancelled by the political authority. Although the pressures by the parliament members, RTÜK and public figures were in the form of de-legitimation rather than a direct attempt to prohibit the broadcasting of Behzat Ç., this concern was uttered by the viewers in social media as well as the interviews I conducted and also put into words by TV critics. Orhan Tekelioğlu, in his column in daily *Radikal*, stated during the second season that ('Normalite atakta, Amirim siperde', *Radikal*; May 6, 2012¹⁹):

It is different to criticize a fictional story than to closely monitor it. You cannot tame outliers by telling what normal should be. Since a narrative is not created only by its author; the ones who consume it, the ones who read it are also complementary actors of the story... Liking Behzat Ç. is a democratic right, just like not liking it; I think

¹⁹ Retrieved from http://www.radikal.com.tr/radikal2/normalite_atakta_amirim_siperde-1087272

[what the current government calls] “advanced democracy” would involve this rule as well. To tell you the truth, I am concerned about chief inspector Behzat’s future. I feel like I will hear the words “screen freak” soon. I hope what I have in mind is an obsession created by my unconscious, an apprehension it created because of bad memories.

Bir kurmacayı, bir diziyi eleştirmek başka, onu yakından takibe almak bambaşka. Norm dışını, “normalin” ne olması gerektiğini söyleyerek terbiye edemezsiniz. Çünkü sadece yazarı yaratmaz bir anlatıyı, onu tüketenler, onu “okuyanlar” da hikayenin tamamlayıcı aktörleridir... Behzat Ç. ’yi sevmek, en az sevmemek kadar demokratik bir haktır, “ileri demokrasi” sanırım bu kuralı da kapsar. Ne yalan söyleyeyim, endişeliyim Behzat Amirimin geleceği hakkında, ufukta bir “ekran ucubesi” lafını duyacak gibiyim. Umarım, aklımdaki bilinçdışımın yarattığı saçma bir saplantı, kötü hatıralar nedeniyle yarattığı bir kuruntudur.

Tekelioğlu’s concerns about the future of Behzat Ç., which is shared by viewers as well, demonstrates that the attempts to undermine the drama’s legitimacy is taken seriously by its supporters and seen as a harbinger of the drama’s possible cancellation. His criticism of close monitoring of Behzat Ç. and his reference to the AKP’s frequently used motto of “advanced democracy” gives a clue about his prediction of where the threat of prohibition would come from.

At the end of the day, the drama was not prohibited, and the producers asserted that there was no direct intervention by authorities to cancel the drama that was passed on to them by the TV channel executives. However, the attempts to undermine legitimacy undertaken by the parliament members, the RTUK and public figures and also news media were regarded by the viewers as the reason for the end of the drama. In an EkşiSözlük entry, it is noted that Behzat Ç. is (Author 6; March 12, 2013):

the TV drama that was finished. They stood up until the last minute; but half of the people who have a say in this country are fascists and the other half are cowards, so it couldn't resist, it's finished, it will be finished. They changed the air time; then it didn't suffice, they changed its day; it didn't suffice, they subverted the program: it was broadcasted for a week and then it wasn't broadcasted the other week. It did not suffice again, they warned it via RTUK; it didn't suffice, they subjected it to a record monetary fine. Parliament members from MHP attacked it; it didn't suffice, so parliament members from AKP also attacked it. In the face of this much of pressure, nobody stood up and backed this drama up... As I told above, parliament members from political parties who received 60,95% percent of the votes in this country outspokenly caused the series to become a target...

bitirilen dizi. son ana kadar dimdik durdular ama memlekette soz sahibi olanlari yarisi fasist diger yarisi da korkak oldugundan dayanamadi, bitti, bitecek.yayin saatini degistirdiler yetmedi, yayin gununu degistirdiler yetmedi, yayin duzenini bozdular bir hafta yayinlandi bir hafta yayinlanmadi yine yetmedi. rtuk araciligiyla ihtar verdiler yetmedi, bu sefer de rekor para cezasi verdiler... mhp milletvekilleri saldirdi yetmedi bu sefer de... akp milletvekilleri saldirdi. bu kadar baskinin karsisinda bir tane adam cikip da yaninda duramadi bu isin... yukarida bahsettigim gini bu ulkede atilan oylarin %60,95'ini alan partilerin milletvekilleri acik acik hedef gosterdiler bu diziyi...

In this quote, while the author mentions Behzat Ç. as “the TV drama that was finished”, s/he deliberately uses passive voice by choosing the word *bitirilen* (“finished by others”) instead of *biten* (“finished by itself”). Thus, she puts forward that it was an external actor who finished the drama. In addition, the quote illustrates the author's belief that there was a systematic effort by “them” to bring the drama to an end. Although s/he never really explains who “they” are, s/he refers to parliament members and RTUK throughout her/his entry. This entry, along with other viewers' accounts, demonstrates the viewers' feeling of resentment towards the political authority.

While de-legitimation cannot be considered as the sole reason for Behzat Ç.'s ending, it can be said to play a part. This is supported by the producers' assertion (especially the general director Akar and author Serbes) in different occasions (see Serbes's quote under the heading De-legitimation of Behzat Ç.) that with the current state of Turkish televisions (circa 2013), it was not possible to continue producing and broadcasting Behzat Ç. or any similar TV drama. Therefore, the de-legitimation clearly damaged Behzat Ç.'s presence among Turkish TV dramas and in the organizational field of the Turkish dramas market.

All in all, along with the changes in viewing practices, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. had also shaped viewer interpretations about the fate of the drama and their emotional responses. While they interpreted that there were adjustments in the script in accordance with the conservative pressures and that the broadcasting of the drama would be/was prohibited by the political authority, they felt resentment towards the TV channel and the production company along with the political authority. The de-legitimation on the whole and their resentment towards the political authority brought about a further commitment to the drama, which I will explain in the next section.

4.2.2.3. The Further Legitimation of Behzat Ç. in the Eyes of Its Viewers and Resistance

When legitimacy is considered as a generalized perception, it is important to note that some groups within the public may not be sharing this perception. There was a legitimization-de-legitimation dynamic in the case of Behzat Ç. such that while the drama was getting illegitimate in the Turkish TV dramas market, the pressures were backfiring for the drama's viewers. Therefore, while the production and broadcasting of the drama was becoming de-legitimated over time (which was also accepted by the viewers as well), watching Behzat Ç. was getting more legitimate for its viewers. Among my informants, Hande contended that as the pressures were getting more severe:

People were saying “okay, let the fines come. The next week is going to be even worse, there will be even more subtle messages [in the drama]. They fans were like this... I always said, it will be watched even more. If you forbid something, people will be more curious, they will watch it eagerly, I said. It will be beneficial for us, don't worry, the drama will not be finished, I said.

Millet şey diyordu “tamam, gelsin cezalar. Önümüzdeki hafta daha fena şeyler olacak, daha fena dokunduracağız”. Böyle fanları böyle şey yapıyordu... Ben hep daha çok izlenir dedim. Bir şeyi yasaklarsan millet daha çok merak eder, kesin daha çok izlenir dedim. Bize yarayacak, boşverin, dizi kaldırılmaz, dedim.

In line with Hande's account here, my other informants also said that they watched the drama even more eagerly in face of the pressures and their expectation from the (imagined) community of Behzat Ç. viewers was to do the same thing. Furthermore, a group of viewers including Hande believed that the drama was getting/will even get harsher

in terms of critiquing the government because of the pressures. This may be regarded as a counter-position to the belief of viewers that the drama was softening. However, in my interviews, even the same informants mentioned that the drama's language was softening and also getting harsher when referring to different episodes or segments within the drama. As their eagerness to watch the drama in the face of the pressures demonstrates, (watching) Behzat Ç. was getting more and more legitimate in the eyes of its viewers. The same was also the case for the TV critics and some other journalists, as they increasingly started to praise Behzat Ç. and its struggle against pressures in their columns. Since legitimacy is a reciprocal concept, it can be inferred that viewers of Behzat Ç. and TV critics equated their own legitimacy with the legitimacy of Behzat Ç. (Kates, 2004). In such a situation, attempts to de-legitimize the drama backfired for them, and their disturbance with religious and conservative ideals' replacing the secular and modern ones within TV dramas and within the society at large also played a part in Behzat Ç.'s legitimation in their eyes.

As Behzat Ç. started to be more and more legitimate in the eyes of the viewers and the TV critics, the communal understanding which was already in the shaping between the producers, the TV critics and the viewers beginning with the first episodes strengthened. On different occasions, the producers expressed that the reason why Behzat Ç. could still be broadcasted despite the low ratings was the viewers' support in social media, and especially in EkşiSözlük. My informants from Ankara frequently recalled their experiences of meeting the cast members in Ankara streets and stated

that just like the characters they portray, they are sincere and natural and very friendly towards the viewers. Also, The TV critics played an important role in promoting the drama throughout its broadcast life by praising the drama and supporting it in the face of critiques in their columns.

The further legitimization of the drama in the eyes of the viewers brought about a resistance movement against the de-legitimation attempts of the parliament members, RTUK, and public figures. The viewers engaged in different forms of resistance such as showing their support for the drama in social media platforms; continuing to watch the drama out-of-spite (“*inadına*”); going to Behzat Ç. movies to support the producers financially; and participating in letter-writing campaigns and outdoor-watching events.

First of all, while they were active on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and EkşiSözlük in the first place, they became all the more vocal following the RTUK warnings and fine and parliamentary discussion on Behzat Ç. My analysis shows that the amount of entries in EkşiSözlük inscribed under the heading Behzat Ç. had increased considerably after the pressures and at certain periods most of the entries were about the political authority’s attempts to undermine the drama’s legitimacy. At the same time, other headings including ‘*Behzat Ç. ’ye rekor ceza*’ (“Record penalty for Behzat Ç”) and ‘*Behzat Ç. destek kampanyası*’ (“Behzat Ç. support campaign”) were initiated by EkşiSözlük authors after the de-legitimation attempts took place. My informant Refik recounts that the Facebook page he administered become a platform for viewers to show their support to the drama over time. On the other hand, Twitter

was also widely used by viewers to resist to de-legitimation. For example, when the RTÜK warned the drama for the first time during season 1, the viewers started the hashtag #behzatmedokunma (Get Your Hands off My Behzat Ç.) which ranked first on the list of trends in Turkey in a short while (Ayça Söylemez, ‘Serbes: "Behzat Ç.'nin Formatında Değişiklik Yapmayacağız"', Bianet; June 8, 2011²⁰). Among my informants, especially university students mentioned that they had been following and at times participating in social media discussions about Behzat Ç., with Refik personally administering 3 Facebook pages about the drama, characters and cast members. In all these platforms, the viewers defended the drama from the critiques, criticized the political authority’s attempts, and declared their support to the producers.

Secondly, with the further legitimation of watching Behzat Ç., the viewers started to watch the drama even more eagerly, as evinced in Hande’s quote above. At the same time, while many viewers started to watch uncensored versions of the episodes at Star TV’s website during the third season, almost all of my informants along with EkşiSözlük authors stated that they still continued to watch it on TV as well or at least left the TV open while it was aired. While some claimed that this is important for the drama to score higher on ratings, others stated that it was just a symbolic way to show their support. Thirdly, going to the cinema to watch the Behzat Ç. movies had become a means to support the producers financially. Most of my informants, as with EkşiSözlük authors, regarded this as a duty towards the production company who

²⁰ Retrieved from <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/sanat/130589-serbes-behzat-c-nin-formatinda-degisiklik-yapmayacagiz>

made such a TV drama possible in the first place. Many of them had been to the movies and some declared their regret for not seeing the movies in theaters. All of them stated that they are going to watch the movies in theaters if there will be more to come, not only because they missed Behzat Ç. but also to support the production company financially.

The viewers had also initiated and participated in online letter-writing campaigns and outdoor-watching events, especially after Belen started the parliamentary discussion and addressed parliamentary questions to ministers about Behzat Ç. While the online letter-writing campaigns were not really very effective, the outdoor-watching events, organization and publicity of which were carried out through the Facebook pages administered by Refik and another admin, attracted a lot of attention. In our interview, Refik told me that they were the initiators of the event; however, it would not be possible without the help of Çankaya Municipality, a CHP-led municipality in Ankara. For the last four episodes of season 2, a huge screen was set in downtown Ankara with the help of the municipality. The events were announced primarily via the Facebook pages and hundreds of viewers, including some of my informants, attended to watch the drama together with fellow viewers. The following EkşiSözlük entry illustrates one of the events (Author 7; May 28, 2012):

I watched tonight's episode from the cinevision set at the intersection of Yüksel and Karanfil streets [with two other EkşiSözlük authors].. The event which was organized by Çankaya Municipality as part of the Behzat Ç.'ye Dokunma [Get Your Hands Off Behzat Ç.] Campaign was quite crowded and many people watched it with Bomontis [the beer

brand used in the drama] in their hands... It was quite good except for the constantly taken pictures... and the inconvenience of sitting down on the floor.. It was interesting to see the lady who continuously uplifted the crowd to stand up and chant, shouting “Hayalet, I love you”.. The most applauded characters were Behzat and Akbaba and the most laughed one was Harun... Everybody expected some of the cast members, but nobody came.. At one stage, the atmosphere was stirred with the mayor’s arrival. Everybody wanted to greet and have a picture with the mayor... The best thing was Gençlerbirliği [an Ankara-based football team] supporters’ bringing torches.. People’s shouting “Ankara Don’t Sleep, Look Out for Behzat Ç.” was like the summary of the night.

bu akşamki bölümünü yüksel ile karanfilin kesiştiği köşede kurulan sinvizyondan izledik (bkz: ben Yazar Y ve Yazar Z).. behzat ç.'ye dokunma kapsamında çankaya belediyesinin organize ettiği etkinlik oldukça kalabalıktı ve çoğu kişi ellerinde bomontilerle izledi.. sürekli çekilen fotoğrafları, yere oturma verildiği rahatsızlığı... saymazsak gayet iyiydi.. insanların sürekli tezahürat yapmaları için ayağa kalkıp elleriyle topluluğu gaza getiren teyzenin, ekranda hayaleti görünce, hayalet gurban olurum sana diye bağırması ilginçti.. en çok alkışı amirimle akbaba aldı ve en çok harun'un mallıklarına gülündü... oyuncuların birilerini bekledi herkes ama kimse gelmedi.. bi ara bülent tanık'ın gelmesiyle hareketlendi ortam.. herkes başkana selam vermek ve fotoğraf çektmek için yarıştı... gençlerbirliği taraftarının meşaleler gelmesi ise en güzeliydi.. insanların, ankara uyuma behzat ç.'ye sahip çık diye bağırması gecenin tek cümlelik özeti gibiydi..

