

Revisiting Queer Portrayal in Popular Culture: The Historiographical Significance of Şokopop in Turkey

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Abstract: Launched as a YouTube channel and Instagram account in 2018, Şokopop quickly became a prominent popular culture phenomenon in contemporary Türkiye. Spearheaded by digital creator Ekim Acun, Şokopop delves into Turkish tabloid news from the 1960s to the early 2000s, reviving the bold and provocative landscape of past popular culture through contemporary digital media. The series offers a nostalgic yet ironic take on celebrity scandals that took place in recent past of Türkiye. While the channel's content spans various aspects of Turkish celebrity culture, its most striking discourse emerges in its representation of queer figures within the popular culture. This study examines Şokopop as a historiographical performance that reconstructs the media portrayal of queerness in Turkish popular culture between the 1960s and early 2000s. This research analyzes the narrative and formal characteristics of biographical episodes on prominent queer figures Bülent Ersoy, Zeki Müren, and Huysuz Virjin. Through textual analysis, it contextualizes Şokopop's narrative strategy as a means of reclaiming queer representation in recent popular culture history.

Keywords: Popular Culture, Digital Media Studies, Media Historiography, Queer Studies, Turkish Tabloid Culture

Jel Codes: J16, Z11, Z13

Popüler Kültürde Queer Temsiline Yeniden Bakış: Türkiye'de Şokopop'un Tarihyazımsal Önemi

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Öz: 2018 yılında bir YouTube kanalı ve Instagram hesabı olarak hayata geçirilen Şokopop, kısa sürede Türkiye'de önemli bir popüler kültür fenomenine dönüşmüştür. Dijital içerik üreticisi Ekim Acun'un öncülüğünde ortaya çıkan Şokopop, Türkiye'de 1960'lardan 2000'lerin başına kadar uzanan magazin haberlerini derinlemesine incelerken geçmişin cesur ve kışkırtıcı popüler kültür atmosferini çağdaş dijital medya aracılığıyla yeniden canlandırır. Acun bölümlerde, geçmişin magazin olaylarını eleştirel ve performatif bir perspektifle drag kostümler içinde anlatır. Kanalın içeriği geniş bir yelpazeye yayılsa da en dikkat çekici söylemi popüler kültürde queer figürlerinin temsiline dair oluşturduğu anlatılarda ortaya çıkar. Bu çalışma, Şokopop'u 1960'lardan 2000'lerin başına kadar Türkiye'de popüler kültürde queerliğin medya temsillerini yeniden inşa eden tarihyazımsal bir performans olarak ele almaktadır. Bülent Ersoy, Zeki Müren ve Seyfi Dursunoğlu gibi queer figürlere odaklanan biyografik bölümlerin anlatsal ve biçimsel analizi Şokopop'un tarihyazımsal önemini Türkiye popüler kültür tarihine kattığı queer perspektif üzerinden açıklamayı hedeflemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Popüler Kültür, Dijital Media Çalışmaları, Media Tarihyazımı, Queer Çalışmaları, Türk Magazin Kültürü

Jel Kodları: J16, Z11, Z13

1. Revisiting Queer Portrayal in Popular Culture: The Historiographical Significance of Şokopop in Türkiye

Şokopop was launched as a YouTube channel and Instagram account in 2018 and quickly became a popular culture phenomenon in contemporary Türkiye. Led by Ekim Acun, *Şokopop* explores tabloid magazines from the 1960s to the early 2000s in Türkiye, reviving the bold and daring landscape of popular culture from the recent past in today's digital media.

The show opens with the line: "Welcome to the deepest hole of the magazine world in Türkiye, where you'll meet scrap, vulgarity, and scandal." Journalist and podcaster Nilay Örnek defines *Şokopop* as an "archaeology of popular culture in Türkiye" (Örnek, 2021). In *Şokopop*, Acun explores past tabloid magazine events, contextualizing them within the broader historical, political, and socio-cultural conditions of the time.

Born in 1988, Ekim Acun studied Film and Television at Tre University of Rome and the London College of Communication (Cosmopolitanmag, 2025). *Şokopop*, which soon became a digital viral phenomenon, evolved into a multifaceted multimedia show, expanding into a documentary series broadcast on streaming platforms, quiz nights in grand venues, and DJ performances. *Şokopop*'s popularity is evident in its follower and subscriber numbers on digital platforms. As of January 13, 2025, *Şokopop* has approximately 246,000 subscribers on YouTube and around 313,000 followers on Instagram.

