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# TRANSNATIONALIZATION OF TURKISH TELEVISION SERIES

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## PREFACE

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Television series are undoubtedly an audio-visual production space that people in every country are eagerly following. Television series are known to have an impact in the public sphere. These effects are discussed in various topics. Another feature of television series, which can be examined in many dimensions in public life, is that productions are demanded not only nationally but also in the international arena.

Television series produced in Turkey are in demand worldwide and this issue is worth examining from a scientific point of view. Examining this issue as an export element is another research title. In this context, this book offers an idea of the domain, reception status and acceptance of international turkish television series in various countries.

As a foresight; television will have quite a series as well; perhaps it will change in terms of production techniques, but it will continue to be popular as a production type.

This book aims to contribute the field that needs to be discussed at all points in media scope and we hope to light the fuse for the international academic community.

**Prof. Dr. Ergün YOLCU**

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## INTRODUCTION

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Turkish television series have recently become a great phenomenon: With the rise of their popularity as of the 2010s, they have been among the most viewed programmes in many of the countries they are exported to breaking viewership records. Meanwhile, for many people, they have become a direct and “live” representation of Turkey and this turned the series into one of the prominent components of global presence and soft power for Turkey. This doubtlessly creates a snowball effect that needs to be studied within the political, economic, cultural and social contexts. This is the main idea that led to the publication of “*TRANSNATIONALIZATION OF TURKISH TELEVISION SERIES*”.

Turkey has now the second place in global television series sales. Turkish television series have been named as soap operas, telenovelas, dramas, or simply *las turcas* in many countries. However, in the meantime, more people have started to call them *Turkish dizis* since it is becoming a brand by itself with its duration, production techniques, scenarios, and music. *Turkish dizis* have become a brand new (and a habitually well-known) category that does not fit into the existing ones and this edited book aims to understand how this happened and where it is possibly going.

This book has eight chapters. In the first one, in “Will It Travel? The Local Vs. Global Tug-Of-War For Telenovela And Turkish Dizi Producers”, Carolina Acosta-Alzuru brings a wholistic perspective to the telenovela and dizi industry including national audiences and contexts, the global market trends, the perennial tension between prioritizing the domestic or the international market, and other factors that influence the writing, casting and production processes. With field research and in-depth analysis of interviews, this study gives a crucial insight regarding the concept of telenovela and dizis.

The second chapter explains the case of Turkish television series in Chile. In the chapter titled “Digital Transformations and The Impact of Turkish Telenovelas in Chile: Back To Melodrama”, Lorena Antezana Barrios, Pablo Andrada, and Constanza Mujica look into why Turkish television series have been so successful in Chile indicating the need to empower local characteristics to generate the global recognition of a Chilean model of television production.

Another country that can cited as an example of the areas where Turkish series have been surprisingly popular is India. Sushmita Pandit, in the chapter titled Turkish Television Series in India: Tracing the Alternative Circuits of Transnational Media Flow, aims to understand in what way Turkish television series can be read as an illustrative instance of understanding transnational media flow through digital alternative channels in a neoliberal, developing country like India.

Next chapter is about the Turkish series in Cuba. Cuba is quite an interesting case since Turkish television series are not broadcast on television. The popularity of *las turcas* comes thanks to the weekly package system created by Cubans, el paquete. In the chapter titled “The

## INTRODUCTION

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consumption of Turkish TV series in Cuba: A Study on the distribution, access, and effects of Popular Culture”, Nadia Herrada Hidalgo, Pınar Aslan and Laura Elena Almora aim to discover how the weekly package system works and how it helps the circulation of Turkish television series. Additionally, they aim to explore the distribution, access and consumption strategies of Turkish TV series in Cuba.

The fifth chapter aims to explain the current situation of Turkish television series in Greece. Greece may be considered an example of the effect of Turkish television series in Turkey’s neighbours who share a certain physical and cultural proximity with Turkey. In the chapter titled “‘They’re Not That Much Different After All...’ The Reception of Turkish Soap-Operas by Women in Greece: Between Otherness and Proximity”, Dimitra Laurence Larochelle aims to present the results of her empirical research concerning the representations of Turkish culture projected by Turkish television soap operas and their reception by Greeks.

Next chapter is not country-based, it is a study on one of Turkish series that have succeeded in becoming a sensation in many countries with a nomination of 46th International Emmy Awards in the category of telenovelas: *Istanbullu Gelin*. In “Cultural Codes Creating A Universal Context and Reception of The Audience: The Case Study of *Istanbullu Gelin*”, Özlem Çağlan Bilsel and Özlem Arda analyze cultural codes of the television series and how they contribute to the creation of a universal context with a research on *Istanbullu Gelin*.

Next chapter is titled “Digital Transformation: Turkish Telenovelas on Peruvian Television”. Giuliana Cassano Iturri explains the current situation of Turkish television series in Peru with the idea that Turkish melodramas participate in Latin American melodrama’s cultural and symbolic field associated with shared identity matrices - urban and rural, tradition and modernity. Findings of this research show that Turkey’s melodramas have displaced the Brazilian, Colombian and American industry -among others- as a source of foreign titles in Peruvian television.

Last but not the least, Özgü Yolcu focuses on the digital platforms and Turkish television series. In the chapter titled “Youtube as A New Broadcasting Medium For Turkish Television Series: The Case Study of *Magnificent Century*”, Yolcu conducts research on another sensational Turkish series, *Magnificent Century*, with the main aim to determine the importance of YouTube and the possibilities it offers in terms of showing Turkish dramas. The chapter explains how dizi producers as content generators have also become broadcasters and how they have adapted to this new process.

As the editors, we hope you enjoy reading the latest research on Turkish TV series, Turkish dizis, and the book triggers more research on Turkish TV Series.