My observation at one of those events and also the accounts of my informants who participated (Hakan, Sedat, Refik, Burak and Melis) confirm the story told by this author. Viewers at the events were engaging in para-social behaviors (Horton and Wohl, 1956) such as talking to the drama characters, clapping or booing them at times. At the same time, most of them were drinking beer, especially Bomonti, during the drama accompanying the characters who frequently drink each episode. During the commercial breaks they were shouting slogans protesting the pressures (“Get Your Hands off Behzat Ç.”) and calling fellow viewers and Ankara people to resist the de-legitimation

efforts (“Ankara Don’t Sleep, Look Out For Behzat Ç.”). A communal understanding between fellow viewers could be observed as they were enjoying watching the drama with hundreds of others along with watching it on the street. While Serbes and Erdem actually attended one of the events, they didn’t stay long and chose not to attend the others. When I asked Erdem and Akar about this during the university event I participated, they told that they had reservations with Çankaya municipality and the mayor’s involvement in the event, as they didn’t want to be connoted with any political party or any political institution. My informants were also divided on the topic. While some of them were disturbed by the municipality’s involvement (Sedat, Çağatay and Remzi), others (Refik, Burak and Güler) appreciated their support. Whatever their views were about the involvement of Çankaya municipality, the participants were happy to be watching the drama together with fellow viewers and resisting the pressures. While the events could not prevent the drama from being fined by the RTUK and hence the air time being changed to 11 pm for third season, they were an important marker of the viewer support for Behzat Ç. and showed the perseverance of the viewers in defending their favorite drama in the face of de-legitimation.

At the end of the day, they couldn’t save Behzat Ç. from becoming illegitimate for TV broadcasting. Therefore, an important consequence of de-legitimation for the viewers (as it is for the producers) was the part it played in the eventual ending of the drama.

4.2.3. Summary of the Section

In summary, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. had consequences for the TV channel, the production company, and the viewers. The changes in the air time and day, smart signs, and the duration of the drama and the monetary fine charged were the most visible consequences. In addition, the de-legitimation resulted in increased self-censorship and a decline in the ratings for the TV channel. While Akar and Erdem put forward that the drama was free of self-censorship on their part, Beşikçioğlu expressed that the actors/actresses started to be more pretentious in their acting due to the pressures over time. The consequences for the viewers were several: The de-legitimation and the subsequent changes on part of the TV channel led to a switch from TV viewing to internet viewing. At the same time, due to the de-legitimation, the viewers interpreted that there are adjustments in the script in accordance with the criticisms and believed that the drama would be eventually cancelled by the political authority. They felt resentment towards the political authority as well as the TV channel and the production company. On the other hand, the de-legitimation actually legitimated Behzat Ç. in the eyes of its viewers and enhanced the communal understanding between the viewers, TV critics and producers. It led to resistance on the part of viewers who continued watching the drama out-of-spite and on TV, increased their presence in social media to support the drama, supported the production company by going to Behzat Ç. movies in theaters, and started and participated in online letter-writing campaigns and outdoor-watching events. At the end of the day, they couldn't save Behzat Ç. from

becoming illegitimate for TV broadcasting. Therefore, an important consequence of de-legitimation for the producers and the viewers was the part it played in the eventual ending of the drama.

Apart from the mentioned consequences for the viewers, the TV channel and the production company, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. also had reverberations for the organizational field of the Turkish TV dramas market and the society at large. In the next two sections, I will first focus on the reverberations at the organizational field level and then I will go into detail about the repercussions at the societal level.

4.3. Reverberations of De-legitimation at the Organizational Field Level

Beyond the immediate consequences it had for its viewers and producers, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. had reverberations for the organizational field of the Turkish TV dramas market. Along with regulative and normative pressures on other TV dramas, it played a part in the de-legitimation of TV dramas incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals in general. In order to make sense of this broader de-legitimation movement, here I will focus on the pressures on another TV drama.

Among the other TV dramas which were scrutinized along with Behzat Ç., the most popular one was the historical costume drama *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* (The Magnificent Century). *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* is about the life story of the infamous Ottoman

sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and his wife Hürrem. *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* was not only one of the TV dramas with highest ratings during its three and a half-year broadcast, it also attracted over 200 million international viewers in the Balkans and the Middle East (Carney, 2014). At the same time, the drama was harshly criticized by many viewers and non-viewers as well as parliament members, because it was claimed to be misrepresenting Ottoman history and disrespectful against important historical figures like Suleiman. The main criticism was that there was not sufficient mention of the successful wars and conquests administered by him and that he was pictured as a sultan who spent most of his time in the palace although it was not true. In addition, the scenes in which he was seen having intercourse with women from the *harem* were also deemed problematic. In a public speech, Prime Minister Erdoğan reprimanded the drama by pointing out this alleged misrepresentation ('Başbakan Erdoğan'dan Muhteşem Yüzyıl'a Ağır Eleştirisi', *Hürriyet*; November 25, 2012²¹):

We would go everywhere our ancestors had been on a horseback, we are interested in all those places, but they think our ancestors are like those in Magnificent Century documentary (*sic*) on television screen. We don't have such ancestors. We never knew such a Sultan Suleiman. He spent 30 years of his life on horseback, not in the palace as you see in those TV dramas. You have to know this, understand this very well. And I am reprimanding the directors of those dramas and owners of those TV channels before our public. And despite our warnings to people in charge, I am expecting the jurisdiction to make the necessary decision.

Ecdadımızın at sırtında gittiği her yere biz de gideriz, her yerle biz de ilgileniriz ama bunlar televizyon ekranındaki ecdadımızı zannediyorum o 'Muhteşem Yüzyıl' belgeselindeki gibi tanıyor. Bizim öyle bir

²¹ Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/22009998.asp>

ecdadımız yok. Biz öyle bir Kanuni tanımadık. Biz öyle bir Sultan Süleyman tanımadık. Onun ömrünün 30 yılı at sırtında geçti. Sarayda o gördüğünüz dizilerdeki gibi geçmedi. Bunu çok iyi bilmeniz, anlamamız lazım. Ve ben o dizilerin yönetmenlerini de o televizyonun sahiplerini de milletimizin huzurunda kınıyorum. Ve bu konuda da ilgilileri uyarmamıza rağmen yargının da gerekli kararı vermesini bekliyorum.

This quote illustrates that similar to the pressures on Behzat Ç. which were leaning on a particular understanding of what moral norms and values to which all members of Turkish society as well as the cultural products should abide, the pressures on Muhteşem Yüzyıl leans on a particular interpretation of Turkish-Ottoman history and a glorification of the belligerent and conqueror-minded mentality of the period. This is also in line with the AKP's reflex of protecting and also propagating the religious and conservative moral ideals, as their project of reformatting Turkey's national identity leans on an Ottomanist imagination, which is damaged by the way Suleiman is portrayed in Muhteşem Yüzyıl. In this regard, Erdoğan undermined the normative legitimacy of the drama by pointing out its 'incorrectness' in terms of representing the historical reality and paved the way for further attempts to undermine its regulative legitimacy by calling juridical authorities for duty.

Although the pressures on Muhteşem Yüzyıl brought about slightly different consequences when compared to the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç., together they were part of a broader movement at the organizational field: the de-legitimation of TV dramas incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals promoted by the political authority. This de-legitimation movement along with the changes in the rating

measurement system led to the enactment of two mechanisms by the production companies and the TV channels. These mechanisms were (1) the elimination of and (2) self-censorship in TV dramas with content incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals, which were also the case for Behzat Ç. A third mechanism, namely the emergence of new conservative TV dramas (such as *Huzur Sokağı*, *Ertuğrul: Diriliş* [Resurrection], *Filinta: Bir Osmanlı Polisiyesi* [An Ottoman Detective Drama], etc.) produced by new-found production companies close to the government was also in place. Together these mechanisms led to the homogenization of Turkish TV dramas with recourse to conservative and religious political and moral ideals. While the third mechanism is beyond the scope of this study, elimination and self-censorship are directly related to the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. In the next two subsections, I will focus on them. In the next subsection, I will detail the mechanism of elimination and touch upon how the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. contributed to this mechanism.

4.3.1. Mechanism 1: Elimination

The de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. and the pressures on other TV dramas incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals have shaped cultural production in the field. One consequence was the elimination of this kind of TV dramas, which constitutes a significant mechanism in the transformation of the field into one in which TV dramas were adjusted according to these ideals.

While the warning given to Behzat Ç. during its first season was being discussed at the council; Korkmaz Alemdar, a RTUK member appointed by the CHP, pointed out to the possible danger of elimination. He put forward that sanctioning the drama might make production and broadcast of the dramas of this genre, i.e. detective dramas, impossible in his explanation letter for his dissenting vote (reached via www.rtuk.gov.tr; May 10, 2011):

The mentioned drama is a Turkish production which is similar to those detective dramas/movies produced in the USA. The behaviors, conversations, and actions which are regarded to be causing breach are indispensable elements of the genre. Actually they can be disturbing not only for children, but also for some adults as well. But this is a genre and it became indispensable for television/cinema. A range of topics are covered via film/series of this kind and are presented to the public... This is why the [RTUK] decision may be legally correct, but it is disputable whether it is right and appropriate. The decision the RTUK made about Behzat Ç. is a decision which can make the production of this kind of programs impossible. To regard the genre's indispensable elements inappropriate would make broadcast and thereby production impossible... For all these reasons, I don't agree with the majority decision the RTUK made about Behzat Ç.

Söz konusu dizi A.B.D. yapımı polisiye filmlerin/dizilerin Türkiye'de üretilen bir benzeridir. İhlale yol açtığı düşünülen davranışlar, konuşmalar, eylemler türün vazgeçilmez öğeleridir. Aslında bunların sadece çocukları değil bir kısım yetişkinleri de rahatsız edebileceği düşünülebilir. Ama bu bir türdür ve sinema/televizyon için vazgeçilmez hale gelmiştir. Pek çok konu bu tür filmler/diziler aracılığıyla ele alınmakta ve kamuoyunun dikkatine sunulmaktadır... Bu nedenledir ki kararların yasal olarak doğru olduğu öne sürülebilir ama haklı ve yerinde olduğu konusu tartışmaya açıktır. Üst Kurul'un "Behzat Ç" konusunda aldığı karar bu tür programların üretilmesini olanaksız hale getirebilecek bir karardır. Türün zorunlu unsurlarını ihlal unsuru saymak gösterimi yani üretimi de olanaksız hale getirecektir. ...Bu gerekçelerle Üst Kurul'un "Behzat Ç" konusunda aldığı çoğunluk kararına katılmıyorum.

As the quote suggests, Alemdar's uttermost concern was the possible de-legitimation of detective dramas as a genre by means of the RTUK sanctions. He put forward that Behzat Ç. could be an exemplary case for other production companies and TV channels which would become reluctant to produce and broadcast detective dramas. However, there hasn't been a significant change in the condition of these dramas within the field as he expected. While *Arka Sokaklar*, a crime-drama adorned with messages which foster a positive image of police department in the society, has still been continuing (2006 to date), other crime-dramas such as *Güzel Çirkin* (Beautiful Ugly, 2013), *Galip Derviş* (2013-2014), *Kayıp* (Lost, 2013-2014), *Cinayet* (The Killing, 2014), and *Filinta* (2014 to date) started to be broadcasted on national TV channels. As Alemdar asserts, this RTUK decision and the following ones decreased the possibility of TV dramas that are similar to Behzat Ç. finding a place in the broadcast stream; however, the point of similarity was incongruence with the religious and conservative ideals. TV critic Tayfun Atay draws attention to the disappearance of this kind of TV dramas with the start of the 2013-2014 television season in his column ('Dizilerin seyir defteri', Radikal; October 11, 2013²²):

For one thing, we can understand that we already said goodbye to TV dramas which include social criticism, take leftist thought as its basis, or which are at least left-leaning. Therefore, this is end of an era. Now it is almost impossible to see dramas such as *Çemberimde Gül Oya*, *Behzat Ç.*, *Öyle Bir Geçer Zaman Ki*, *Kayıp Şehir* (Lost City), or *Ağır Roman-Yeni Dünya* (Heavy Roma-New World) which are explicitly or implicitly radical, protest, problem-oriented, and anti-status quo... Instead, there are directly or indirectly conservative or conservative-leaning

²² Retrieved from http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/tayfun_atay/dizilerin_seyir_defteri-1155144

dramas now. It seems like the Crime-thriller genre, loaded with mystery, has taken one step forward. This is normal, because this, excluding the exceptions like Behzat Ç., is a genre which not only does not disturb status-quo conservatism, but also serves it implicitly.

Bir kere anlaşılıyor ki toplumsal eleştiri içeren, düşünsel olarak ‘sol’dan beslenen yahut en azından sol ‘tınlamalı’ dizilere tam anlamıyla elveda demiş durumdayız. Dolayısıyla bir dönem kapandı. Artık (bitmiş, arşivde yerini almış dizilerin adını vermekte sakınca yok) bir ‘Çemberimde Gül Oya’, ‘Behzat Ç.’, ‘Öyle Bir Geçer Zaman Ki’, ‘Kayıp Şehir’ gibi diziler, yani açık-seçik veya vurgulu şekilde radikal, protest, sorun odaklı, statüko-karşıtı, fincancı katırlarını ürkütmeye yönelik (‘Ağır Roman-Yeni Dünya’yı da atlamayalım) kurgular görmek hemen hemen olanaksız... Bunun yerine, doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak muhafazakâr içerikli ya da (yukarıdaki ifadeyle uyaklıca) ‘tınlamalı’ diziler var artık. Polisiye-gerilim, ‘gizem’le sarmaş-dolaş, bir boy daha öne çıkmış gibi. Doğal, çünkü bu, istisnalar (‘Behzat Ç.’) hariç, statükocu muhafazakârlığa rahatsızlık vermediği gibi alttan alta da hizmet eden bir tarz.