Influenced by American tabloid magazine documentary series on the E! Channel, *Şokopop* episodes are designed to be approximately 45 minutes each. Acun puts forth a great deal of meticulous archival research and editorial design into tabloid magazines, tapes, and various documents published back in the day that cover the events. From the first launch of *Şokopop* in 2018 to 2020, the identity of its creator—who is also the narrator in the videos—was kept a secret. The narrator, who usually dresses in drag or flashy, gender-fluid costumes, wears a mask and applies digital manipulation to his voice. Ekim Acun revealed himself as the creator and narrator of *Şokopop* during the TED Talk he gave on the roots and emergence of digital content (Acun, 2019). In his talk, he asserted that this act of self-revelation symbolized his self-acknowledgment of his affection for "trashy" tabloid magazines. Acun explained that he initially hid behind the mask due to a sense of shame about engaging with such content and, as a result, wanted to remain anonymous. However, as he grew more confident, came to terms with his passion for tabloid journalism, and recognized the value of his work, he decided to remove the mask.

Highlighting the reflective nature of popular culture in capturing dynamic societal tendencies across economic, political, and social contexts, Acun discussed the significance of tabloid magazine content in his talk (ibid). Although *Şokopop*'s identity became closely associated with its creator, Ekim Acun, after his revelation in 2019, he continued to use the mask and manipulated voice for the narrator, preserving them as key components of *Şokopop*'s identity.

In the documentary series, the narrator of *Şokopop* appears in his own distinctive style of drag while framing past tabloid magazine events. Drag has long been an essential practice in queer culture, and Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity is fundamental to understanding its impact. In *Gender Trouble*, Butler argues that gender is not an innate identity but a series of performed acts reinforced through repetition. Drag performance highlights this artificiality by exaggerating and parodying gender norms. Drag, gender fluidity, and non-binary dressing all serve as critical interventions within queer theory, illustrating that gender is not an essence but a repeated act (1999, pp. 175-177). Such conceptualization signifies how fashion and performance are utilized as tools of resistance, subverting patriarchal, heteronormative, and binary frameworks. While discussing the characteristics of his work in Örnek's podcast (2021), Acun highlights *Şokopop*'s grounded approach to tabloid events, which maintains a critique of the patriarchal, misogynistic, transphobic, and homophobic discourse prevalent in ongoing tabloid media culture.

2. The Historiographical Performance of Şokopop' Representation of 1960's to Early 2000's Tabloid Magazin

The Sokopop series characteristically follows a prominent magazine figure like Ajda Pekkan (Şokopop, 2021), Seda Sayan (2018), or Ebru Gündeş (2021) on their path to recognition and popularity. This journey often coincides with various scandals involving love affairs, reckless alcohol and drug use, bankruptcies, gambling troubles, and more. The excitingly trashy yet irresistibly captivating stories, narrated in Şokopop's distinctive documentary style, take place in Türkiye between the 1960s and early 2000s. This period is particularly significant, marked by social and political turmoil, including liberal movements that critically questioned the foundations of the republic, the emergence of public television and radio broadcasts, deep state crises, corruption in both the private and public sectors, and economic crises. The bits and pieces of historical data collected from newspaper magazine pages, artists' memoirs, magazine shows aired on TV, and, naturally, from the trashy dark corners of the internet, are carefully selected, juxtaposed, and aligned for Şokopop's interpretation of past events. His skillful contextualization of past magazine stories is deeply connected to the surrounding socio-economic and political trends of Turkey at the time.

In *What Is History?* Carr (1990) asserts that historians continually strive to organize past human experiences by attributing cause-and-effect relationships to them (p. 88). From this perspective, history is understood as a constructed framework in which past events are arranged in a causal order. Historical documents require narration to be comprehensible. The construction of a narrative involves establishing cause-and-effect relationships between statements (Carr, 1990, p. 147).

In historiographical practice, the historian identifies and constructs a series of reasons that they attach to the emergence of the event being documented. The process of forming a coherent account of the past—one that validates itself through historical data—stems from the fundamental need to establish meaning. In this context, meaning is constituted by narration, which serves as the medium for conveying the sentiment, idea, and information of the historical account (Carr, 1990, p. 88).

