

A Fashion and Style Competition Show on a Turkish TV Channel: Teaching Oversize Women to Wear Suitable Clothes by Reviving the Spirit of Atatürk

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This study analyzes the types of clothes oversize women wear and the sociological reasons for which they wear these clothes in a Turkish contemporary TV competition show titled “*Doya Doya Moda*” [“*Fashion, By Being Full Up*”] (2019-2020) from a symbolic interactionist perspective (Blumer, 1969) and describes how these women, competing for winning some awards and a gold necklace every week, follow Atatürk’s way and observe his reforms as modern women. In 1925, Atatürk made the “Hat and Clothing Reform” by declaring that modern hats and clothes would be worn by Turkish people instead of Ottoman fezzes, imamahs, and veils.

As the TV program is still shown, the data of this study consists of the 20 (twenty) episodes of the show chosen in accordance with their themes representative of the other parts of the whole seasonal competition show: major themes of these parts consist of imitating an actress or a singer, going to a business meeting, opening an art exhibition, organizing a party, meeting prospective husbands’ parents for the first time, going out for drinking coffee with some friends, matching contrasting colors, et cetera. An uncovered woman from Iran and another secular woman from Algeria are also participating in the competition among four other Turkish curvy women. Their sizes are above 12.

The aim of the study is to demonstrate that the clothes worn in the program are aligned with Atatürk’s reforms for Turkish secular women and promote women’s rights to work, to select their own life companions, and to be paid equally regardless of their body shapes without being forced to be skinny. Therefore, the TV program is related to Atatürk’s reforms on the rights of women to work with equal hours and pays to those of men (1923), to select their own husbands, to receive the same amount of heritage as men can do, to study, as well as to earn degrees after the acceptance of the Turkish Civil Code (1926). Accordingly, the clothes worn by oversize women in accordance with these reforms by Atatürk, will be analyzed from a symbolic interactionist perspective.

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