Atay’s observation demonstrates that while Alemdar was right in his prediction of a general de-legitimation movement in the field which was contributed by the undermining of legitimacy of Behzat Ç., this movement was in force for TV dramas with elements incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals. This made it inconvenient for the production companies and TV channels, which feared further pressures and decrease in ratings which would result in a loss in profits, to invest in this kind of TV dramas. Having perceived the replacement of the prevailing secular and modern values and norms with religious and conservative ones, they tried to maintain their own legitimacy by conforming to the changes within the field (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975; Suchman, 1995). By the end of the 2012-2013 television season, Behzat Ç., *Kayıp Şehir*, and *Öyle Bir Geçer Zaman Ki* were eliminated and, as

Atay suggests, the broadcast stream was filled with TV dramas with explicit or implicit conservative storylines.

While producers of Behzat Ç. were insistent on carrying on with their original storyline despite the pressures, they were also aware that ‘the TV dramas similar to Behzat Ç.’ were being eliminated. In a newspaper interview about the second Behzat Ç. movie, Akar emphasized that it won’t be possible to see dramas like Behzat Ç. in the future. His reasoning was that Turkish television system has started to get structured in a way that will broadcast “pleasant” (“*tatlı*”), “cute” (“*şirin*”) programs which posits viewers as cultural dopes (Cansu Çamlıbel, ‘Diziler Yumuşar’, *Hürriyet*; August 12, 2013²³). Similarly, viewers were also aware of the elimination and its linkage to the ongoing changes in the conventional values and norms. The following excerpt taken from my interview with Melda and Songül, who also watch a number of different Turkish TV dramas including *Muhteşem Yüzyıl*, illustrates this awareness:

The researcher – Do you think it is possible to see similar programs [to Behzat Ç.] on television in the future?

Melda – Frankly, it is hard, when you look at the current trajectory of this country. I don’t know if there will be a change afterwards. But in the present case they won’t want it, I don’t think so.

Songül – With the current trajectories of Turkey, it won’t happen; but it can be later, in the future. Because it was a successful one, they can shoot something like this. But with the current conditions, nobody would take the chance. I mean, they would know that it [won’t be possible].

²³ Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/24501596.asp>

Araştırmacı – Peki sizce ileride benzer şeyler yapılabilir mi televizyonda?

Melda – Valla şimdi bu ülkenin gidişatına göre zor. Sonradan değişen bir şey olur mu bilmem. Bu durumda istemezler, zannetmiyorum.

Songül – Türkiye’nin şu anki gidişatlarında olmaz, ama daha sonra ileride olabilir. Tutuldu diye böyle bir şey çekilebilir. Ama şu anda bu şartlarda kimse bu işe girişmez. Bilir yani.

Melda and Songül’s comments demonstrate that not only professionals such as the producers, TV channel executives or TV critics, but also the public, the very viewers, were aware that during the period following the end of Behzat Ç., it won’t be possible to come across with dramas incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals. The elimination was important for all the actors within the field including the production companies, TV channels, advertisers and viewers, as it shaped their practices as well as interpretations about the trajectory of the field. While elimination was a radical mechanism; self-censorship, which also played a part in the homogenization of the dramas and the transformation of the field, was more subtle and less radical. In the next subsection, I will go into detail about this mechanism.

4.3.2. Mechanism 2: Self-Censorship

Along with elimination, self-censorship enacted by the production companies and TV channels is a mechanism that plays a part in the transformation of the Turkish TV dramas market. Self-censorship is a less radical mechanism; instead of finishing or

cancelling the drama incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals, it curbs the incongruent elements. It is a more subtle mechanism; it may even be involuntary and go unnoticed by the very producers that enact it. Therefore, it is not possible to clearly map out the incidents of self-censorship within the field; however, it is possible to elaborate on the ongoing discussions in media and the accounts of industrial actors.

As I have explicated above, while the viewers believed that the storyline of Behzat Ç. was modified with recourse to criticisms of the political authority, Akar and Erdem denied any self-censorship attempts on their part. They also remarked that apart from a couple of exceptional instances, the broadcasting TV channel didn't ask them to make any changes in the drama. However, the number of scenes blurred and dialogues bleeped by the TV channel had risen, especially during season 3, which suggests self-censorship on the part of the TV channel. On the other hand, the leading actor Beşikçioğlu contended that the cast members were affected by the criticisms and started to be more pretentious in their acting over the course of the drama. The other TV dramas which were also under the scrutiny of the political authority were more prone to self-censorship than Behzat Ç. In the case of Muheşem Yüzyıl, it was believed by my informants (especially Güner, Melda and Songül) that the disquieting elements such as revealing dresses of the women in *harem* were eliminated. In *Bir Kadın Bir Erkek* (A Woman A Man; 2008-2012), two leading characters who had been living together without getting married since the start of the drama were believed by the

viewers (including my informant Burak) to be married by the producers due to the pressures.

While it is not possible to provide solid evidence of how the self-censorship mechanism works, industrial actors, including the producers of Behzat Ç. acknowledge that self-censorship is a reality in the field. The following is TV critic Mesut Yar's comment on the RTÜK warning and other pressures Behzat Ç. faced during the first season emphasizing this mechanism ('Çocuklardan Değil de Teşkilattan Korkunuz', Posta; January 25, 2011²⁴):

RTÜK has intimidated Behzat Ç. (Star TV) with cues by saying "he drinks, he swears, he tortures; children can take him as a role model" for now... If we follow these cues, we will come across with a lot of "rearranged" TV dramas in television history. If you want to *live*, you will make that rearrangement; otherwise in the next evaluation meeting it is highly likely that you will end up knocked out of the bounds. (emphasis added)

Behzat Ç. (Star TV) "içki içiyor, küfür ediyor, işkence yapıyor; çocuklar kendisini rol model alabilir" diyerek RTÜK tarafından şimdilik "ipucuyla" korkutulmuş... Bu ipuçlarını takip ettiğinizde bir sürü "yeni-den ayarlanmış" diziye rastlarsınız TV tarihinde. Yaşamak istiyorsan o ayarı yapacaksın, yoksa bir sonraki değerlendirme toplantısında taca atılman yüksek ihtimaldir...

In this quote, Yar points out that the RTÜK warnings can be considered as cues for further sanctions which would follow if the indicated changes are not made. He puts forward that the stakes are high if a rearrangement is not made. While he notes that Turkish television history is full of rearranged TV dramas, the de-legitimation of

²⁴ Retrieved from <http://www.posta.com.tr/yazarlar/tumyazilari?AuthorID=303&PageSize=100&PAGE=1>

Behzat Ç. and the pressures on the other mentioned dramas exacerbated the debate on self-censorship. In social media as well as in TV critics and other journalists' columns, self-censorship has been a hot topic as the mechanism was important in the transformation of the field. In his column, Tayfun Atay mentioned the rumors on self-censorship he had been hearing from actors within the field ('Liberal-muhafazakâr gelgitte şaşalayan medya', Radikal; February 5, 2013²⁵):

I am hearing incidents of censorship and self-censorship from television industry frequently. Most of them are off-the-record, so I cannot write them at the time being. However, what I understand is that different kinds of content which is not in accordance with the current government's cultural values, political disposition and economic targets are curbed, cut or entirely removed not only with the RTÜK pressure, but also by TV channel administrations with the fear from the government.

Televizyon sektörünün içinden sansür ve 'otosansür' haberleri alıyorum bol bol. Çoğu 'off-the-record' olduğu için de şimdilik yazamıyorum. Ama anlaşılan o ki mevcut iktidara akortlu kültürel değerlere, siyasi tasarruflara ve ekonomik hedeflere aykırı sayılan türlü-çeşit içerik, sadece RTÜK zoruyla değil ama kanal yönetimleri tarafından da hükümetten korkuyla kırpılıyor, kesiliyor veya tümden kaldırılıyor.

This excerpt demonstrates how censorship enacted by the RTÜK is supplemented by self-censorship on the part of TV channels. It is important to note the role played by TV channel executives in transforming Turkish TV dramas with recourse to the conservative and religious ideals. With the fear of the political authority (which is actually the fear of losing profits in the market whose norms and values are changing), the executives started to curb the elements of the dramas incongruent with the new norms

²⁵ Retrieved from http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/tayfun_atay/liberal_muhafazakar_gelgitte_sasalayan_medya-1119938

and values. As TV critic Orhan Tekelioğlu puts forward, while the RTUK is used as a tool by the government to make conservative interventions, TV channel executives go one step further and join in the promotion of the religious and conservative ideals ('Değerler araştırması ve diziler', Radikal; February 19, 2012²⁶). They do so by means of self-censorship and participate in the proliferation of these ideals in TV dramas. Apart from the channel executives, Tekelioğlu also criticizes producers who engage in similar behavior. In the following excerpt from a news report featuring the opinions of different actors within the field on the pressures on Behzat Ç., it is possible to see the way the dynamic between the pressures and self-censorship is seen in the field. The infamous Turkish TV and cinema producer Şükrü Avşar, owner of Avşar Film, contends that (Özlem Yılmaz, 'Behzat Ç.'ye haksızlık mı yapıldı?', Habertürk; June 20, 2012²⁷):

I think it is necessary to be a little bit tolerant. The RTUK should be a little bit more flexible. On the other hand, it is necessary not to exaggerate some stuff. In our TV dramas, sometimes there are exaggerations. Repressive mindset or the intensive pressure of the sanctions is of course not a good thing for the producers. This means a strong auto-control system, and this can lead to a decrease in the viewing pleasure. The producers should also pay attention. The RTUK should be a little bit more tolerant and constructive.

Bence biraz hoşgörölü olmak lazım. RTÜK biraz daha esnek olmalı. Diğer taraftan bazı şeyleri abartmamak gerekiyor. Bizim dizilerde biraz ölçü kaçıyor. Yasakçı zihniyet ya da cezaların böyle yoğun bir baskı oluşturması yapımcılar açısından elbette iyi bir şey değil. Bu sefer çok fazla otokontrol sistemi olacaktır, o da seyir keyfini kaçırabilir.

²⁶ Retrieved from http://www.radikal.com.tr/radikal2/degerler_arastirmasi_ve_diziler-1079365

²⁷ Retrieved from <http://www.haberturk.com/polemik/haber/752230-behzat-cye-haksizlik-mi-yapildi>

Yapımcılar da dikkat etmeli, RTÜK de biraz daha hoşgörülü, yapıcı olmalı.

Avşar's account demonstrates his effort to find a middle way which could satisfy the preoccupations of RTUK and the necessities of production of TV dramas. His quest for balance in the field corresponds to a position likely to be shared by other producers who don't want to lose profits. While he suggests that a strong auto-control system would damage the viewing pleasure on part of the audiences, he also puts forward that the Turkish TV dramas are at times exaggerative and producers should be careful in producing these dramas. This can be interpreted as a dilemma for producers who are trying to please the audiences to score high ratings and the political authority by modifying the elements incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals in their dramas. Examining Avşar's account, it can be inferred that his stance is one which would make concessions to the political authority to the extent that it won't hurt the rating scores of the dramas he produces; which paves the way for self-censorship in the field.

My interviews and netnography shows that Behzat Ç. and other drama viewers are aware of the self-censorship mechanism. When asked whether the targeted goal was attained via the pressures on Behzat Ç., some of my informants replied that it was, especially by way of self-censorship. Although they were still willing to watch and support Behzat Ç., some even more eagerly as Hande claims, self-censorship was referred to as a more subtle mechanism which started to be prominent in Turkish TV dramas in general. The following quote from Burak is exemplary of this contention:

Censorship? Of course it reaches its aim. We don't see it man, it controls. When it comes to self-censorship... When a TV drama producer, a TV drama director removes a particular scene... A scene with rakı for example... You know that there is no beer or rakı anymore, they are not seen. They are pretending as if they are drinking water. Only pouring rakı so that it looks like water... A very big problem, I think. Does it reach its aim? It does. They don't show it anymore. They don't show it because of *societal family order*. I am not saying this because we are a public who always drinks, who are always drunk. But this is exaggeration. (emphasis added)

Sansür mü? Ulaşıyor tabi. Görmüyoruz la, kontrol ediyor. Otosansüre girdiği zaman iş. Bir dizi yapımcısı, bir dizi yönetmeni bir sahneyi oraya koymadığı zaman... Rakı sahnesi işte... Artık biliyorsun bira, rakı konulmuyor, görülmüyor. Su içiyormuş gibi yapıyorlar. Sadece rakı koyup içiyorlar içiyorlarsa. Çok sıkıntı bence. Şöyle bir şey... Amacına ulaşıyor mu? Ulaşıyor. Koymuyorlar artık. Toplumsal aile düzeni diye koymuyorlar artık. Ben sürekli içtiğimiz için, sürekli sarhoş gezen bir toplumuz diye söylemiyorum. Ama bu kadarı abartı artık.

Burak's account demonstrates his awareness of and disturbance with self-censorship along with other viewers. While he states that the political authority attained its goal by making producers only imply alcohol consumption in dramas instead of showing it explicitly, he believes that the extent of self-censorship is exaggerative. He hints to the subtle nature of this mechanism and remarks that it has been taking hold in the field without being really noticed. Although viewers are aware of this mechanism, it is not possible to detect in what different ways it shapes the dramas. Along with the more explicit mechanism of elimination, self-censorship subtly plays a role in the transformation of the Turkish TV dramas market.