Historiography can be seen as a constructed representation of the past. As White (1975) argues, it is a form of narration that actively shapes and performs the representation. Given its narrative nature, historiographical practice should not be restricted solely to written forms. The act of narration extends beyond written texts, just as the ability to perform representation is not limited to textual documentation. In this regard, the concept of historiography encompasses various media through which historical representations can be conveyed.

The search for a methodology to maintain readily accessible and comprehensible historical knowledge has a long and respectable history. In *The Gender of History*, Berktaý (2010) argues that in the 16th century, close-source analyses and document-driven approaches played a significant role in historiography (p. 15). The study distinguished itself through meticulous work with historical records, aiming to find and preserve as much historical data as possible. By the 18th century, however, this document-based orientation began to shift toward a methodology that emphasized literary properties. As Berktaý explains, this tendency emerged under the influence of the Enlightenment, consciously departing from the previous political focus of historiography in an effort to embrace multiple layers of society (ibid).

With the advent of the 19th century, modernist scientific reasoning profoundly shaped historiography, transforming it into an independent academic discipline with its own critical methodology. A central figure in this movement was Leopold von Ranke, who championed the principles of impartiality and objectivity. He asserted that rigorous analysis of historical sources should serve as the foundation of the discipline, ensuring a more accurate and scholarly approach to the study of history (Berktaý, 2010, p. 15).

Ranke's approach differed from the historiographical methods of the 16th century in that it acknowledged the historian's existence and the development of their perspective

within the context of their time and place. This methodological shift, which accepted the subjective nature of the historian's approach, positioned historiography closer to the modern scientific disciplines (Berktaş, 2010, p. 16).

As Berktaş (2010) exposes, 20th-century historiography, particularly within European and American universities, evolved into a substantial academic profession, continually grappling with intellectual and methodological challenges. However, this century also witnessed the collapse of Enlightenment ideals, as the devastation of World War II led to widespread disillusionment and critical reassessment. Even the long-held belief in historiography's capacity to uncover objective truth through rigorous methodology came under scrutiny in the postmodern era. The debate unfolded between those who defended the reliability of historical data and early chronicles as valid sources and those who questioned the very possibility of objectivity and impartiality in historical narratives.

The postmodern perspective acknowledges the historian as an interpreter and historiography as a form of narration. As the belief in scientific knowledge as the foundation of historiography weakened, it lost its perceived dominance over other forms of narration. Ankersmit (1989) critiques the postmodern approach for its flexibility in historiographical practice, arguing that it excessively relies on the historian's interpretation (p. 138). He further highlights the dominance of the historian, which, in his view, obstructs access to historical cognition (Ankersmit, 1989, p. 140).

Despite his criticism of postmodern approaches to historiography, Ankersmit (1989) considers the methodological tendencies of the *Annales* School to be an exception. He asserts that the *Annales* School successfully introduced new methodologies for presenting historical cognition (p. 138).

The historiographical approach of the *Annales* School is significant for its challenge to the totalitarian epistemology of the Rankean model. In *Achievements of the Annales School*, Foster (1978) characterizes it as a new social science that integrates historical data within a broader social and economic context (p. 62). Within this framework, the role of the historian is to identify and interpret the network of relationships between events and conditions, similar to how a biologist examines processes rather than how a physicist seeks ultimate laws. This methodological approach aimed to attain and present historical cognition with minimal distortion. The general tendency of the *Annales* tradition leaned toward a micro-analytical perspective. As Foster (1978) explains, *Annales* historiography emphasizes the patterns and transformations of a social group within a specific time and space, interpreting them through a wider social context (p. 64).

Lorenz (1999), in *Comparative Historiography: Problems and Perspectives*, critiques postmodernism's stereotypical portrayal of fragmentary perspectives (pp. 30–37). He conceptualizes postmodern methodologies as being shaped by the specific social conditions emerging within a given society's national boundaries. According to Lorenz (1999), the nation-specific nature of these methodologies contradicts the pluralist claims of postmodern historiography. Consequently, the distinction between pluralism, relativism, and skepticism diminishes, along with the understanding of history. Berktaş (2010) argues that the postmodernist approach to historiography defines it as a branch of literature grounded in historical data (p. 17). In response to postmodernist criticism, historians defended their methodological interpretations while emphasizing their responsibility to give voice to the past.

