Televisual Resistance
Political potentials of television series

The potential social and political interactivities between television series and global uprising can be observed clearly in the words of a television show’s narrator, “All revolutions start with one person… Then one becomes a thousand!” (Tatar Ramazan, 2013). This interconnectedness continues between on-screen micropolitics and actual on-street macropolitics as well. In the series, Tatar Ramazan rebels against the oppressive and authoritative mayor who sells public places and uses state power (law, police) for his financial benefits. Shortly, Ramazan’s disobedience turns into a collective resistance. One month after the first episode, Gezi Resistance started due to Turkish prime minister’s decision of demolishing a public park to build a shopping mall in its space. Rapidly, the protests spread to all the cities of Turkey, becoming a huge civil disobedience and resistance movement. Serial narratives embody the social and political aura and transform its narrative complexity and narrational aesthetics in accordance. Similar to Tatar Ramazan, Fringe’s last season, where its main protagonists become insurgents, was also being aired worldwide in the spring of 2013. In Gezi and its coeivals, such as the riots in England and France, Arab Spring, Occupy movement, and Hong Kong Umbrella Revolution, resistance tactics similar to Fringe’s were used and are still being used against the state oppression.

Additionally, popular culture elements, especially television series, are used as disobedience material on streets and digital platforms. When corruption tapes of Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan and his son were revealed in February 2014, people reacted with online resistance acts. Social media activist re-edited some scenes from television series, such as Breaking Bad, Game of Thrones, Yalan Dunya in reference to the corruption tapes and turned them into digitally distributed resistance material. It is apparent that contemporary actual politics and social media have direct connections and interactions.

In looking into these cooperative intensities and durations of on-screen and on-street resistance movements, my overall purpose is to survey the political potential and limits of digitally mixed and distributed televisual images in the era of global uprisings. The theoretical framework would be composed of Gilles Deleuze and Felix
Guattari’s political philosophy, schizoanalysis, Deleuze’s cinematic theory, and Patricia Pisters’s neuro-image theory. Briefly, this paper would discuss the political potentials of television series and their limits in the twenty-first century cultural, mental and political transformation.

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Nur Ozgenalp graduated from Mimar Sinan University with a Bachelor's Degree in Cinema and Television. She continued her education at Film and TV Studies at Bilgi University where she also worked as a teaching assistant. Her MA dissertation concentrated on film theory and psychoanalysis. In 2009, while studying at Cinema and Media PhD programme of Bahcesehir University, she became fascinated with Marxist theories, cultural studies, and cyborg theory. She has been teaching film and media courses at Izmir University of Economics and Academy Istanbul since 2008. Currently, she is a PhD researcher at Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis, studying cultural and political transformations by examining new technologies, cross-media and serial television fiction in relation to Deleuzo-Guattarian theories.