4.3.3. Homogenization of Turkish TV Dramas

The broader de-legitimation movement at the organizational field led to the enactment of the mechanisms of elimination and self-censorship by the producers, as I have explicated above. These two mechanisms along with the third mechanism I briefly mentioned, namely the emergence of new conservative dramas by newfound production companies, resulted in the homogenization of Turkish TV dramas, or in other words the isomorphic change in the field (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Accordingly, the TV dramas started to get more and more similar to each other with explicit or implicit conservative elements injected in their scripts while the dramas incongruent with the conservative and religious ideals disappeared, as explicated in Atay's quote.

At the same time, while the attempts to undermine regulative and normative legitimacy were in force, a more profound change in the cultural-cognitive frames of reference was also in the making at the organizational field level. Elaborating on the accounts of TV critics, producers and viewers, it can be inferred that self-censorship and elimination were in the process of becoming taken-for-granted in the field. TV channel executives' internalization of self-censorship as pointed out by Atay, Avşar's quest for a middle way that would accommodate the demands of the RTUK and the viewers at the same time, and Burak's awareness of this mechanism all indicate that self-censorship could be made sense of according to the cultural and cognitive frames of reference which were in the process of coming into prominence. Similarly, elimination of the TV dramas incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals was also

in the process of becoming taken-for-granted as implied by Akar's and Atay's assertions that it won't be possible to see TV dramas like Behzat Ç. anymore and Melda and Songül's awareness of this situation. All in all, the attempts to undermine the regulative and normative legitimacy of Behzat Ç. along with similar TV dramas had shaped not only the practices and interpretations within the field, but also the cultural-cognitive frames of reference and thereby the definitions of cultural-cognitive legitimacy.

The homogenization which resulted from the enactment of the mechanisms of elimination and self-censorship by the production companies and TV channels in their effort to attain, maintain or defend legitimacy (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975; Suchman, 1995) and the concomitant changes in the definitions of cultural-cognitive legitimacy within the field come to mean a transformation of the field. This transformation has been turning the field into one in which TV dramas similar to Behzat Ç. could be regarded as "screen freaks" as put forward by Tekelioğlu with regard to the changed definitions of cultural-cognitive legitimacy.

4.3.4. Summary of the Section

At the organizational field level, de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. along with scrutiny of other TV dramas incongruent with the conservative and religious ideals (such as

Muhteşem Yüzyıl) brought about two mechanisms enacted by production companies and TV channels with the aim of staying in business and not losing profits. The first mechanism called elimination stands for the disappearance of TV dramas with content incongruent with these ideals. The second mechanism called self-censorship refers to the modifications in the scripts and the blurring or bleeping of elements incongruent with these ideals. As these mechanisms started to get prominent, Turkish TV dramas started to get homogenized with respect to the conservative and religious ideals. At the same time, as they started to get taken for granted, changes in the definitions of cultural-cognitive legitimacy within the field was taking place. Together homogenization and changes in the cultural-cognitive legitimacy come to mean the transformation of the Turkish TV dramas market. All in all, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. was part of a bigger de-legitimation movement and a more profound change at the organizational field level. Similarly, at the societal level, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. triggered a different set of discussions. In the next section, I will go into detail about these discussions.

4.4. Reverberations of De-legitimation at the Societal Level

When consumers start to identify themselves with certain consumption practices, the legitimacy of that practice becomes homologous to the legitimacy of the consumers as a social group (Bourdieu, 1993; Kates, 2004; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010). A similar

homology was seen in the case of Behzat Ç., most of whose viewers came from the modern and secular factions of the Turkish society. The drama was particularly embraced by this group because of its script rich with social and political criticism and the main characters with whom they identified. When asked about their opinion about who Behzat Ç. viewers were, my informants' descriptions of the (imagined) community of Behzat Ç. viewers leaned on not only social and economic backgrounds, but also political orientations. Similarly, when asked who wouldn't watch Behzat Ç., their descriptions of non-viewers depended almost entirely on political orientations. For example, Güler states that Behzat Ç. is most likely to be watched by people from Ankara, [university] students, mainly women as well as *Republicans* and *AKP-opponents*. Remzi contends that it is watched by men, university students, people who usually watch foreign TV dramas and also *leftists*. Güner states that *the conservative faction* and *members of the religious community* would not watch it. Similarly, Sedat puts forward that the average Turkish person, *conservative people*, and *people who have strong religious affections* would not be watching it. While the lifestyles of the characters which included alcohol consumption and extramarital affairs were condemned with recourse to the conservative and religious ideals, they were regarded usual according to the modern and secular mindset of the viewers. As such, the pressures leaning on the religious and conservative ideals by the RTÜK, parliament members and public figures had also led to a greater attachment to the drama on the part of this group.

The de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. corresponded to a period during which the AKP's project of reformatting Turkey's national identity with recourse to conservative and Islamist ideals came to the forefront (Çınar, 2011; Ertuğrul, 2012). This project approached the Turkish society as a "culturally homogenous people/nation" (Ertuğrul, 2012: 183) dominant values of which are derived from these ideals. While the rise of political Islam and the AKP's eventual coming to power have led to the legitimation of consumption practices of the religious and conservative factions of the society such as Islamic veiling (Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010), the party's reformatting project has played a part in the de-legitimation of consumption practices ascribed to the secular and modern individuals such as alcohol consumption as well as Behzat Ç. viewership. When this was the case, Behzat Ç. became a symbol for the modern and secular factions of Turkish society. As such, at the societal level, the undermining of Behzat Ç.'s legitimacy came to mean an attempt to de-legitimize the points of view and ways living of these factions. Especially the criticisms addressed to the drama with regard to the characters' alcohol consumption and extramarital affairs were seen as attempts to condemn their ways of living at the societal level. At the same time, the criticisms regarding the drama's misrepresentation of Turkish government officials were regarded as attempts to discredit their points of view as the leftist and anti-status quo language of the drama as well as its depiction of nepotism, bigotry, debauchery, and corruption of government officials were highly praised by these people. Overall, as with Yalkın et al.'s (2013) consumers reacting to internet censorship, Behzat Ç. viewers stated that

de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. was part of *a bigger plan* aiming at imposing certain ways of living and political views built upon the conservative and Islamist ideals.

While the debates relating to alcohol consumption, extramarital affairs, usage of swearwords, police brutality, and other ways in which government officials are allegedly misrepresented in Behzat Ç. all have reverberations at the societal level, my discourse analysis reveals that especially the harmful effects of alcohol consumption of the characters and the extramarital affairs in the drama which are deemed damaging the traditional Turkish family structure were emphasized in the RTÜK's, parliament members' and public figures' criticisms. Therefore, I will pay specific attention here to (1) the debate about Behzat Ç. characters' alcohol consumption and the parallelism between attempts to undermine Behzat Ç.'s legitimacy and the AKP's policies on alcohol consumption and sales and to (2) the debate about the so-called "traditional Turkish family" and criticisms of extra-marital affairs pictured in the drama.

4.4.1. Debate 1: Alcohol Consumption in Behzat Ç.

Consistent with the project of reformatting the national identity with recourse to conservative and religious ideals, 2010s witnessed the problematization of alcohol consumption by the Prime Minister Erdoğan, parliament members, and public figures, and thereby it became a significant matter of public debate. The changes in 'Alcohol and Alcoholic Drinks Monopoly Law' (passed on 11 June 2013) were confronted with

disquiet among modern and secular factions of the society and regarded as an attempt to suppress alcohol consumption in general. Especially the newly added article which states that “retail sale of alcoholic products are forbidden between 10 pm and 6 am” was protested. Apart from the regulative adjustments, parliament members’ reprimanding alcohol consumption and promotion in their public speeches can be regarded as attempts to undermine the normative legitimacy of alcohol consumption. Erdoğan’s statement that “beer, an alcoholic drink, was represented as a ‘national public drink’ in some books published in the first years of the Republic. However, our national [alcoholic] drink is ayran (a salty drink made with yoghurt which doesn’t contain alcohol)” (‘Milli içkimiz ayran’, Hürriyet; April 27, 2013²⁸) made it to the headlines and was met with frustration as well as mockery by the modern and secular factions of the society, in social media as well as in daily conversations.

The normative attempts to undermine the legitimacy of alcohol consumption, including the one of Erdoğan, and the debate about the passage of the aforementioned law concur with the third season of Behzat Ç. During the third season, in parallel with all these, Behzat Ç. was scrutinized with regard to its characters’ alcohol consumption. For example, Bulut’s criticism of excessive alcohol consumption (see the section on Attempts by Public Figures) took place in the course of lively debate on the former issue. Furthermore, just a month before the passage of the aforementioned law, the Secretary of State Arınç reprimanded TV dramas in which alcohol consumption are

²⁸ Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/23146841.asp>

displayed, in his speech at the ceremony of RTUK's 19th foundation anniversary. While he didn't specifically mentioned Behzat Ç. in this speech, online news media's as well as the viewers' interpretation was that he was implicitly targeting Behzat Ç. In the news report titled "Arınç attacked Behzat Ç in an implicit way", he is reported to say that (Milliyet; May 2, 2013²⁹):

Without doubt alcohol [harms the body] as well. Which society's values does an individual that immediately reaches out for the alcohol bottle after opening the door [of his/her house], serving alcohol with a glass in his/her hand just after saying hi represent; or what does this tell us? There are TV series which the public likes to watch. We also know that there are other factors that lie behind these series. For example, the fact that a very famous person, someone that people watch without blinking an eye, drinks all the time, becomes friends with the alcohol bottle – is it about the role that character plays in the series or is it about secret sponsors filling [his/her] pocket [with money] and asking [him/her] to advertise them? I am not giving names. But everybody knows who these characters are. We are not struggling with these characters; we are trying to show something since we know what the consequences of the message they are trying to convey for the society are. There are some very wealthy, very powerful people who are trying to make everybody alcoholic and increase alcohol consumption; so some people may be given special roles in certain TV series just for being a role model and advertising [alcohol]. We need to think about this at the back of our minds. If you ask me who these people are, there may be some names I can whisper to your ears. But we need to bear this in mind when we think about these series.

Kapıyı açar açmaz insanın şişeye sarılması, merhaba dedikten sonra hemen elindeki kadehle içki sunması, hangi toplumun değerlerini gösteriyor veya neyi bize anlatmak istiyor. Toplumda ilgiyle takip edilen diziler var. Bu dizilerin arka planında başka unsurların yattığını da biliyoruz. Mesela çok meşhur birisinin, adeta o dizilerde insanın nefes almadan seyrettiği birilerinin sık sık alkole, kadehe elini sürmesi, şişeyle arkadaş olması, acaba o karakterin o dizide yaptığı rolle mi ilgilidir yoksa gizli sponsorların cebine doldurdıkları parayla bizim

²⁹ Retrieved from <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/bulent-arinc-isim-vermeden-behzat-siyaset/detay/1702444/default.htm>

reklamımızı yap demesiyle mi ilgilidir. İsim vererek söylemiyorum. Ama bu tipler herkesin malumudur. Biz bu tiplerle mücadele etmiyoruz, onların vermek istedikleri mesajın topluma neye mal olacağını bildiğimiz için bir şeyler göstermeye çalışıyoruz." Herkesi alkolik yapmaya, alkol tüketimini artırmaya yönelik öylesine güçlü, cepleri dolgun birileri vardır ki sırf bazı dizilerde reklam unsuru olsun, rol model olsun diye birilerine özel roller verilmiş olabilir. Bunu bir kenarda düşünmemiz lazım. Kimdir bunlar dersiniz, kulaklarınıza üfleyeceğim birkaç tane isim olabilir. Ama bu dizilere biraz bu gözlerle de bakmamız lazım.

While advertising alcoholic products in television and radio broadcasting is illegal according to Law no. 6112, Arınç accuses certain TV dramas of publicizing these products secretly and getting paid by secret sponsors for doing so. Whereas he discredits TV dramas which include scenes with (excessive) alcohol consumption in general and never directly mentions Behzat Ç in his speech; the title of the news report, along with other news reports in online news media, implies that he targeted the drama implicitly. The way the news are made about Arınç's speech paved the way for the perception that he actually attacked Behzat Ç., which might be stemming from Arınç's earlier response to the parliamentary question regarding Behzat Ç. in which it is stated that RTUK closely monitors the drama. It led to the undermining of the drama's normative legitimacy since what is brought forward is Behzat Ç's incomppliance with the conservative and religious ideals according to which alcohol consumption is unacceptable.

Intertextuality can be observed between the statements of Bulut as well as other public figures and Arınç in their emphasis on the alcohol consumption of Behzat Ç. characters. In their accounts, concerns about Behzat Ç. intersect with general concerns about the practice of alcohol consumption. The criticisms regarding the characters'

alcohol consumption in Behzat Ç. and the normative and regulative attempts to de-legitimate alcohol consumption constitute consistent discursive and practical mechanisms employed by different constituents of political authority. Therefore, it can be inferred that the Behzat Ç. was used as a tool for molding public opinion during the discussions on alcohol sales and consumption. In line with Behzat Ç. viewers' assertion that de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. was part of a bigger plan, the attacks on the alcohol consumption of the drama characters, especially during the third season, were also attempts to undermine the legitimacy of alcohol consumption as a practice which is thought to be primarily engaged in by Behzat Ç. viewers and the modern and secular factions of the society.

4.4.2. Debate 2: Reification of the “Traditional Turkish Family”

Along with the characters' alcohol consumption in Behzat Ç., whether their extramarital affairs damaged the so-called “traditional Turkish family” structure had become a matter of debate during the drama's broadcast. The debate started with MHP parliament member Bülent Belen's assertion that “the drama is planting dynamite at the core of the Turkish family” at the national assembly on March 2012 (see the section on The Undermining of Regulative Legitimacy). His main concern was the extramarital affair between Behzat and Prosecutor Esra. In the parliamentary questions he raised to four ministers, Belen repeated his concern as to Behzat Ç. characters “living

together although they are not married” and put forward that “the drama in question and similar programs may decay the Turco-Islamic family structure”.