Although criticisms of postmodern conceptions of historiography challenge the characteristics of such methodologies, it is evident that the nature of history has evolved significantly beyond modernist frameworks. Historians' tendency to seek absolute knowledge of the past has shifted toward a perspective that acknowledges the historiographer's subjectivity—an aspect that inherently renders historiography a partial endeavor.

The practice of historiography is rooted in the selection and construction of historical facts within a narrative. Consequently, debates regarding absolute historical accuracy or

credibility become incoherent when considering the fundamental nature of historiography. From this perspective, when examining the issue of historical accuracy and credibility, the historical representation in non-traditional texts—such as Şokopop’s video narratives on digital platforms—has attained a status comparable to literary historiographical practices.

The playful yet grounded agency of Şokopop, which holds a distinct position in contemporary popular culture in Türkiye, extends beyond its lucid articulation of magazine events or personas by contextualizing them within the political, economic, and social dynamics of the period. In its discourse-based composition, Şokopop shows careful adherence to the citation of sources for the information included in its accounts, supporting the strong basis of its meticulous work in the archives. Since the establishment of Şokopop in 2018, the platform has been gaining success and public acclaim in contemporary Turkey. The agenda setting high-quality content provided by the content creator appeals to the public and hence reinforces its growing success. By looking into Turkish popular culture between the 1960s and the early 2000s, Şokopop produces a nostalgic echo in the discourse of contemporary media.

Through its documentary series, Şokopop performs an historiographical practice by aligning archival materials with structural design. This approach transforms past magazine events into dynamic historical narratives. By doing so, Şokopop performs a significant historiographical function, shaping how these past events are remembered and interpreted in the present.

3. The Significance of Historiographical Performance of Şokopop on Queer Celebrities in Turkish Popular Culture from 1960’s to 2000’s

The conflict between two drag singers may not possibly expose a significant historiographical value. However, a meticulous approach to such incidents in wider historical and social context would expose valuable cognitions. The reflections emerge on Şokopop’s portrayal of those incidents reveals how popular culture constructs historical narratives and shapes collective memory.

The historiographical performance of Şokopop that brings the past the tabloid magazine events into contemporary discourse gains importance by shedding light on the evolving socio-cultural landscape, significantly on the politics of gender, and the public reflection it evokes. Şokopop's portrayal of past tabloid magazine enrich the conventional historiography by acknowledging the cultural significance of the field of pop culture in.

In *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity, and Politics in the Contemporary Moment* (2020), Douglass Kellner provides a critical examination of the interactive relationship between ideology and media culture. In his approach, Kellner points out to the complexity of production and reception processes within cultures and the diversity within societies that leads to multiple reactions and interpretations towards media texts (Kellner, 2020, pp. 19–21). As societies are not homogeneous structures that have the same characteristics, individual opinions, concerns, and desires differ. He argues that the popularity of a cultural product would not reveal universal admiration but it broadly stems from the wide circulation within media networks and not necessarily from the approval by the masses (Kellner, 2020, p. 21).

Cultural studies, according to Kellner, provides an abundant framework for the examination of the dynamics between domination and resistance in society. From the examination of media products, researchers are able to recognize the power streams that shape the dynamics in society (Kellner, 2020, p. 25). Popular culture holds significant importance as it reflects the prevailing social, cultural, and political currents of a given time and place through widely circulated cultural products. According to Kellner (2020), culture functions both as the origin and the outcome of intellectual and creative activity, shaping the ways in which individuals and societies engage with discourses of social, economic, and political conditions.

As a contested terrain, culture embodies both dominant and resistant forces, integrating ideological legacies of the past while shaping the trajectory of the future. Popular culture, in its inherently dynamic nature, can be understood as the culture of the contemporary moment—the pulse of society. It encapsulates prevailing ideas and ideological struggles, offering insight into the ways in which individuals interact with their cultural environment. Through this process, popular culture not only reflects but also actively influences cultural practices within a specific temporal and spatial context (Kellner, 2020, p. 20)

The domain of popular culture serves as a sphere of knowledge that is widely accessible to the general public. In defining popular culture, Williams (1983) emphasizes its wide circulation and general recognition as its defining characteristics, rather than its level of admiration or favorability. He highlights that terms like "popular song" or "popular art" are often abbreviated to "pop," a linguistic shift that underscores the accessibility of cultural forms (Williams, 1983, p. 238).