While Belen’s opinions in this regard were shared by concerned non-viewers on social media; my informants as well as other Behzat Ç. viewers on social media, especially on EkşiSözlük, put forward that the criticisms were based on a particular understanding of what Turkish family is and what it ought to be. They were uncomfortable with Belen’s statements as they regarded them as an intervention to their ways of living and also their points of view about what family life ought to be. During the interviews, my informants objected to the reification of the term “traditional Turkish family”. While a range of comments stated that there is no single definition of what Turkish family is, in others it was mentioned that there is no inherent feature that makes Turkish family structure better than the other supposed family structures. Kemal stated that he doesn’t like

that kind of expressions. Turkish family structure... As if Greeks, Ukrainians, Georgians or other people in the world are human beings, but we are something superior or inferior? Maybe there were some stuff in the drama that didn’t suit humanity, but it was in the drama, I mean out there there are much much real versions of that.

O tür lafları da zaten sevmiyorum: Türk aile yapısı... Sanki Yunanlılar, Ukraynalılar, Gürcüler ya da dünyadaki başka insanlar insan da, biz daha üstün bir şey miyiz, ya da daha alçak bir şey miyiz? İnsanlığa yakışmayan şeyler belki vardır dizide de, ama o dizideydi, hani dışarıda bunun çok çok daha gerçekleri var.

While Kemal’s main objection is that the so-called Turkish family structure is in no way superior to the family structures seen in other parts of the world, he also points out

that Behzat Ç. is, after all, only a drama. Many of my informants along with the accounts I collected from social media remarked that a TV drama should not be confused with real life and treated as if the characters were real people. Furthermore, as with Kemal, they mentioned that reality about the current state of the Turkish family life is much worse than how it is depicted in Behzat Ç. In EkşiSözlük, authors had been sharing news stories about real incidents of extramarital affairs, family violence, child abuse and rape, and honor killings to defend their point that Turkish family structure is nothing to be praised in the first place. One of my informants elaborated on his own experiences with his family and mentioned some other incidents he has witnessed or heard in his hometown and elsewhere arguing that Turkish family is an institution which had already been dissolved long ago. Overall, the particular understanding of what the Turkish family structure is/ought to be which Belen and the other concerned individuals referred to in criticizing Behzat Ç. was seen as a reification of the term and a discursive intervention on the ways of living of the modern and secular factions of the society.

Intertextuality between the government policies on alcohol sales and the pressures on Behzat Ç. as per its characters' alcohol consumption and the reification of Turkish family structure along with other discursive mechanisms utilized by the RTÜK, parliament members and public figures came to mean that de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. indicated the de-legitimation of ways of living and points of view at the societal level. My data analysis shows that, according to Behzat Ç. viewers, there were

three intended consequences of this latter movement of de-legitimation via the pressures on Behzat Ç. These are (1) the homogenization of the society, (2) appealing to and consolidation of the religious and conservative voter base, and (3) elimination of the points of view that are critical of the current government. Since the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. only plays a small part in this broad de-legitimation movement which initiated changes in the frames of reference that structure social life, whether the intended consequences are met is a question which is beyond the scope of the current study. In the next sections, I will discuss these intended consequences taking the viewers' and TV critics' accounts into consideration.

4.4.3. Intended Consequence 1: Homogenization of the Society

While the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. played a part in the homogenization of Turkish TV dramas, it was also seen as part of the political authority's project of reformatting Turkey's national identity which envisions a homogenous nation/people whose social values and norms lean on the conservative and religious ideals. While the envisioned homogeneity was attempted to be attained by de-legitimizing the ways of living and points of view of the modern and secular factions, the discussions on Behzat Ç. was used as a tool in these attempts at homogenization. The usage of Behzat Ç. as a means for undermining the normative legitimacy of alcohol consumption and the emphasis on a particular conservative and Islamist understanding of Turkish family

structure in condemning the drama can be regarded as attacks on not only Behzat Ç. itself, but also on ways of living and points of view that are represented in the drama and attributed to the secular and modern factions. Therefore the de-legitimation of the drama via these discursive mechanisms also came to mean the de-legitimation of the ways of living and points of view of this group of people with whom the drama is associated.

My informants, who were coming from these walks of life, frequently stated that “we [Turkey]” have become a “society of fear” or a “society of pressure”. Çağatay stressed the political authority’s attempts to give shape to people so that all the citizens will be of the same pattern:

Our life, to a great extent, is tried to be directed by the government or its institutions. You will be of one particular pattern, everyone will be of the same pattern. Same... Like a flock... Think about that. When there is a different voice, I don’t know, by hitting his head... Like hitting, killing... The religious, revengeful youth will suppress all the different voices... The ones who are not religious are like this... Only one pattern as I told, he will continue his life performing the prayers, keeping his nose clean, going along believing “what the government says, what your mother and father says”. We cannot expect these children’s brains to develop, that’s what I think, we can never expect that.

Hayatımız aşırı [bir şekilde] hükümet tarafından veya onun [kurumları] tarafından yönlendirilmeye çalışılıyor. Sen bir kalıba sokulacaksın, herkes bir kalıp olacak. Aynı... Sürü gibi... Düşün artık. Değişik bir ses çıktığı zaman, ne bileyim, kafasına vurarak... Vurması gibi, öldürmesi gibi... Her farklı sesi yok edecek yani dindar, kindar gençlik. Dindar olmayan böyle... Sadece tek kalıp diyorum ya işte böyle namazını kılacak, etliye sütlüye karışmadan, hiçbir şeye karışmadan, ‘hükümet ne diyorsa doğrudur, annen baban ne diyorsa doğrudur’ mantığıyla gidecek. Bu çocukların beyninin gelişmesini bekleyemeyiz yani, ben öyle düşünüyorum yani, hiçbir zaman bekleyemeyiz.

Along with Çağatay, other Behzat Ç. viewers are also seen to be switching between talking about the pressures on Behzat Ç. and the de-legitimation movement that takes place at the societal level. Asked about what he thinks about viewers' resistance against the conservative pressures on Behzat Ç., Çağatay states that "our life is tried to be directed by the government or its institutions" which will at the end lead to a society full of people of the same pattern, which he calls "religious and revengeful".

While the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. had born such meanings at the societal level, the viewers were concerned not only about the fate of the drama, but also about the operation of democracy in the country. The attempts at homogenizing the society were frequently brought about in the discussions on Behzat Ç. in daily conversations and social media as well as in my informants' accounts. The de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. was deemed as an important issue at the societal level as it was regarded as an indicator of the future restrictions on the ways of living and points of view and thereby on democracy. The following quote from an EkşiSözlük entry is telling in this regard (Author 8; May 25, 2012):

Now take a deep breath and please think: If you cannot tolerate Behzat Ç. because of the so-called "national-moral values", so-called "protection of children and the youth from alcohol and cigarettes", and so-called "institutional respectability", how will you tolerate the individuals who are really outside the main tendency, yet who constitute the society? The AKP supporters, religious people, political Islamists, you have the primary responsibility in the AKP's power. It is your responsibility to say "stop" to implementations which will lead to the demise of not only us but also you, which will annihilate the democratic way of life.

şimdi, derin bir nefes alın ve lütfen düşünün: sözümona "milli-manevi değerler", sözümona "gençleri-çocukları içkiden, sigaradan korumak", sözümona "kurumsal saygınlık" adına behzat ç.'yi tolare edemiyorsanız, bir toplumu oluşturan hakikaten ana eğilim dışı bütün bireyleri nasıl tolare edeceksiniz?.. akp yandaşları, dinciler, siyasal islamcılar, bu akp iktidarından baş sorumlu sizsiniz. bırakın bizi, kendi felaketinize yol açacak, demokratik yaşam biçimini ortadan kaldıracak uygulamalara "dur" demek sizin sorumluluğunuzdur.

The author emphasizes the importance of tolerance and drawing on the case of Behzat Ç. exemplifies how it is losing its place in Turkish politics and society. He points out that the way the political authority had acted in the case of Behzat Ç. is an indicator of the undemocratic implementations to come which would render individuals who do not share the dominant ways of living and points of view as outsiders in the society. Therefore, the attempts to homogenize the society are believed to lead to a decline in democracy in general and the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. is seen as an example in this regard. While the author of the above entry holds the AKP supporters responsible for this predicted decline in democracy, since they are responsible for the AKP's coming to power in the first place, and expects them to say "stop" to the undemocratic implementations, it has to be mentioned that the political authority was successful in mobilizing its supporters in pressurizing Behzat Ç. (see the section on Concerned Non-viewers and Viewers: Incongruence with Moral Ideals). Similarly, in the next section I will discuss how the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. was also used to appeal to and consolidate the conservative and religious voter base.

4.4.4. Intended Consequence 2: Appealing to and Consolidating the Voter Base

During the debate on whether Behzat Ç. was appropriate for TV broadcasting, there were a number of calls by parliament members and public figures for viewers to file complaints to the RTUK about the elements they deem inappropriate in Behzat Ç. as well as other TV dramas. As I dwelled on before, The Turkish Green Crescent Society president Balcı (in a newspaper interview) and the Minister of Family and Social Policies Şahin (in a parliament discussion) advised citizens to take action in order to activate the complaint mechanism. In parallel with their calls, there had been applications to the RTUK by concerned non-viewers as well as the viewers and the fans. At the same time, many concerned non-viewers stated that they were disturbed by the excessive alcohol consumption, profanity, and misrepresentation of government officials, in social media and daily conversations. Among my informants, Refik and Çağatay especially elaborated on their discussions with family members who work as police officers and mentioned that these individuals criticized the drama for being unrealistic and misrepresentative of Turkish police. I also came across with similar concerns on social media, especially in reader comments on online news reports. During the delegitimation process, these individuals declared their support for the RTUK sanctions and at times added that the sanctions should even be more severe. A reader comment

on a news report about the monetary fine Behzat Ç. was imposed is as follows ('Behzat Ç.'ye Rekor Ceza', Vatan; June 18, 2012³⁰):

Excellent. The drama has become disgusting. I never came across with an individual who speaks this 'dirty' and who is this much alcoholic, and I never saw a police officer like this. The fine should be even more.

Çok iyi olmuş. dizi iğrenç hale geldi. Hiçbir yerde bu kadar pis konuşan ve bu kadar alkolik insana rastlamadım. Ve böyle polis de görmedim. Hatta cezası az bile olmuş.

The concerns of this reader along with other concerned non-viewers show intertextuality with criticisms brought by the RTUK, parliament members and public figures during the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. They were mobilized by the political authority to undermine Behzat Ç.'s normative legitimacy and they showed a strong presence in social media criticizing the drama especially after the RTUK sanctions and parliamentary discussion. Since these concerned non-viewers primarily come from the conservative and religious factions of Turkish society, their mobilization also had societal and political implications beyond Behzat Ç. As my informant Burak calls it, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. turned into a "ball game" in which the political authority was passing the ball to its own "target audience". The attempts to de-legitimize the modern and secular ways of living and points of view through Behzat Ç. came to mean the political authority's appealing to its voter base. Therefore, at the societal level, another intended consequence of the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. for the political authority had been the consolidation of its voter base.

³⁰ Retrieved from <http://haber.gazetevatan.com/behzat-cye-rekor-ceza/458575/8/magazin>

My informants were critical of the fact that the voices of the conservative and religious factions of the society are better-heard by the current government in the case of Behzat Ç. as well as in general. At different points during our interviews, they declared their unrest about the double standard going on at the societal level. Gözde states that:

Here there is also the issue of “my prime minister, his prime minister, everybody’s prime minister”. [They are] the government of the viewers of this drama as well as non-viewers... They are the government of STV [an Islamist-religious TV channel] viewers and Behzat Ç. viewers. It represents them and represents the others as well; but the voice of one side is better-heard, it is louder. There is a problem in our democratic representation, in our political tendency as well as in our media.

Burada bir de ‘benim başbakanım, onun başbakanı, herkesin başbakanı’ muhabbeti var. O diziye izleyenlerin de hükümeti, izlemeyenlerin de... STV’dekilerin de hükümeti, Behzat Ç’cilerin de. Onları da temsil ediyor, onları da temsil ediyor; ama bir tarafın sesi çok daha duyuluyor, daha yüksek oluyor. Temsili demokrasimizde de sıkıntımız var, siyasi eğilimimizde de sıkıntı var medyamızda olduğu gibi.

Gözde expresses her opinion that the problem with the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. is beyond the drama itself; there are problems in Turkish media and democracy. Accordingly, the political authority is said to be prioritizing the conservative and religious factions as these people constitute their primary voter base. This is consistent with its envisioning of a homogenous Turkish people/nation leaning on the conservative and religious ideals. At the same time, the preferences of the conservative and religious factions came into prominence in media as well. As I elaborated on above, this came about with the transformation in the Turkish TV dramas market initiated by the political authority.

While the prioritization of the conservative and religious factions as well as their politico-moral ideals is aimed at appealing to and consolidating the voter base, some of my informants regarded it as harmless for Behzat Ç. as each actor – the RTÜK and Behzat Ç.’s producers and broadcasters- plays this “ball game” for their own audience.

Ergin argues that:

Of course [an institution] which works as the moral control mechanism of the political authority in social engineering would like to take advantage of [Behzat Ç.]. The odd thing is, while it continues doing this, it will lock Behzat Ç.’s audience and benefit Behzat Ç. Using your term, it is a win-win relationship, there are no losers... RTÜK would, as a hand of political authority, would give the necessary message to its own audience, the conservative audience. I mean, the blind leading the blind... There is a certain population that it consolidates and it speaks to them. The other one [the production company] also has a target audience it consolidates via the TV drama, it focuses on them. These two are different, so nobody actually loses anything.

İktidarın aslında toplum mühendisliğindeki ahlaki kontrol eli olarak çalışan bir şey tabii ki bundan nemalanmak isteyecektir. İşin garip tarafı o bunu yaptıkça Behzat Ç.’nin seyircisini kilitleyip Behzat Ç.’ye fayda sağlar. Bu sizin tabirle win-win ilişkisidir, kaybeden yoktur... RTÜK de ama kendi kitlesini, muhafazakar kitleye iktidarın uzanımındaki bir el olan gerekli mesajı verecektir. Yani körler sağırılar birbirini ağırlar... Konsolide ettiği belli bir nüfus var, ona konuşuyor. Öbürünün de dizicilik üzerinden reyting adı altında konsolide ettiği bir hedef kitle var, ona yatıyor. Zaten bunla o ayrı, o yüzden kimse bir şey kaybetmiyor.

While he describes the tension between the political authority and Behzat Ç. producers as a win-win situation, later in the interview he states that he doesn’t believe that the RTÜK had ever intended to cancel the drama. Instead, the intention was to appeal to and consolidate “the conservative audience”, i.e. the voter base, by de-legitimizing and discrediting Behzat Ç. Whereas the AKP was the primary beneficiary in this de-legitimation, Ergin contends that Belen’s statements in the parliament and his

parliamentary questions were related to the MHP's intention to "take its share" from the de-legitimation:

I mean, the same thing. The MHP also wants to take its share from this. 'I am here as well. If the morality of the Turk is to be protected, I will protect it. If someone says something about my ancestors, I will reply first.' That simple. There is nothing much to look for. It's just a political [income/capital] game. I don't think it is anything else.

Yani aynı şey. Orada da şöyle MHP de bu ranttan payını almak istiyor. 'Ben de varım, Türk'ün ahlakı korunacaksa ben korurum. Ecdadıma bir şey deniyorsa önce ben cevap veririm.' Bu kadar basit yani. Hiç orada öyle aranacak fazla bir şey yok. Gerçekten bir siyasi rant oyunu. Başka da bir şey olduğunu düşünmüyorum.

Along with Ergin, my other informants expressed that the discussion going on around Behzat Ç. was not really about Behzat Ç. itself, but the drama was used as a tool by political parties as a means (the ball, if you will) to appeal to and consolidate their voter bases. The mobilization of concerned non-viewers to file complaints to the RTUK and their engagement in discussions relating to Behzat Ç. in social media were indicators of this. Therefore, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. is regarded to have played a part in the government's consolidation of its voter base.

4.4.5. Intended Consequence 3: Eliminating the Oppositional Points of View

While the AKP government has a record of suppressing the media outlets/members critical of its policies using various strategies (Akser and Baybars-Hawks, 2012), Behzat Ç. also got its share from these suppressions. In this regard,

elimination of the points of view raised by the drama and/or its viewers which were oppositional to the current government was regarded by Behzat Ç. viewers as another intended consequence of the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. at the societal level.

The perspective the drama took in discussing the social and political issues was most of the time critical of the current and previous governments. Many episodes touched upon police brutality, nepotism in the police department, and government officials' corrupt relations with mafia. While these elements of the script were very much liked by the viewers as they cohered with their points of view about the government, they were objected by the concerned non-viewers as well as parliament members and public figures as they were deemed misrepresenting the Turkish government officials. Although these were among the concerns of the political authority, the attempts to de-legitimate Behzat Ç. were primarily focused on the characters' alcohol consumption and their extramarital affairs. My interviews and netnography show that the viewers believe that these are the ostensible reasons for the pressures on Behzat Ç., while the drama's casting doubt on the legitimacy of government policies is the actual, concealed one. Güler states that:

“They are drinking; it doesn't suit us, what kind of a drama is this?” Of course it is not really about alcohol actually. It is about being against the system. “There are no such police officers in the department, there can't be.” I mean people start to think “oh maybe there are”. Actually the alcohol and all that are only the part that is seen. The actual thing is that they try to depict the corruption and all that in which some ministers and under-secretaries are involved. I honestly think they are uneasy about these.

“İçki içiliyor, ediliyor, çok bize uymuyor, bu nasıl dizi?” Bunlar tabii içkiyle falan çok ilgili değil aslında. Düzene karşı gelmekle ilgili şeyler.

“Emniyette böyle polisler yok, olamaz.” Hani insanlar, “vardır ya böyle” diye düşünceler oluşuyor. Aslında o içkiydi, şuydu buydu, işin görünen kısmı. Önemli olan bir takım bakanların, müsteşarların karıştığı yolsuzluklar, şunlar bunlar, ellerinden geldiğince gösterilmeye çalışılıyor. Bunlardan da huzursuz olduklarını düşünüyorum açıkçası.

Similar to Güler, my other informants believe that the criticisms brought to Behzat Ç. do not tell the whole story about the disturbance of the political authority about the drama. In addition to viewers, TV critics’ had also observed that the disturbance may be stemming from the way the drama handles social and political issues as well as its touching upon issues of nepotism and corruption. Orhan Tekelioğlu writes (‘Buhrandayız Amirim!’, Radikal; December 16, 2012³¹):

First of all, let’s remember what is extraordinary in Behzat Ç.’s narrative. As I have pointed out before, the points listed by Behzat Ç.’s critics (behaviors “inappropriate” for government officials, “extramarital” affairs, “promotive” alcohol consumption, usage of “profanity” and etc.) has no function apart from specifying the topics according to which the drama can get sanctioned. The actual discomfort the drama creates becomes evident in the reflexes its story “touches upon”. For example, Behzat Ç.’s torturing suspects during interrogation, isn’t it a refusal of the claims that the conditions of suspects have been ameliorated in recent years? Or isn’t it easy to realize that the acceptance of the necessity to kill the ones not liked by the majority which is witnessed in the transvestite killings as well as the killing of [the Armenian-Turkish journalist] Hrant Dink is inconsistent with the “advanced democracy” discourse [of the political authority]? Moreover, elements which are frequently utilized in the storyline such as Behzat’s superiors preventing him when he chases the actual murderers and files swept under the carpet would probably make some [people] uncomfortable.

Öncelikle, Behzat Ç. anlatısında sıradışı olanın ne olduğunu bir daha hatırlayalım. Daha önce de işaret ettiğim (6 Mayıs 2012, Radikal İki) gibi, Behzat Ç.’yi eleştirenlerin listeledikleri (memura “yakışmayan” davranış, “gayrimeşru” ilişki, “özendirici” içki tüketimi, “argo” konuşma vb.) hususların, dizinin RTÜK kanunu çerçevesinde ceza

³¹ Retrieved from www.radikal.com.tr/radikal2/buhrandayiz_amirim-1112136

alabileceği alanları belirtmesinden öte bir işlevi yok. Dizinin yarattığı esas rahatsızlık, hikayesinin “dokunduğu” siyasal kültürümüze dair “reflekslerde” ortaya çıkıyor. Örneğin, Behzat Ç.’nin sorguda şiddet uygulaması, son yıllarda iyileştirildiği söylenen “işkence” iddialarının bir reddi olmuyor mu? Ya da travesti cinayetlerinden Hrant Dink cinayetine uzanan, “çoğunluğun” sevmediğinin “katli vaciptir” kabullenmesinin “ileri demokrasi” söylemiyle çeliştiği hemen fark edilmiyor mu? Dahası, Behzat’ın gerçek katillerin peşine düştüğünde amirlerinin engellemesi, dosyaların sümen altı edilmesi gibi anlatıda sıkça gündeme getirilen unsurlar, herhalde birilerini rahatsız edecektir.

While Güler emphasizes the depiction of corruption in Behzat Ç. as the reason why it is pressurized, Tekelioğlu also draws attention to other issues such as police brutality and torture and killings of LGBT people and minorities. The drama raised questions about these and similar social and political issues and at times it could be regarded as casting doubt on the current and former governments’ policies. Therefore, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. had come to mean the elimination of oppositional points of view at the societal level.

As Weber (1978) argues, any form of domination aims to justify its existence. With this aim, it endeavors to establish and over time augment the belief in the legitimacy of its authority. The intellectual and moral leadership, or cultural hegemony as coined by Gramsci (1971; 2006), of the political authority is crucial in legitimate domination. The AKP’s project of reformatting Turkey’s national identity with recourse to the conservative and religious ideals, which is regarded as “the bigger plan” behind the internet censorship (Yalkın et al., 2013) as well the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç., is an endeavor in furthering the legitimacy of its domination. The pressures on Behzat Ç. were also means in de-legitimizing the modern and secular ways of

living and points of view at the societal level. In this sense, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. was expected to play a part in the homogenization of the society, the consolidation of the voter base and the elimination of oppositional points of view, all of which were in the making to a certain extent. On the other hand, the linkages between de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. and that of ways of living and points of view also paved the way for the viewers' to associate resistance to pressure on the drama with generalized resistance against the political authority. In the next subsection, I will touch upon this issue.

4.4.6 .Generalized Resistance

Since the scrutiny of Behzat Ç. was regarded as a means to de-legitimize the ways of living and points of view incongruent with the religious and conservative ideals, Behzat Ç. viewers coming from the modern and secular factions of Turkish society equated resistance to this scrutiny with generalized resistance against the political authority. The attempts to homogenize the society, appeal to and consolidate the voter base, and eliminate the oppositional points of view were deemed undemocratic and protested through resisting the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. The leftist and anti-status quo tone of the drama contributed considerably to the viewers' linking resistance to the de-legitimation of the drama with resistance at the societal level. At the same time, the political orientations of producers, especially Beşikçioğlu and Serbes who made their

views about various government policies explicit in their newspaper interviews and TV appearances, were influential in this regard. In such a case, my informants, most of whom were also opinionated about the political orientation of fellow Behzat Ç. viewers, frequently went between resistance against the de-legitimation of the drama and generalized resistance against the political authority in their narratives. Especially the outdoor-watching event was seen as an act of resistance which was not only about Behzat Ç. but also the general tension between the modern and secular factions and the political authority. Güner expressed that:

On one hand, some criticize this [drama]. The critics are actually the individuals that we are opposing in real life or individuals who are disturbed by the different police image. We don't find it right. It was discussed in the national assembly, then people watched it on the huge screen. This is what it results in, am I clear? ... I wouldn't be [disturbed] if the drama ended normally or I would say it ended normally if there weren't changes in the air time or a decrease in its duration. But now that there are different thoughts, you naturally want to support it. Because, just as I said, the policeman [Behzat] was maybe not a leftist one, or not an oppositional one, but it was a different policeman. We liked that. In that sense, while we liked it that way, some others tried to change it. And since the ones who did this are people who are dissident to us in real life, we are trying to support it. The audiences are also trying to support it. This is what it results in in the society. It is not right actually. If nobody actually intervenes, we would watch it the way we wanted anyways. The ones who like would watch, the others would not.

Bir yandan birileri eleştiriyor bunu. Eleştirenler de aslında bizim gerçek hayatta muhalif olduğumuz karakterler veya farklı bir polis imajından rahatsız olan karakterler. Bunu doğru bulmuyoruz. Mecliste konuşulmuş, sonra insanlar gidip izlemiş dev ekranda. Bu onu doğuruyor, anlatabiliyor muyum? ...Ben normal bir şekilde dizi bitseydi şey yapmazdım veya diziyi geç saatlere koymalar, kısaltmalar olmasa ben dizi bittiğinde normal bir şekilde bitti derdim. Ama şimdi değişik düşünceler olunca insan doğal olarak desteklemek istiyor, destek olmak istiyor. Çünkü dediğim gibi, polis belki solcu bir polis değildi, muhalif bir polis

de değildi belki ama farklı bir polisti. Bu bizim hoşumuza gitti. O anlamda, biz onu öyle beğenirken birileri de değiştirmeye çalıştı. Bizim de normal hayatta karşıt görüşlü olduğumuz insanlar bunu yapınca bir yandan biz de desteklemeye çalışıyoruz. Kitleler de desteklemeye çalışıyor. Bu bunu doğuruyor toplumda. Aslında doğru değil. Kimse karışmasa herkes zaten kafasına göre izler. İzleyen izler, izlemeyen izlemez.

Güner's narrative demonstrates that the reason he, along with other viewers, supports the drama is related to the political orientations of the ones who criticize it. Since the critics are coming from political backgrounds which are dissident to his views, he “naturally” wants to support the drama. It can be inferred from his narrative that what triggers the support for Behzat Ç. at the societal level is intervention in the drama because of the disturbance with the “different” way police is depicted. In this regard, supporting Behzat Ç. in the presence of critiques came to mean resisting the attacks on the points of view of the modern and secular factions of the Turkish society. Similarly, my informants who participated in the outdoor-watching events stated that they were there not only for the drama, but also because of their general unrest about the pressures on their ways of living. In this regard, alcohol consumption during the events can be seen as an act of resistance against the de-legitimation of alcohol consumption by the political authority.

Over time, Behzat Ç. had become a symbol of generalized resistance. Especially the leading character Behzat, who is a chief inspector who frequently goes against his superiors and corrupt government officials, has been referred to in graffitis and slogans during several demonstrations including Gezi Park protests. My informants Refik and

Burak as well as some EkşiSözlük authors even implied that the outdoor-watching events were small-scale rehearsals of Gezi Park protests. Two weeks after the Gezi Park protests started, an EkşiSözlük author suggested that (Author 9; June 13, 2013):

It might sound silly, but I have been contemplating about this. I think Behzat Ç. is the indirect reason for the “well done to everyone (youngsters) that they have the self-confidence to demonstrate in the streets” reaction, which everyone gives to what has been happening in the last two weeks. Question your way of looking at the world before this drama and that after it was finished and you will understand what I mean, or I am talking nonsense - I don’t know. So glad to have watched you Behzat Ç. and so glad that you opened my eyes.

yazınca çok saçma olabilir, ama sürekli kafamın içinde dönüyor, şu son 2 haftadır yaşanan olaylarda herkesin verdiği "ulan helal olsun millete (gençlere) meydanlara çıkacak özgüvenleri varmış" tepkisinin direkt olmasa da endirekt mimarıdır bence behzat ç bu dizi başlamadan önceki dünyaya bakışınızı, birde dizi bitince dünyaya bakışınızı sorgulayın ne demek istediğimi anlayacaksınız, yada ben saçmalıyorum bilmiyorum. iyi ki vardın behzat ç ve iyi ki gözümü açtın.