Products of popular culture, as an intrinsic component of society, achieve prominence through wide circulation and broad recognition. As previously noted, their popularity does not necessarily depend on being favored by large groups; rather, it is rooted in their accessibility and visibility within a given cultural landscape. The field of popular culture encompasses products, discourses, and artistic practices that are widely known and available to the public at a specific time and place, rather than those that are universally admired.

The defining characteristic of popularity, then, lies in the level of recognition a cultural product attains. Its prominence is contingent on its ability to resonate with the cultural dynamics of society—whether through widespread approval or even controversy. Ultimately, the success of a cultural artifact is determined by its capacity to capture the social pulse of its time, regardless of whether its reception is favorable or unfavorable.

Products of popular culture at a given time provides a significant bundle of data to inspect the main tendencies of a society for the time they grew upon. Hence the work Şokopop does to dig the dirty archives of tabloid magazine and narrate tabloid stories of the 90's provides a distinct cognition of 60's to early 2000's Türkiye. These tabloid stories serve as historical artifacts that document the intersections of identity, media, and public discourse. By recontextualizing them, Şokopop not only reclaims marginalized narratives but also critiques the mechanisms of media sensationalism and cultural memory. What may seem "trashy" is, in reality, a lens through which we can examine the complexities of history, identity, and representation.

While Şokopop's content is not solely focused on celebrity queer performances in Turkey's recent past, its most striking critical discourse emerges in the representation of LGBTQ+ figures within the celebrity sphere. This discourse is particularly evident in the biographical series on Bülent Ersoy, Zeki Müren, and Seyfi Dursunoğlu, which explores the portrayal of queer identities in popular culture during the periods covered in the series. Consequently, Şokopop's portrayal of significant queer figures in Turkey's popular culture from the 1960s to the early 2000s, sets forth a significant historiographical performance.

4. Methodology

This study aims to signify Şokopop's historiographical performance that exposes the media portrayal of queer in Turkish popular culture between the 1960s and early 2000s. The biographical documentary series on Bülent Ersoy, Zeki Müren, and Seyfi Dursunoğlu are selected for the analysis in this study grounding on their distinct portrayal of queer celebrities. For the analysis involving the interpretation and discussion on the documentaries *Şokopop Pride Özel: Baharı Bekleyen Kumrular* (Pride Special: Doves Waiting for Spring) (2019) and *Huysuz ve Tatlı: Seyfi Dursunoğlu ve Huysuz Virjin* (Grumpy and Sweet: Seyfi Dursunoğlu and Huysuz Virjin) (2024), Doulass Kellners's contextualization of

textual analysis for cultural products will be utilized. Douglas Kellner in *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity, and Politics in the Contemporary Moment* (2020) evaluates media products as ideologically charged representations that express and also shape cultural identities, power relations, and political conflicts (2020, p. 53). Kellner's textual analysis would be utilized as a critical methodological approach to interpret how media products are charged with discursive constitution and hence ideological tools.

Through a textual analysis of biographical episodes "Huysuz ve Tatlı: Seyfi Dursunoğlu ve Huysuz Virjin" and "Şokopop Pride Özel: Baharı Bekleyen Kumrular, Zeki Müren Bülent Ersoy" that also evaluates narrative and formal qualities for the constitution of meaning in those texts, this research contextualizes Şokopop's performance as a historiographical practice. By addressing archival media materials with a contemporary perspective, Şokopop critiques past representations of queer in Turkish popular culture while opens a space for comparative discussions on the evolving discourse of queer identity in Turkey's media history. The practice of textual analysis involved repeated watching and note taking techniques.

5. Analysis on the historiographical performance of Şokopop Series "Şokopop Pride Özel: Baharı Bekleyen Kumrular" and "Huysuz ve Tatlı: Seyfi Dursunoğlu ve Huysuz Virjin": the media portrayal of queer in Turkish popular culture.