As the quote illustrates, for the author the outdoor-watching events had been an experience that s/he associates with the Gezi Park protests. Similar statements were made by Refik and Burak as well. Overall, Behzat Ç. has an important place for its viewers not only as a TV drama but also as a symbol of generalized resistance against the pressures on their ways of living and points of view. Whereas the pressures on Behzat Ç. came to be regarded as an attempt to de-legitimate the ways of living and points of views of the modern and secular factions of the society, resistance to these pressures came to mean generalized resistance to this more profound attempt and to the political authority.

4.4.7. Summary of the Section

Beyond its viewers, production company and the TV channel and beyond the Turkish TV dramas market, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. also had reverberations at the societal level. At this level, the de-legitimation of the drama came to be regarded as an attempt to de-legitimate the ways of living and points of view incongruent with the conservative and religious ideals by the viewers. The scrutiny of Behzat Ç. was particularly a means to de-legitimate alcohol consumption and reify and sacralize a particular understanding of what traditional Turkish family is/ought to be. At the societal level, three intended consequences of de-legitimation were regarded as the homogenization of Turkish society, appealing to and consolidation of the (conservative and religious) voter base and elimination of oppositional points of view. At the same time, the de-legitimation also paved the way for Behzat Ç. to be regarded as a symbol of generalized resistance to the pressures at the societal level.

At the end of the day, the movements of de-legitimation and the discussions going on in public discourse at three different levels were all nested together and the (de-legitimation of the) drama became a marker of the transformation of the Turkish TV dramas market and the tensions between the modern and secular and the conservative and religious factions of Turkish society.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This thesis focuses on the de-legitimation of production and broadcast of TV drama Behzat Ç. I define de-legitimation as the process through which a (cultural) product is detached from the established rules, norms, values and frames of reference by using regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive mechanisms (Johnson et al., 2006). In contrast to legitimation which facilitates market formation (Giesler, 2008; Humphreys, 2010a; Humphreys, 2010b; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Press and Arnould, 2011; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010), de-legitimation damages the marketplace presence of the product in question and may lead to its eventual elimination from the marketplace. Similarly, at the market level, de-legitimation of products of a particular type may

result in marketers' abandonment of the production or their modification of these products and thereby to market transformation.

While in the eyes of its viewers it was still legitimate to watch Behzat Ç.; the viewers, producers, TV channels, and TV critics agreed that Behzat Ç. was no longer appropriate for TV production and broadcasting. With the regulative and normative pressures by the RTÜK, parliament members, public figures, and non-viewers, it was made incongruent with the rules, norms and values coming into prominence in the Turkish TV dramas market and also in Turkish society. The de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. had not only consequences for its producers and viewers, but also reverberations at the Turkish TV dramas market and for societal dynamics. At the organizational field level, it played a part in the overall de-legitimation of TV dramas incongruent with the conservative and religious ideals. Along with the pressures on other dramas, it resulted in the enactment of two mechanisms by producers, which are elimination of TV dramas incongruent with these ideals and self-censorship with respect to these ideals, and therefore in homogenization of Turkish TV dramas. Homogenization along with a cultural-cognitive change in the definitions of legitimacy came to mean a transformation in the Turkish TV dramas market. At the societal level, the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. heated the debate about and between the two factions of Turkish society, the conservative and religious and the modern and secular. For Behzat Ç. viewers, it came to mean an effort to de-legitimize the ways of living and points of view attributed to the modern and secular factions of the society. It was regarded as part of a bigger plan

which intends to homogenize the society, appeal to and consolidate the AKP's voter base, and eliminate the oppositional points of view. When this was the case, Behzat Ç. viewers equated resistance to the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. with generalized resistance against the AKP government. Therefore, Behzat Ç. became a symbol for resistance against the government for the secular and modern factions of the society.

In the next sections, drawing on my analysis, I will engage in a dialogue with relevant literature to map out the theoretical contributions.

5.1. De-legitimation

While the previous studies taking legitimacy with respect to consumption and markets into account primarily focused on the process of legitimation and the concomitant formation of markets (Giesler, 2012; Humphreys 2010a; Humphreys, 2010b; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Press and Arnould, 2011; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010), the current thesis explicated the process of de-legitimation. While legitimation of a product is noted to unfold as changes in regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive structures as well as in semantic associations occur (Humphreys, 2010b; see also Suchman, 1995), similar changes can also be seen in the de-legitimation process. Accordingly, de-legitimation is the process through which a product is detached from the prevailing rules, norms, values, and frames of reference within the field it is situated as well as the society at large with the use of regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive

mechanisms. While legitimization is important for the formation of new markets (Humphreys 2010a, Humphreys, 2010b; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010; Press and Arnould, 2010) and perpetuation of products or consumer practices in the marketplace (Giesler, 2012; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010), my analysis demonstrates that de-legitimation damages the presence of a product in the marketplace and may lead to its eventual elimination. In the case of Behzat Ç., de-legitimation led to changes in air day and time and smart signs, decrease in the duration of the drama, a monetary fine, self-censorship, a switch from TV viewing to internet viewing, viewers' belief that the script was changed in line with the criticisms and their resentment towards the producers, and a decline in the ratings. All these damaged the presence of Behzat Ç. in the TV dramas market and they played a part in the eventual ending of the drama.

It is important to note that the ending of the drama was not a decision imposed directly by the RTUK or any other actor related to the political authority. The decision was made by the production company and the TV channel for which it became impossible to continue the production and the broadcasting of the drama because of the pressures. Therefore, de-legitimation is a process which, by acts of intimidation and discrediting, may trigger certain practices and mechanisms employed by consumers and/or marketers including elimination as in the case of Behzat Ç. On the other hand, in the case of rave in neoconservative Britain (Goulding et al., 2009), the de-legitimation of this practice by conservative media as well as legislative regulations

was followed by its elimination with further legislative amendments. Therefore, the end result of de-legitimation may also be top-down elimination.

My analysis also demonstrates that, as Johnson et al. (2006) put forward, “de-legitimation... might begin with a change in the structural conditions that currently undergird...” (p. 73) the field as well as the society at large. In the case of Behzat Ç., the primary challenge to legitimacy was the alteration in the prevailing norms and values (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975). Accordingly, with the neoconservative politico-moral policies of the AKP government, the common norms and values that were derived from the secular and modern ideals were in the course of being replaced by those derived from the religious and conservative ones at the societal level. Similarly, with the pressures of the political authority and the changes in the rating measurement system, the dramas were getting more and more adorned with conservative and religious motifs. In such an environment, Turkish TV dramas, like Behzat Ç., which once had legitimacy according to the once-prevailing norms and values became illegitimate to be produced and broadcasted according to the norms and values that were in the process of coming to prominence. Therefore, we can infer that changes in the widespread norms and values and the definitions of legitimacy within the field and the society at large may pave the way for de-legitimation of a (cultural) product.

5.2. Legitimation-De-legitimation Dynamic and Consumer Resistance

As prior research has shown, the legitimation of a product is a process during which groups of actors with divergent interests conflict and negotiate and hence there is a legitimation-de-legitimation dynamic (Giesler, 2008, Giesler, 2012; Goulding et al., 2009; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010; Thompson et al., 2006). My findings demonstrate that the same dynamic is also prevalent in de-legitimation.

Comparing my findings on the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. with those of the studies on doppelganger brand image (Giesler, 2012; Thompson et al., 2006) can shed light on the legitimation-de-legitimation dynamic. While groups of actors enacting doppelganger brand images such as “consumers, antibrand activists, bloggers, and opinion leaders in the news and entertainment media” (Thompson et al., 2006: 50) were less powerful when compared to the multinational corporations backing up the brands in question (namely Botox and Starbucks), we come across with an opposite situation in the case of Behzat Ç. In this context, the less powerful side in the legitimation-de-legitimation dynamic was the network of actors that backed up the drama which consisted of the production company, TV channel, viewers and TV critics, when compared to the ones discrediting it including parliament members, the RTUK, public figures, and non-viewers. Whereas doppelganger brand images didn’t lead to full-fledged elimination of Botox and Starbucks, Behzat Ç. was regarded to be illegitimate for TV production and broadcasting at the end of the day. Therefore, relative power of

the legitimating and de-legitimizing groups of actors is important in understanding whether the dynamic will lead to eventual (de-)legitimation.

On the other hand, the role of governments in legitimization-de-legitimation dynamic has also been significant in different studies. Humphreys's (2010b) analysis of the rise of casino gambling as a legitimate industry in the US demonstrated the importance of the governments' support in the process, which primarily emerged due to the tax yields. In Karababa and Ger's (2011) context of Ottoman coffeehouse consumption, the legitimization of coffeehouses was enabled by the concessions made by the sultan and the religious institution. Similarly, Goulding et al. (2009) put forward that the UK government was among the initiators of the emergence of clubs as market-bound sites where consumers and their practices can be managed. The legitimization and marketization of CSA was directly supported with governmental support programs (Press and Arnould, 2011). Likewise, the AKP's coming to power in Turkey was an important milestone for the destigmatization of Islamic veiling as it aligned with the religious ideals and political project of the party (Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010). The common point in these studies with regard to the position of the government is that it is either making concessions or directly taking part in the legitimization process from the beginning. On the contrary, in the case of Behzat Ç., the government took part in the de-legitimation of the drama by way of the RTUK and parliament members' reprimanding speeches, and it didn't make concessions along the process. Just like the mobilization of Botox consumers and practitioners (by Allergan's branding strategies) to

legitimate the brand (Giesler, 2012), non-viewers and public figures were mobilized by attempts to undermine Behzat Ç.'s regulative legitimacy and they engaged in attempts to undermine the drama's normative legitimacy. Therefore, my findings indicate that the government can also take on a strict de-legitimizing role in legitimization-de-legitimation dynamic.

A comparison between prior studies on legitimization and the current thesis on de-legitimation demonstrates that the relative power of the legitimating and de-legitimizing groups of actors might depend on actors which have the ability to mobilize other actors. This concurs with the idea that legitimacy is a generalized perception such that certain actors who have the ability to define what is legitimate are influential in shaping this perception (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Johnson et al., 2006; Scott, 1995). In each context, there is a different power dynamic between actors. In the aforementioned studies as well as in the current study, multinational corporations and governments can be regarded as the actors which shape the perceptions of legitimacy. Involvement of these actors in the legitimization-de-legitimation dynamic are either in the form of overdetermination of inner fields (the organizational field of Turkish TV dramas market in the case of Behzat Ç.) by higher-level fields (the field of power, i.e. the AKP government's policies) (Bourdieu, 1993) or leads to a struggle between different actors within the field (such as the struggle between Allergan and the actors enacting the doppelganger brand images in the case of Botox). In order to make better sense of legitimization-de-legitimation dynamic, attention should be paid to the actors

which shape definitions of legitimacy within fields and whether they are making concessions along the process or not.

The success of consumer resistance also depends on the dynamics of power between different legitimating and de-legitimizing actors. Research on consumer resistance has primarily focused on the relationship between the consumer and the market taking on either a liberatory or market-bound perspective (İzberk-Bilgin, 2010). While the liberatory perspective portrays the consumer as an agent who actively constructs her/his own identity resisting the hegemony of marketer-imposed meanings on product and service offerings (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995), the market-bound perspective considers the consumer impotent against the overarching market structures that co-opt countercultural meanings created by resisting consumers (Holt, 2002). Lately, a different take on consumer resistance which takes not only the dyad of consumers and marketers, but also other actors that get involved with the marketplace was offered (Giesler, 2008; Karababa and Ger, 2011; Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010; see also Penalosa and Venkatesh, 2006). Accordingly, consumer resistance is not always directed to marketers, but consumers and marketers can also ally in enacting resistance against other power structures. Karababa and Ger (2011: 755) put forward that “in order for consumer resistance to be successful, an individual’s alliance with an institution – even the market itself – and the existence of a public sphere are necessary”. In the case of Behzat Ç., we can see viewers allying with the production company and the TV channel who insist on continuing the production and broadcast of the drama despite the

pressures and an active public sphere with viewers (and non-viewers) discussing the trajectory of the drama in daily conversations and social media as well as excessive media coverage. However, looking at the de-legitimation and eventual ending of the drama, we can conclude these were not sufficient because of the stance of the government and its mobilization of a network of actors. While concessions were made by the sultan and the religious institution in Karababa and Ger's Ottoman coffeehouse consumption context, the political authority was decisive in its efforts to undermine the legitimacy of Behzat Ç. as de-legitimation of TV dramas that are incongruent with its conservative and religious ideals was substantial in for its political project. Therefore, adding to Karababa and Ger's point about the success of consumer resistance, I put forward that it is important to pay attention whether actors that are influential in defining what is legitimate within the field and society at large make concessions due to emergence of certain benefits such as tax yields (Humphreys, 2010b; Karababa and Ger, 2011), market opportunities (such as Apple's introduction of iTunes as a commercial music downloading platform in Giesler, 2008), or alignment with their (political) projects (Sandıkcı and Ger, 2010).

5. 3. Legitimacy at Different Levels

Prior research has briefly mentioned the relations between different fields with respect to legitimacy. Scaraboto and Fischer (2013) find that oversized consumers find

support in adjacent fields such as the one constituted by the Fat Acceptance Movement in their quest for participation in mainstream fashion markets. Sandıkcı and Ger (2010) acknowledged the role of the AKP's ascent in the field of power in the legitimization of Islamic veiling for urban middle-class consumers. In the case of Behzat Ç., de-legitimation of the drama has been an important instance in the de-legitimation of TV dramas with content incompatible with the religious and conservative ideals at the organizational field level. At the societal level, it came to mean the de-legitimation of ways of living and points of view incongruent with these ideals. It paved the way for the transformation of the Turkish TV dramas market and also led to certain debates at the societal level. Therefore, I add to prior studies that legitimization/de-legitimation of a (cultural) product has not only consequences for its consumers and marketers, but also reverberations at the organizational field level (i.e. market level) and at the societal level.