This study evaluates "Şokopop Pride Özel: Baharı Bekleyen Kumrular" and "Huysuz ve Tatlı: Seyfi Dursunoğlu ve Huysuz Virjin" that portrays the biographical narratives of Zeki Müren, Bülent Ersoy and Seyfi Dursunoğlu, the significant queer figures in Turkish popular culture. By combining narrative and formal qualities of the series with a socio-historical context, this analysis explores how the documentary reconstructs LGBTQ+ representation in Turkish popular culture. The study argues that Şokopop employs a distinct historiographical approach that enables the inclusion of queer identity in the history of popular culture in Türkiye.

The episode *Şokopop Pride Özel: Baharı Bekleyen Kumrular* narrates a tale from back in 1980's Harbiye, İstanbul when Zeki Müren and Bülent Ersoy paused their known-to-all cold war, performed a spontaneous duet and shared an innocent kiss. The representation of the series narrates the tale within a broader socio-historical framework, emphasizing the cultural and political significance of Zeki Müren and Bülent Ersoy as prominent queer celebrity figures of the recent past in Türkiye. Müren, as a gender-expansive queer icon of the 20th century, navigated fame within an authoritarian yet culturally rich era, challenging traditional gender norms while maintaining widespread public appeal (Stokes, 2010, pp. 69-71). Bülent Ersoy on the other hand, faced legal struggles and banned from the stage shows following the gender transition process, however she maintained a rather state-side discourse of heteronormativity on the following periods as a "diva" and hence did not become an active figure of critical queer discourse in Türkiye (Güvendik, 2018, pp. 44-45).

The episode dedicated to pride celebrations of 2019, constructs its narrative through a combination of chronological storytelling and critical commentary that weaves multiple grounds of cultural reflections. By assembling archival footage from the tabloid news, TV shows along with the commentary, the Şokopop episode integrates media clippings, interviews, and performance footage, creating a multifaceted portrayal of its subjects Zeki Müren and Bülent Ersoy. The narrative technique of satire is utilized significantly in the voiceover and on-screen graphics. The episode (in-line with the general stylistic features of Şokopop series) employs a distinct formal approach by adopting a collage-like editing style that juxtaposes historical coverage with contemporary reactions, which maintains a dynamic interplay between past and present. The episode reflects with a critical perspective on the heteronormative contradictions and biases the media representations of Zeki Müren and Bülent Ersoy in popular culture. The episode showcases the career highlights of these two queer celebrities through reflecting on their lives that embody

existential struggle that discloses ways of LGBTQ+ resistance within the cultural sphere at that time.

The documentary's thematic focus on gender nonconformity, artistic resistance, and public reception allows for a critical interpretation of the past media coverage towards the queer celebrity figures. The episode highlights the impact of media and censorship, illustrating how the queer portrayal evolves in response to shifting political climates. Gaining distinction as both an archival and activist historiographical practice, reclaims marginalized histories and offers a counter-narrative to generic representation of past. In doing so, it contributes to a broader discourse on visibility, resistance, and the politics of representation in contemporary media studies. Hence, the historiographical performance of the Şokopop episode incorporates a significant perspective on the history of popular culture in Türkiye by depicting the portrayal of queer celebrities in Turkish media in 1960's to 2000's.

Huysuz ve Tatlı: Seyfi Dursunoğlu ve Huysuz Virjin (2024) episode of Sokopop as a portrait documentary presents a comprehensive and critically engaged exploration of the life and career of Seyfi Dursunoğlu, famously known as Huysuz Virjin. The documentary offers a significant interpretation Dursunoğlu's impact on Turkish popular culture, portraying him within the socio-political and cultural landscape of his time. Through the use of rare footage, photographs, and interviews, Acun diligently builds a dense and captivating image of Huysuz Virjin's performances, TV shows, and public life. Dursunoğlu's Huysuz Virjin was a hyper-feminine, sharp-tongued, flirtatious character that teased and played along gender expectations. In line with drag aesthetic style, he exaggerated femininity using a comedic fictional Armenian character wearing chic gowns with dazzling embroideries and drag style makeup. His drag performance was not an important LGBTQ+ activism attempt but his visibility as a "gender-nonconforming" figure challenged the heteronormative standards of Turkish television and popular culture in general.

The documentary portrays Seyfi Dursunoğlu's private and personal life by touching upon his struggles on the path to developing his unique drag performance that lasted nearly five decades. As a pioneer in Turkish drag performance Dursunoğlu faced various obstacles including public humiliation by state authorities that involves stage performance restrictions and consecutive financial difficulties. By the portrayal of Dursunoğlu's story of becoming a celebrity figure with his drag queen performance, the documentary emphasizes on the significance of resilience and determination for a queer artist in popular culture scenery of Turkey through 1960's to early 2000's. The documentary explores both Seyfi Dursunoğlu and his drag persona Huysuz Virjin as significant components of Turkish popular culture during the time he had actively performed. Through a critical queer perspective, the documentary portrays Seyfi Dursunoğlu as an artist in drag performance defying the conventions of Turkish popular culture norms by challenging the patriarchal and transphobic constitutions.

The documentary portrays Seyfi Dursunoğlu's life by a montage that brings together archival footages from tabloid media, television broadcasts, and supporting commentary. The episode composes a multi-layered and touching narrative by aligning interviews, performance recordings, and press clippings. The commentary resorts to satire as a narrative technique maintaining the strategic bond with the overall narrative style of Şokopop audio-visual contents. College and paper rip editing technique is utilized in the episode to juxtapose archival footage from past with contemporary pieces that successfully sets up a space of imaginary dialogue between past and present.

The Şokopop episode *Huysuz ve Tatlı: Seyfi Dursunoğlu ve Huysuz Virjin* (2024) builds up a framework for queer artist Seyfi Dursunoğlu that signifies his impact in popular culture scenery by challenging the defining heteronormative standards over the decades of his performances spanning from 1960's to 2000's. The historiographical performance of the episode enriches the history of popular culture in Turkey in its portrayal of queer celebrity artist Seyfi Dursunoğlu and the rise of his drag character Huysuz Virjin in

Turkish media between 1960's to 2000's. In so doing, the documentary adds a grounded approach to the discussions on politics of queer representation in media.

6. Conclusion and Discussion

The historiographical performance of the Şokopop series, particularly in "Şokopop Pride Özel: Baharı Bekleyen Kumrular" and "Huysuz ve Tatlı: Seyfi Dursunoğlu ve Huysuz Virjin," provides a unique perspective to interpret the portrayal of queer figures in Turkish popular culture. By presenting a dynamic narrative that exposes archival material with satirical narration, the series provide a space to discuss the dominant heteronormative tendencies that shape the popular culture through the critical queer perspective.

The playful yet grounded agency of Şokopop, which holds a distinct position in contemporary popular culture in Turkey, extends in its articulation of magazine events and celebrities by contextualizing them within the political, economic, and social dynamics of the period. In its discursive constitution, Şokopop demonstrates a keen commitment to citing sources of its archival research revealing a solid foundation. The content creation it presents exposes a nostalgic echo in the contemporary popular media by reconfiguring Turkish popular culture of the 1960s to the early 2000. With its documentary series, Şokopop performs a historiographical practice through selection of archival data and contextualization with editorial intervention. In this manner, Şokopop performs a significant historiographical practice, shaping how these past events are remembered and interpreted in the present.

Through the biographical documentaries that narrates the stories of queer celebrity figures Zeki Müren, Bülent Ersoy, and Seyfi Dursunoğlu, the episodes highlight the gender biased constitutions in media representation and reflects the socio-political constraints. In doing so, it reclaims queer identities and signifies their influence on Turkish popular culture. While Zeki Müren and Bülent Ersoy progress on the paths of fame and success within restrictive political climates, the historical representation of Şokopop highlight their compromises within dominant heteronormative social tendencies. By the same token, the depiction of Seyfi Dursunoğlu and his drag character Huysuz Virjin exhibits how drag performance and its inherent humor maintained a space for challenging gender norms, even in socio-cultural conditions that often sought to ignore queer expression. In this manner, the documentary crafts a framework to emphasize the dynamic between resistance and concealment through critical queer perspective by the portrayal of the queer celebrities in media culture.

The Şokopop series gains distinction as a historiographical practice by offering a diverse narrative on the history of popular culture in Turkey. The historiographical approach of Şokopop serves as an important intervention in media studies and queer history. By blending past and present narratives, the series constructs an evolving discourse on LGBTQ+ visibility, media censorship, and cultural memory in Turkey. This study signifies the importance of queer historiography in reconfiguring dominant narratives, asserting that popular culture can serve as a powerful archive of resistance within the identity politics.

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