At the societal level, de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. heated the debates on alcohol consumption and “traditional Turkish family”. The parallelism between government policies and speeches by parliament members in these matters and the criticisms regarding the alcohol consumption in Behzat Ç. implies that the de-legitimation of the drama was also an attempt to de-legitimate ways of living and points of view incongruent with the conservative and religious ideals. Sandıkcı and Ger's study (2010) map out the legitimization of Islamic veiling as a consumption practice and consider it as an instance in the formation of a parallel taste structure, i.e. “the emergent aesthetics that

hybridize Islamic and secular/Western sensibilities” (31). My findings imply that, at the societal level, de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. might be a step in the gradual centralization of this taste structure. While homogenization of the dramas come to mean that they are getting more and more adorned with similar conservative and religious motifs, the modern and secular elements are not fully eliminated. Therefore, this parallel taste structure is manifest in the emerging cultural products in the field. Although this assertion here is only speculative, tracing the legitimation and de-legitimation of different consumption practices in a society over time and investigating the relationship of these with different taste structures would be a fruitful future research topic.

On the other hand, prior research on TV dramas have shown that they are used in constructing national identity by defining the ideal citizen and arousing nationalist feelings (see Abu-Lughod, 2001; Mankekar, 1999; Rajagopal, 2001; Porto, 2011). I find that the de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. was used as a means for reformatting Turkish national identity with respect to an Islamist, Ottomanist and conservative projection of Turkish public (Bozkurt, 2013; Yalkın et al., 2013). Therefore, this study demonstrates that de-legitimation of TV dramas can also be used as tools for altering the national identity within a country, especially when the texts of these dramas are incongruent with the politico-moral ideals of the government.

At the organizational field level, de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. along with the pressures on similar dramas led to the enactment of the mechanisms of elimination and self-censorship and subsequent homogenization of Turkish TV dramas with respect to

conservative and religious ideals. While legitimation is known to be closely linked with homogenization (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), I demonstrate how de-legitimation of Behzat Ç. along with similar TV dramas also leads to changes in definitions of legitimacy and therefore to an isomorphic change (i.e. homogenization) in the operations of marketers within the field. Since the enactment of these mechanisms and the homogenization of Turkish TV dramas came to mean a transformation of the market, the current study illustrates de-legitimation's role in market transformation. While Giesler set forth (2008) the role of legitimation of the practice of music downloading in the transformation of music industry, I put forward that de-legitimation can also lead to a similar change. It alters the definitions of legitimacy and the practices of the marketers, who, in turn, may pave the way for a profound alteration in the products offered by withdrawing or altering their market offerings and therefore for a market transformation.

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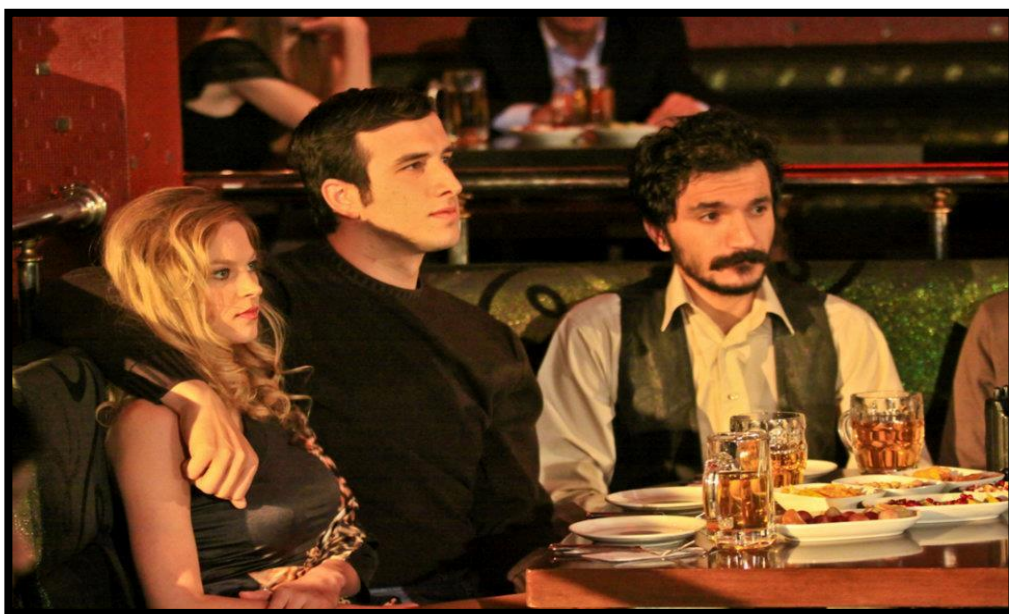
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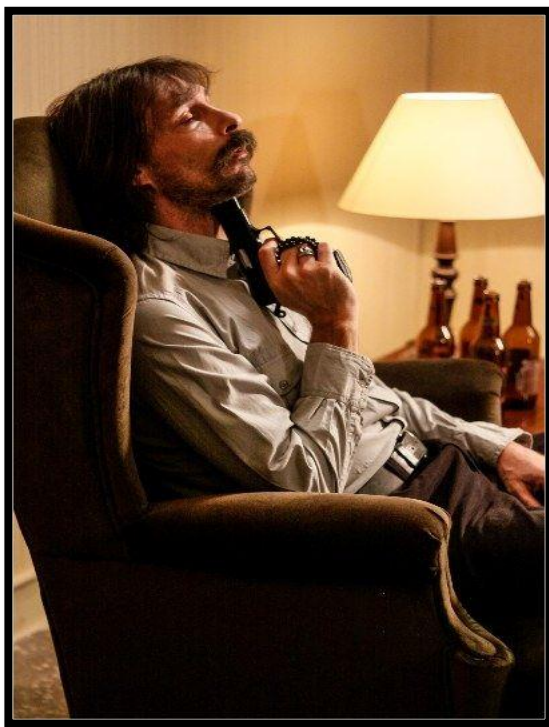
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APPENDIX A

SCENES FROM THE DRAMA AND PICTURES FROM THE OUTDOOR WATCHING EVENT













APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (TURKISH)

1. Behzat Ç. izlemeye nasıl başladınız?
 - Dizide sizi ilk çeken şey neydi?
 - Diğer Türk dizilerinden ne yönlerden farklı?
2. Televizyondan mı, internetten mi takip ettiniz?
 - Kimlerle beraber izlediniz?
 - Arkadaşlarınızla, ailenizle, yakın çevrenizle dizi hakkında konuşuyor muydunuz? Ne tarz muhabbetler yapılıyordu? Örnekler verir misiniz?
 - Diziyle ilgili sohbetlerinizde fikir ayrılığı yaşadığınız oldu mu? Örnekler verir misiniz?
 - Çevrenden gördüğün kadarıyla kimler izliyor bu diziyi?
 - Kimler izlemez?
3. Dizi neden bu kadar büyük olay oldu?

4. Diziyle ilgili negatif eleştiriler hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

- Dizideki alkol kullanımı ve küfürlü konuşmalar hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

Bu tarz içeriklerin toplumun bazı kesimleri için rahatsızlık verici olması hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Sizce televizyonda bu tarz içeriklerin yayınlanması sakıncalı mı?

Çocukların ve gençlerin gelişiminin negatif yönde etkilenmesinden söz ediliyor. Bu konuda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

Dizide yer alan evlilik dışı ilişkilerin Türk aile yapısına zarar vermesinden endişe ediliyordu. Bu konuda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

- Dizide Türk devlet görevlilerinin temsil edilme şekli hakkında bazı sorunlar olduğu söyleniyordu. Bu konuda ne düşünüyorsunuz?
- Yukarıdaki konularda dizi hakkında RTÜK'e seyirciler tarafından birtakım şikayetler ulaştırılmasını nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?

5. Dizi birtakım sansür uygulamalarıyla karşılaştı. RTÜK tarafından diziye birtakım uyarılar verildi.

- Takip ettiniz mi? Nereden duydunuz? Bildiğiniz kadarıyla neler olduğunu anlatır mısınız?
- Bu süreçte siz neler düşündünüz? Neler yaptınız?
- Dizi çeşitli para cezaları aldı. Bununla ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz?
- Dizinin ilk sezonu +7 akıllı işaretiyle yayınlanırken, ikinci sezondan itibaren +13 akıllı işaretiyle yayınlandı. Bununla ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz?
- Dizinin yayın saati ilk iki sezon sırasıyla 20:30 ve 22:00'yken, üçüncü sezon çocukların izlemesini engellemek için 23:00'a alındı ve dizinin süresi kısaltıldı. Bununla ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz?

6. MHP milletvekili Bülent Belen diziyle ilgili 4 farklı bakanlığa soru önergeleri verdi. (alkol kullanımı ve evlilik dışı ilişkiler – Türk aile yapısı)
- Takip ettiniz mi? Nereden duydunuz? Bildiğiniz kadarıyla anlatır mısınız? Bu konuda ne düşünüyorsunuz?
 - Bülent Arınç diziye daha önce ceza verildiğini, dikkatle takip ettiklerini açıkladı. Bununla ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz?
 - Benzer şekilde Başbakan Erdoğan, Muhteşem Yüzyıl'ın tarihsel gerçekliği saptırdığını söyleyip bu diziyi kınamıştı. Haberiniz var mıydı? Bildiğiniz kadarıyla anlatır mısınız? Bu konuda ne düşünüyorsunuz?
7. Eleştiriler ve cezalar üzerine Ankara Dizine Sahip Çık veya Behzat Ç' me Dokunma diye bir etkinlik düzenlendi.
- Takip ettiniz mi? Nereden duydunuz? Bildiğiniz kadarıyla süreci anlatır mısınız? Sizce bu eylemin amacı neydi?
 - Siz de katıldınız mı? Oraya gitme amacınız neydi? Kimlerle gittiniz?
 - Biraz ortamı anlatır mısınız? Nasıl bir atmosfer vardı? Dikkatinizi neler çekti? Hoşunuza giden veya gitmeyen neler yaşandı? Atılan sloganları hatırlıyor musunuz? Diğer insanların neler yaptıklarını, nasıl davrandıklarını hatırlıyor musunuz?
 - Siz neler yaptınız? Neler hissettiniz?
 - Orada hatırladığınız özel bir anınız var mı? Anlatabilir misiniz?
 - Sizce bu eylem amacına ulaştı mı?
8. Eleştiriler, sansür, para cezaları, RTÜK ile olan anlaşmazlıklar ve sonrasında bu eylemler sırasında dizi ile ilgili medyayı takip ediyor muydunuz?
- Gazetelerde köşe yazarları ve TV eleştirmenlerinin diziyle ilgili yazılarını okudunuz mu? Ne tarz yazılar vardı? Genelde Behzat Ç'yi öven yazılar mı, yeren yazılar mı gördünüz? Örnekler verebilir misiniz? Ne düşündünüz?

- Oyuncularla veya teknik ekiple yapılan röportajları okudunuz mu? Örnekler verebilir misiniz? Ne düşündünüz?
- Oyuncuların katıldığı TV programları veya talk show'ları izlediniz mi? Örnekler verebilir misiniz? Ne düşündünüz?
- Sosyal medyayı takip ettiniz mi?
- Oyuncuların, teknik ekibin veya Star TV'nin twitter, Facebook, youtube sayfalarını takip ettiniz mi? Örnekler verebilir misiniz? Ne düşündünüz?
- Oyuncularla, ekiple, Star TV'yle irtibata geçtiniz mi? E-mail yoluyla, ya da twitter, facebook ve benzeri sosyal medya kanallarından? Deneyimlerinizi anlatır mısınız?
- Diğer izleyicilerin sosyal medyada paylaştıkları kısa entry'leri, yazıları, resimleri, video'ları takip ettiniz mi? Ne düşündünüz?
Hangi siteleri takip ettiniz? Ekşisözlük, İncisözlük ve benzeri platformlar? Özellikle ne tarz yorumlar okudunuz? Dizinin aldığı cezalara veya RTÜK'e karşı entry'ler yazılar var mıydı? Ne tarz şeyler vardı? Ne düşündünüz?
- Siz yorum, yazı, video paylaştınız mı? Neler paylaştınız? Ne amaçla paylaştınız?

9. Sizce dizi neden bitti?

- Sinema filmlerini izlediniz mi? Dizinin sinemada devam etmesiyle ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz? İleride çıkacak filmlere gider misiniz?
- Bir daha dizi olarak ekranlarda görmek ister misiniz? Sizce bu mümkün olur mu?
- Benzer diziler görmek ister misiniz? Sizce ileride televizyonlarda benzer diziler görür müyüz?

10. Genel olarak Türk dizileriyle ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz?

- Takip ettiğiniz Türk dizileri var mı? Örnek verebilir misiniz?

- İçerik olarak doyurucu buluyor musunuz? Örnek verebilir misiniz?
- Son zamanlarda ne tarz diziler ağırlıkta? Örnek verebilir misiniz?
- Türk dizilerinde sizi rahatsız eden unsurlar var mı? Örnek verebilir misiniz?
- Sizce Türk dizilerinde toplumu kötü yönde etkileyecek unsurlar var mı? Örnek verebilir misiniz?
- Sizce bu unsurlarla ilgili bir işlem, bir yaptırım uygulanmalı mı? Ne tarz yaptırımlar uygulanmalı?

11. Genel olarak televizyonda ve özellikle de dizilerde sansür uygulamalarıyla ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz?

- Sizce sansür uygulamalarının amacı ne? Ne olmalı?
- Sansür uygulamaların amacına ulaştığını düşünüyor musunuz?
- Sizce ne tarz durumlarda sansür uygulanmalı?
- Aklınıza gelen Behzat Ç. dışında sansür uygulamasıyla karşılaşan bir televizyon programı veya dizisi var mı? Örnekler verir misiniz? Ne düşündünüz? Neler yaptınız?

12. RTÜK hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

- Sizce bu kurumun amacı nedir? Ne olmalı?
- Bu kurumun televizyonda neler yayınlanacağıyla ilgili yetkisi ne düzeyde olmalı?
- Genel olarak RTÜK'ün aldığı kararlarla ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz?