

TELEVİZYON ANLATISININ PLATFORMLAŞMASI: YAYIN AKIŞI, ALGORİTMİK KÜRASYON VE İZLEYİCİ DENEYİMİ

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ÖZ

Bu makale, tarihsel olarak yayın akışıyla ilişkilendirilen örgütleyici işlevlerin dijital platform ortamlarında nasıl yeniden yapılandırıldığını ve bu dönüşümün televizyon anlatısını, içerik görünürlüğünü ve izleyici deneyimini nasıl yeniden şekillendirdiğini incelemektedir. Kuramsal ve kavramsal bir yaklaşım benimseyen çalışma; televizyon akışı, platformlaşma, algoritmik kürasyon, isteğe bağlı izleme ve binge-watching literatürlerini tek bir analitik çerçevede bir araya getirmektedir. Makalenin temel argümanı, dijital platformların televizyon akışının örgütleyici mantığını ortadan kaldırmadığı; aksine bu işlevleri kataloglar, arayüzler, öneri sistemleri, otomatik oynatma mekanizmaları ve kullanıcı etkinliği arasında yeniden dağıttığıdır. Bu yeniden yapılanma, sürekliliğin artık öncelikle ortak ve doğrusal bir yayın programı üzerinden değil, farklılaşmış ve giderek kişiselleşen izleme yolları aracılığıyla üretildiği platformlaşmış bir akış biçimi olarak kavramsallaştırılmaktadır. Makale ayrıca platformlaşmanın izleyicinin zamansal özerkliğini genişletirken, algoritmik kürasyon aracılığıyla görünürlüğün altyapısal olarak örgütlenmesini de güçlendirdiğini ileri sürmektedir. Anlatı düzeyinde ise bölümsellik, sezon yapısı, cliffhanger ve uzun erimli anlatısal süreklilik gibi yerleşik televizyon biçimleri basitçe ortadan kalkmamakta; bu biçimlerin zamansal işlevleri isteğe bağlı izleme koşulları içinde yeniden yapılandırılmaktadır. Çalışma, bu nedenle çağdaş televizyonu kopuş ve süreklilik arasındaki ilişki üzerinden kavramsallaştırmakta ve platform çağında televizyonun sona eren bir medya formu olarak değil, yeniden yapılanmış bir anlatı ve izleme rejimi olarak değerlendirilmesi gerektiğini önermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Televizyon Anlatısı, Yayın Akışı, Platformlaşma, Algoritmik Kürasyon, İzleyici Deneyimi.

THE PLATFORMIZATION OF TELEVISION NARRATIVE: BROADCAST FLOW, ALGORITHMIC CURATION, AND VIEWER EXPERIENCE

ABSTRACT

This article examines how the organizing functions historically associated with broadcast flow are reconfigured within digital platform environments and how this transformation reshapes television narrative, content visibility, and viewer experience. Adopting a theoretical and conceptual approach, the study brings together scholarship on television flow, platformization, algorithmic curation, on-demand viewing, and binge-watching within a single analytical framework. It argues that digital platforms do not eliminate the organizing logic of television flow but redistribute its functions across catalogs, interfaces, recommendation systems, autoplay mechanisms, and user activity. This reorganization is conceptualized as platformized flow, in which continuity is no longer produced primarily through a common linear schedule, but through differentiated and increasingly personalized pathways. The article further argues that platformization expands viewers' temporal agency while simultaneously increasing the infrastructural organization of visibility through algorithmic curation. At the narrative level, established television forms such as episodicity, seasonality, cliffhangers, and long-form continuity are not simply replaced; rather, their temporal functions are reconfigured within on-demand viewing conditions. The study therefore conceptualizes contemporary television through the relationship between rupture and continuity and proposes that television in the platform era should be understood as a reconfigured narrative and viewing regime rather than as a disappearing media form.

Keywords: *Television Narrative, Broadcast Flow, Platformization, Algorithmic Curation, Viewer Experience.*

INTRODUCTION

Television has historically operated not merely as a technical means of transmitting audiovisual content, but as an institutional media form that organizes the temporal, narrative, and experiential conditions under which content is encountered. In traditional broadcasting, channel scheduling, fixed transmission times, weekly episode structures, commercial breaks, and practices of synchronous viewing have shaped not only the distribution of television content but also the temporal organization of television narrative. Raymond Williams's (2003) concept of flow remains a fundamental point of reference for understanding this structure, since it conceptualizes television not as a collection of discrete programs but as a continuous viewing order produced through the arrangement of programs, advertisements, promotions, and transitions.

The widespread adoption of digital platforms has significantly altered this mode of organization. On services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, and similar on-demand platforms, television content is no longer encountered primarily within a fixed schedule. Instead, it circulates through catalogs, interfaces, search functions, personalized recommendations, "continue watching" lists, and autoplay mechanisms. This transformation cannot be reduced to the relocation of television content from broadcasting to internet-based distribution. As Lotz (2018) demonstrates, television has historically been reconfigured across different technological and industrial phases, and contemporary digital platforms represent another significant stage in this process by reorganizing the production, circulation, visibility, and consumption of television content within a shared infrastructural environment.

Platform studies provide an important framework for understanding why this transformation cannot be explained solely through the concept of digitalization. Poell et al. (2019) conceptualize platformization as the penetration of the infrastructural, economic, and governance processes of digital platforms into different social and cultural domains. Similarly, Nieborg and Poell (2018) demonstrate that platforms do not function as neutral intermediaries but actively reorganize the conditions of cultural production and circulation. From the perspective of television, this involves a shift from channel-centered programming toward platform-centered circulation, from fixed broadcast time toward on-demand access, and from a common linear schedule toward increasingly personalized regimes of visibility.

However, interpreting the rise of digital platforms simply as the disappearance of television flow would be insufficient. Although the linear schedule organized by a broadcaster for a mass audience has weakened, digital platforms have introduced new mechanisms that structure continuity, attention, and movement among con-

tents. Catalog rankings, algorithmic recommendations, autoplay, similarity-based suggestions, and “continue watching” functions establish new forms of connection between programs and episodes. These mechanisms differ from traditional broadcast flow, yet they continue to organize the sequence in which viewers encounter content and to encourage continuity within the viewing experience. The central issue, therefore, is not whether flow has disappeared, but how its organizing function has been reconfigured within platform infrastructures.

This study addresses the following central research problem: Through which mechanisms do digital platforms reorganize the temporal, narrative, and viewer-related structures historically associated with broadcast flow, and how does this reorganization produce both rupture and continuity within television? This problem is examined through two interrelated questions. First, how is the organizing function of broadcast flow reconstituted through catalogs, interfaces, and algorithmic curation? Second, how does this transformation affect episode and season structures, narrative continuity, viewing rhythm, and the position of the viewer within the television experience?

The central theoretical proposition of the article is that digital platforms do not eliminate the logic of television flow; rather, they relocate its organizing function from fixed, linear channel programming to a platform-based regime structured through catalogs, interfaces, and algorithmic curation. This transformation creates a significant tension within the viewing experience. On the one hand, on-demand access provides viewers with greater temporal flexibility by allowing them to choose when to begin, pause, resume, or consecutively watch television content. On the other hand, the visibility, accessibility, and discoverability of content become increasingly dependent on platform architectures, ranking systems, and recommendation mechanisms. The platform viewer is therefore neither a passive subject fully dependent on broadcast scheduling nor an entirely autonomous user operating outside structures of mediation. Rather, the viewer-user occupies a position shaped by the interaction between individual choice and platform-organized visibility.

This perspective also requires the transformation of television narrative to be understood beyond the level of plot, character, or genre alone. Digital platforms do not necessarily eliminate historically established features of television narrative such as episodicity, seasonality, cliffhangers, character continuity, and long-form storytelling. Instead, they transform the temporal and experiential conditions under which these elements operate. In traditional broadcasting, for example, the cliffhanger commonly functioned as a mechanism that connected the viewer to a future broadcast date. Within an on-demand environment, the same narrative device may instead encourage immediate continuation to the next episode. Si-

milarly, the season may no longer be experienced only as a broadcasting period distributed across several weeks, but also as a narrative unit that is available as a whole within a platform catalog. Platformization therefore does not necessarily produce a complete formal rupture in television narrative; rather, it reorganizes historically established narrative structures within new conditions of circulation and viewing.

The contribution of this article lies in bringing together discussions of broadcast flow, platformization, algorithmic curation, and on-demand viewing within a single analytical framework for understanding the reconfiguration of television narrative. Existing discussions of these concepts often address different dimensions of contemporary television: flow foregrounds temporal organization, platformization emphasizes infrastructural and economic transformation, algorithmic curation concerns regimes of visibility and content discovery, while binge-watching and on-demand viewing address changing viewing rhythms. This article argues that these processes should be understood as interconnected mechanisms through which television is reorganized within the platform environment. In this sense, digital platforms are approached not merely as new distribution technologies, but as media infrastructures that reshape the temporal organization, circulation, visibility, and experience of television narrative.

Accordingly, the article conceptualizes the contemporary condition of television through the relationship between rupture and continuity. The weakening of fixed broadcast schedules, channel-centered viewing, and synchronous consumption represents a significant rupture with the institutional and temporal organization of traditional television. At the same time, episodic structure, seasonality, narrative continuity, viewer engagement, and the broader logic of maintaining continuity across content persist in reconfigured forms. Rather than treating digital platforms either as evidence of the “end of television” or as a simple extension of traditional broadcasting, the article proposes that television should be understood as a media form undergoing platform-based reconfiguration under changing technological, economic, and cultural conditions.

The remainder of the article proceeds in four stages. First, the methodological and analytical framework of the study is clarified. The following sections examine the reorganization of broadcast flow within platform environments, the relationship between algorithmic visibility and the viewer-user, and the transformation of narrative temporality through on-demand and consecutive viewing practices. The final theoretical discussion brings these dimensions together through the concepts of rupture, continuity, and the platform-based reconfiguration of television.

METHOD AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts a theoretical and conceptual approach rather than an empirical research design. It does not analyze a specific digital platform, television series, interface, catalog, or audience group through primary data collection. Nor does it aim to provide a systematic literature review based on comprehensive database searches, predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria, or bibliometric procedures. Instead, the article develops a selective and critical synthesis of scholarship from television studies, platform studies, algorithmic culture, and viewer research in order to address the central research problem of how the organizing functions historically associated with broadcast flow are reconfigured within digital platform environments.

Throughout this article, the term television narrative is used in a broader sense than plot, character development, or textual structure alone. It refers to the organization of episodicity, seasonality, narrative continuity, viewing rhythm, and the conditions under which viewers encounter television content. This broader use reflects the premise that television narrative is shaped not only by textual conventions but also by the temporal, institutional, and technological arrangements through which it is circulated and experienced. Accordingly, the analysis considers changes in narrative form together with transformations in broadcast scheduling, platform interfaces, algorithmic visibility, and on-demand viewing practices.

The literature is selected according to the analytical role that particular concepts play within this problem rather than according to a chronological or exhaustive review logic. Raymond Williams's (1974/2003) concept of flow provides the starting point for conceptualizing the temporal and programmatic organization of traditional television. Amanda D. Lotz's (2018) work on the technological and industrial transformation of television is used to situate contemporary platform-based change within a longer history of institutional and technological reconfiguration. The concept of platformization, particularly as developed by Poell et al. (2019) and Nieborg and Poell (2018), provides the framework for examining how platform infrastructures, economic models, and governance processes reorganize the production, circulation, and visibility of television content. Research on algorithmic curation, including Pajkovic (2022), is used to analyze how recommendation systems and interface arrangements structure content discovery and hierarchies of visibility. Studies of video-on-demand and binge-watching, including Mikos (2016) and related viewer research, are drawn upon to examine the transformation of viewing rhythm and the temporal experience of episodic and seasonal narratives.

These bodies of literature are not treated as separate descriptive domains. Rather, they are brought together as interrelated analytical dimensions of a broader pro-

cess of television platformization. Within this framework, broadcast flow refers to the temporal and sequential organization of traditional television; platformization addresses the infrastructural and institutional reorganization of content circulation; algorithmic curation concerns the organization of visibility and content discovery; and on-demand viewing practices illuminate transformations in viewing temporality and viewer agency. The analytical objective is therefore not simply to define these concepts individually, but to examine how their interaction helps explain the transition from channel-centered programming toward platform-based forms of continuity, visibility, and engagement.

The article is guided by the distinction between rupture and continuity. This distinction functions as an analytical principle throughout the study. Rupture refers to the weakening of fixed broadcast schedules, channel-centered programming, synchronous viewing, and the institutional centrality of linear flow. Continuity refers to the persistence and reconfiguration of television-specific features such as episodicity, seasonality, narrative continuity, viewer engagement, and the broader organizational logic of sustaining attention across content. This framework allows the transformation of television to be considered neither as the complete disappearance of an older medium nor as a simple continuation of traditional broadcasting, but as a process in which established television forms and practices are reorganized within platform infrastructures.

The scope of the study is therefore deliberately conceptual. Claims made in the article concern the theoretical relations among broadcast flow, platformization, algorithmic visibility, viewing rhythm, and television narrative rather than empirical generalizations about all digital platforms or all viewers. Differences among platform business models, interface designs, release strategies, national markets, and audience practices are acknowledged but are not systematically compared. These limitations define the boundaries of the present analysis and indicate areas in which the conceptual framework developed here may be examined through future empirical research.

FROM BROADCAST FLOW TO PLATFORMIZED FLOW

The concept of flow provides a crucial starting point for understanding the institutional and temporal organization of traditional television. Williams (2003) conceptualizes television not as a sequence of isolated programs but as a continuous viewing order in which programs, advertisements, promotions, and transitional elements are arranged within an integrated temporal structure. Within this model, the viewer encounters content largely through a schedule determined by the broadcasting institution. Broadcast time, channel programming, commercial interruptions, and the positioning of programs within particular time slots therefore participate in the organization of television narrative as well as in its distribution.

This organization is especially visible in the weekly episode structure and the culture of waiting associated with traditional television. Episodes are positioned within recurring broadcast schedules, while cliffhangers, season finales, previews, and dramatic interruptions help sustain viewer attention across temporal gaps. Commercial breaks and prime-time programming further demonstrate that the rhythm of television narrative is shaped not only by textual or aesthetic decisions but also by industrial and institutional conditions. The viewer in this system is not entirely passive: channels can be changed, programs can be selected, and viewing habits can develop in different domestic and social contexts. Nevertheless, these choices are primarily exercised within a temporal structure already organized by the broadcaster. As Ellis (2000) suggests through his account of television's movement from scarcity toward proliferating choice and demand-oriented viewing, this structure had already begun to change before the rise of contemporary streaming platforms.

Digital platforms intensify this transformation by reorganizing the institutional mechanisms through which television content is circulated and encountered. This process should be distinguished from digitalization in a narrow technological sense. Digitalization concerns the production, storage, transmission, and accessibility of media content through digital technologies, whereas platformization refers to a broader reorganization of cultural production and circulation through platform infrastructures, economic models, data practices, and governance mechanisms. Poell et al. (2019) conceptualize platformization in precisely these infrastructural, economic, and governance terms. From the perspective of television, the significance of platformization therefore lies not simply in making television content available online, but in shifting the organizational center of content circulation from the channel schedule toward the platform environment.

One of the clearest manifestations of this shift is the transition from schedule-based availability to catalog-based accessibility. In traditional broadcast flow, content is primarily encountered at the moment and in the sequence determined by the channel. In platform environments, by contrast, episodes, seasons, films, and programs can remain accessible beyond their initial release moment and can be revisited, paused, resumed, or discovered at different points in time. The catalog consequently alters the temporal status of television content by reducing its dependence on a single broadcast moment. At the same time, the catalog should not be understood as a neutral archive in which all content is equally available to viewer attention. The organization of categories, interface positions, search functions, rankings, and recommendation structures produces differentiated conditions of visibility within the platform.

Platformization also changes the industrial position of the distributor itself. Platforms may simultaneously commission, acquire, package, circulate, measure, recommend, and promote television content. Nieborg and Poell (2018) show that the platformization of cultural production involves the growing integration of cultural commodities into the economic and infrastructural logics of online platforms. In the television industry, this transformation means that the platform increasingly operates not merely as a technical intermediary between producer and viewer, but as an institutional actor that participates in organizing production, circulation, measurement, and visibility. Chalaby (2024) similarly demonstrates that streaming services reshape the economic and institutional relations of the television industry within the broader platform economy.

The central analytical implication of this transformation is that the decline of linear scheduling does not necessarily entail the disappearance of flow as an organizing principle. Rather, the functions historically performed by broadcast flow are redistributed across catalogs, interfaces, recommendation systems, autoplay mechanisms, and other forms of platform organization. Traditional flow presents viewers with a largely linear sequence established by the broadcaster and shared by audiences encountering the same schedule. Platform environments, by contrast, organize movement among contents through more differentiated and increasingly personalized pathways. In this article, this reorganization is understood as platformized flow: a mode of continuity in which sequencing and viewer retention are no longer produced primarily through a fixed channel schedule but through the interaction of catalog architecture, interface design, automated continuity mechanisms, and user activity.

This shift involves both rupture and continuity. The rupture lies in the weakening of fixed broadcast time, synchronous viewing, channel-centered programming, and the broadcaster's direct control over a single linear sequence. The continuity lies in the persistence of an institutional logic that organizes encounters among contents, sustains viewer attention, and encourages movement from one televisual unit to another. Platformization therefore changes the mechanisms through which continuity is produced without eliminating continuity itself. Similarly, television-specific forms such as episodicity, seasonality, recurring characters, and long-form narrative remain present, but they are experienced within temporal and institutional conditions different from those associated with traditional broadcast scheduling.

Understanding this distinction is important for the broader argument of the article. Digital platforms should not be approached simply as the opposite of broadcast television, nor should the transition from scheduled broadcasting to on-demand

access be treated as a complete transfer of temporal control from institutions to viewers. Platform environments expand the viewer's capacity to determine when and at what pace content is watched, while simultaneously introducing new mechanisms through which content is ordered, foregrounded, and connected. The transformation of television flow must therefore be analyzed as a redistribution of organizational power across platform infrastructures, interface architectures, algorithmic systems, and viewer activity. The following section develops this argument by examining algorithmic curation as a specific mechanism through which visibility, discovery, and viewer choice are organized within platformized television.

ALGORITHMIC CURATION AND CONTENT VISIBILITY

If platformization redistributes the organizing functions historically associated with broadcast flow, algorithmic curation constitutes one of the principal mechanisms through which this redistribution becomes operational. In traditional television, content visibility is largely structured through channel schedules, prime-time positioning, promotion, and programming decisions. In platform environments, by contrast, visibility is increasingly organized through interfaces, rankings, recommendation systems, viewing histories, genre classifications, and personalized categories. The central issue is therefore no longer only whether content is available within a catalog, but how prominently, repeatedly, and contextually it is presented to particular users.

Algorithmic curation can be understood as a process through which platforms rank, recommend, associate, and foreground content on the basis of behavioral data and platform-defined classification systems. These processes generate hierarchies of visibility within catalogs that may otherwise appear to offer extensive choice. Pajkovic (2022), in examining the Netflix recommender system, demonstrates that recommendation mechanisms are connected not only to technical content matching but also to processes of taste-making, discovery, and viewer guidance. From this perspective, algorithms participate in shaping the conditions under which television content becomes noticeable, comparable, and discoverable.

This reorganization of visibility also transforms the position of the viewer. In the platform environment, the viewer increasingly operates simultaneously as a user who searches, selects, pauses, resumes, creates lists, and navigates among contents while interacting with recommendation systems and generating behavioral data through these interactions. This shift should not be interpreted as a movement from passive viewing to complete user autonomy. On-demand access expands temporal flexibility and the capacity for selection, but these choices are

exercised within catalog structures, interface architectures, and recommendation systems designed by the platform. The viewer-user therefore occupies a position characterized by a tension between agency and platform guidance: more capable of controlling when and how content is watched, yet dependent on platform infrastructures in determining what becomes visible, discoverable, and recommendable.

This tension is central to the relationship between algorithmic curation and platformized flow. Traditional broadcast flow organizes a common sequence through which viewers encounter programs at predetermined times. Platformized flow does not usually impose the same sequence on every user; instead, it produces differentiated pathways through recommendation, ranking, autoplay, “continue watching” functions, and similarity-based connections among contents. These mechanisms do not determine viewer behavior in an absolute sense, since users can search independently, reject recommendations, discontinue viewing, or move across genres. Nevertheless, they structure the field within which such decisions are made. Algorithmic curation therefore operates less as a direct substitute for channel programming than as a regime that organizes the possibilities of encounter.

The distinction between availability and visibility is particularly important in this context. A program’s inclusion in a platform catalog does not guarantee that it will be equally visible or equally likely to reach viewers. Interface placement, recommendation frequency, personalized categories, popularity rankings, promotional imagery, and links to related content may produce highly unequal levels of exposure. The catalog should therefore be understood not as a neutral archive but as a differentiated field of visibility. This distinction strengthens the argument that platformization reorganizes television not merely by increasing access to content but by restructuring the mechanisms through which attention is distributed.

Algorithmic curation can also affect the contexts through which television narratives are encountered. Series remain predominantly organized according to particular episode and season sequences, yet viewers may first encounter them through recommendation rows, trailers, promotional clips, popular-content rankings, or associations generated after viewing another program. These different points of entry do not necessarily alter the internal narrative structure of the series, but they can alter the context of discovery and the expectations through which the narrative is approached. Algorithmic visibility therefore affects the experience and cultural positioning of television narrative without necessarily determining its textual form.

The organizational role of curation is also connected to the economic logic of platforms. For subscription-based services, viewer retention, continued engagement, and movement among contents are institutionally significant. Recommendation systems, autoplay, and interface design consequently function not only as tools of convenience but also as mechanisms that may extend engagement within the platform environment. In this respect, the continuity historically produced by broadcast scheduling is partly rearticulated through data-driven systems designed to connect one viewing decision to another.

At the same time, the principles through which algorithmic visibility is organized are only partially accessible to users. Viewers generally cannot know in detail why particular contents are foregrounded, how individual signals are weighted, or which alternatives remain less visible. The platform viewing experience is therefore structured through a combination of personalization and opacity. This reinforces the need to avoid interpreting expanded choice as equivalent to unrestricted autonomy: platform environments may widen the range of technically accessible content while simultaneously organizing attention through mechanisms whose operational logic remains largely invisible to the user.

Algorithmic curation should consequently be understood as a central component of the platform-based reconfiguration of television. It transforms the institutional organization of visibility from a model dominated by shared broadcast schedules toward a differentiated system of ranking, recommendation, and interface-based discovery. In doing so, it contributes to the platformized form of flow identified in this article: continuity is increasingly produced not through a single linear schedule but through personalized pathways that connect content, user activity, and platform objectives. The next section turns from the organization of visibility to the organization of viewing time, examining how on-demand access and binge-watching reshape the temporal experience of episodic and seasonal narrative.

THE REORGANIZATION OF NARRATIVE TEMPORALITY: EPISODE, SEASON, AND CONSECUTIVE VIEWING

The platformization of television transforms not only the visibility and circulation of content but also the temporal conditions under which television narrative is experienced. Traditional broadcasting organizes viewing through recurring schedules, weekly episode intervals, and periods of waiting between narrative units. On-demand environments loosen this connection between narrative progression and institutional scheduling by allowing viewers to begin, pause, resume, and consecutively watch episodes according to more flexible temporal arrangements. The relevant transformation, therefore, concerns not simply an increase in viewing choice but a redistribution of control over the temporal experience of television narrative.

Binge-watching provides one important point of entry into this transformation. The concept has been defined in different ways across the literature, including through the number of episodes viewed consecutively, viewing duration, intensity of engagement, viewer motivation, and perceptions of control. Starosta and Izydorczyk's (2020) systematic review demonstrates this conceptual diversity. For the purposes of this article, binge-watching is not treated as a fixed quantitative category but as a mode of consecutive viewing that reduces the temporal distance between episodes and alters the conditions under which narrative continuity is experienced. This formulation makes it possible to examine binge-watching primarily as a problem of narrative temporality rather than as a behavioral category requiring a universal numerical threshold.

This temporal reorganization is particularly visible in the relationship between the episode and the culture of waiting. In traditional broadcast television, the episode is positioned within a recurring institutional schedule. Its ending may therefore function simultaneously as a moment of temporary closure and as a device that produces anticipation for a future broadcast. Cliffhangers, previews, and season finales extend narrative engagement into the interval between episodes. On-demand availability changes the function of this interval. When another episode can be accessed immediately, suspense may operate less as a mechanism for sustaining attention across a week and more as a mechanism for accelerating continuity within the same viewing session.

The transformation of the cliffhanger illustrates an important distinction between narrative form and narrative function. Digital platforms do not necessarily invent new narrative devices or eliminate established ones. Rather, historically familiar devices may acquire different temporal functions when the conditions of viewing change. A cliffhanger remains a device of narrative suspension, but the duration and institutional organization of that suspension may be substantially altered. In this sense, platformization affects television narrative not only through possible changes in textual form but also through the recontextualization of existing narrative techniques within new viewing rhythms.

A similar transformation can be observed at the level of the season. In traditional broadcasting, a season is experienced as both a narrative structure and a temporal process distributed across a broadcast calendar. On platforms that make several or all episodes available within the same catalog, the season may also be encountered as a relatively complete narrative unit that can be watched at a viewer-defined pace. The distinction is not absolute, since platform release strategies vary considerably: some services release complete seasons, others retain weekly schedules, and still others adopt hybrid models. Platformization should therefore not be equated with simultaneous full-season release. Its broader significance lies in

expanding the range of temporal arrangements through which episodes and seasons can circulate and be experienced.

Studies of digital platform series in Turkey also indicate that platform environments may create conditions for changes in episode duration, season organization, and practices of waiting. Kocagür (2022), for example, draws attention to the ways in which single-season digital series can differ from conventional Turkish television production in terms of episode duration and the temporal boundaries surrounding access to episodes. Such observations do not demonstrate a universal platform narrative form, but they support the broader argument that platform distribution can loosen some of the scheduling constraints historically associated with broadcast television.

Consecutive viewing also reshapes the experience of narrative continuity. Television has long relied on episodicity, recurring characters, continuing storylines, and season-long arcs; these features therefore should not be treated as innovations created by streaming services. What changes is the temporal proximity through which they may be experienced. Watching episodes with limited interruption can intensify the viewer's perception of character development, plot connections, and long-form narrative arcs by reducing the gaps that traditionally separate episodes. At the same time, this possibility should not be confused with a general increase in narrative complexity or quality. Platform environments enable particular modes of continuity, but individual productions may remain episodic, fragmented, conventional, or genre-driven.

The relationship between temporal autonomy and platform organization remains important here as well. On-demand access allows the viewer to exercise greater control over when and at what pace television content is consumed. Yet platform interfaces simultaneously encourage continuity through autoplay, "next episode" prompts, personalized recommendations, and "continue watching" functions. Consecutive viewing therefore emerges from an interaction between viewer choice and platform design rather than from either factor alone. Mikos (2016) emphasizes the significance of video-on-demand environments for changing modes of television use, while research on binge-watching motivations shows that intensive viewing is also connected to entertainment, relaxation, and narrative engagement rather than simply to technological availability (Pittman & Sheehan, 2015).

This observation is consistent with the broader analytical framework of the article. The shift from broadcast temporality toward on-demand temporality does not represent an unrestricted transfer of control from television institutions to viewers. Instead, temporal organization is redistributed. Viewers gain the capa-

city to decide when viewing begins and how rapidly episodes are consumed, while platforms introduce automated mechanisms that facilitate or encourage continued engagement. Narrative temporality in platformized television is therefore characterized by the coexistence of increased temporal agency and technologically structured continuity.

Catalog accessibility further extends this temporal transformation beyond the immediate viewing session. In traditional broadcasting, access to earlier episodes or seasons may depend on reruns, recording technologies, or other forms of secondary circulation. Platform catalogs can make earlier narrative units continuously accessible, enabling viewers to begin a series after its original release, return to previous episodes, rewatch earlier seasons, or encounter older programs in new contexts. The temporal life of television narrative is consequently less closely tied to the moment of first transmission and becomes increasingly shaped by processes of recirculation within the platform environment.

Yet catalog persistence should again be distinguished from equal visibility. The continued availability of an older season or series does not guarantee that viewers will encounter it. As the previous section demonstrated, catalog circulation is mediated through recommendation systems, interface placement, rankings, and other mechanisms of algorithmic visibility. Narrative temporality and algorithmic curation therefore intersect: platforms extend the potential lifespan of television narratives while simultaneously organizing the conditions under which those narratives become newly discoverable.

Taken together, these developments indicate that platformization reorganizes television narrative primarily by altering the temporal and institutional relations among episode, season, continuity, and viewing practice. The episode remains a central narrative unit, but its relation to waiting becomes more flexible. The season remains an organizing structure, but it may function both within a release schedule and as a catalog-based narrative whole. Narrative continuity persists, but it can be experienced through temporal intensities different from those associated with weekly broadcasting. The transformation at stake is therefore not the disappearance of television's established narrative forms, but their refunctioning within a more flexible, catalog-based, and platform-organized temporal regime.

This reorganization provides another basis for understanding the relationship between rupture and continuity developed throughout the article. Platform environments weaken the institutional centrality of weekly broadcast time while preserving and reworking episodicity, seasonality, suspense, and long-form continuity. In this sense, the transformation of narrative temporality supports the broader argument that television does not simply disappear in the platform era. Its

characteristic forms persist, but the temporal arrangements through which they operate are increasingly shaped by on-demand access, catalog circulation, viewer choice, and automated mechanisms of continuity.

THEORETICAL DISCUSSION: THE END OF TELEVISION OR ITS RE-CONFIGURATION?

The preceding analysis suggests that the transformation associated with digital platforms is better understood as a reconfiguration of television than as its disappearance. This argument does not deny the extent of institutional and temporal change. Fixed broadcast schedules, channel-centered programming, synchronous viewing, and the dominance of a common linear sequence have all lost part of their organizing power within on-demand environments. Yet the weakening of these structures does not entail the disappearance of the narrative, temporal, and institutional logics historically associated with television. Rather, these logics are reorganized through platform infrastructures.

This interpretation is consistent with approaches that understand television as a historically changing media form rather than as a fixed broadcasting technology. Lotz (2018) demonstrates that television has been repeatedly reconfigured through shifts in distribution technologies, industrial structures, and modes of access. From this perspective, digital platforms represent neither an entirely external force that replaces television nor a technologically neutral extension of broadcasting. They constitute a new institutional environment in which television content, viewing practices, and mechanisms of circulation are reorganized.

The theoretical contribution of this article can be formulated through three inter-related propositions.

First, platformization transforms rather than eliminates the organizing logic of flow. Traditional broadcast flow coordinates content through a linear sequence established by the broadcaster and encountered by viewers according to a shared schedule. Platform environments weaken this model, but they do not remove the institutional organization of sequencing and continuity. Instead, these functions are redistributed across catalog architecture, interface design, recommendation systems, autoplay, and other mechanisms that connect one viewing decision to another. The term platformized flow is used here to refer to this reorganization: continuity is no longer produced primarily through a single broadcast sequence but through differentiated pathways created by the interaction of platform infrastructures and user activity.

This proposition introduces an important distinction between the disappearance of linear broadcasting and the disappearance of flow as an organizing principle.

The former is clearly weakened in on-demand environments; the latter persists in transformed form. Traditional flow and platformized flow operate through different mechanisms, yet both structure encounters among contents and seek to sustain continuity within the viewing experience. The relevant transformation is therefore not a movement from institutional organization to its absence, but a redistribution of organizational functions from broadcast scheduling toward platform-based systems of sequencing, recommendation, and visibility.

Second, platformization expands viewer agency while simultaneously intensifying the infrastructural organization of visibility. On-demand access provides viewers with greater control over when content is watched, how rapidly episodes are consumed, and whether viewing is paused, resumed, or discontinued. Compared with traditional broadcast scheduling, this represents a significant increase in temporal flexibility. Yet increased choice does not imply that the viewer operates outside institutional mediation. Platform interfaces rank, classify, recommend, foreground, and connect content, thereby shaping the field within which viewer decisions take place.

The viewer-user should therefore be understood neither through a model of passive determination nor through a model of unrestricted autonomy. Algorithmic curation does not mechanically determine what viewers will watch, but it affects what becomes visible, discoverable, and easily accessible. The transformation of television viewing is consequently characterized by a redistribution of agency: viewers gain greater control over temporal consumption while platforms gain new capacities to organize attention and visibility through data-driven infrastructures. This tension between agency and guidance constitutes a defining feature of the platformized television experience.

Third, platformization refunctions established television narrative forms by changing the temporal conditions under which they are experienced. Episodicity, seasonality, cliffhangers, recurring characters, and long-form narrative continuity predate digital platforms and should not be treated as innovations of streaming television. What changes is the temporal and institutional context in which these elements operate. A cliffhanger that once sustained anticipation across a weekly interval may facilitate immediate continuation to another episode; a season that once unfolded primarily through a broadcast calendar may also circulate as a catalog-based narrative whole; earlier episodes and seasons may remain accessible for later discovery and rewatching.

This distinction between narrative form and narrative function is important because it prevents the transformation of television narrative from being interpreted as a simple progression toward entirely new textual structures. Platformization

does not affect every production in the same way, nor does it necessarily produce greater narrative complexity. Instead, it modifies the conditions through which established narrative devices are circulated, accessed, and temporally experienced. The transformation is therefore best understood as a process of refunctioning rather than wholesale formal replacement.

Taken together, these three propositions clarify the relationship between rupture and continuity that structures the article's analytical framework. Rupture is evident in the declining centrality of fixed broadcast time, common linear scheduling, channel-centered circulation, and synchronous viewing. Continuity is evident in the persistence of episodicity, seasonality, narrative continuity, institutional mechanisms of sequencing, and strategies aimed at sustaining viewer engagement. These dimensions should not be treated as mutually exclusive. Platformized television is constituted precisely through their coexistence.

This perspective also complicates the assumption that on-demand media represent a straightforward transfer of control from television institutions to individual viewers. Control is redistributed rather than simply transferred. Viewers acquire greater authority over the timing and pace of consumption, while platforms acquire new capacities to structure discovery, ranking, visibility, and continued engagement. In this sense, the platformization of television entails a shift in the location and techniques of media organization rather than the disappearance of organization itself.

The concept of platformized flow provides a way of bringing these transformations into a common theoretical frame. It connects changes in institutional organization, algorithmic visibility, viewer agency, and narrative temporality without reducing one dimension to another. The concept does not imply that all platforms operate identically or that all viewing follows algorithmic recommendations. Rather, it identifies a broader shift in which continuity and circulation are increasingly organized through combinations of catalog structures, interface arrangements, automated systems, and user interactions.

Accordingly, the opposition between the "end of television" and the simple continuation of traditional broadcasting is analytically insufficient. Digital platforms weaken several defining features of the classical broadcast model, but they also preserve and reorganize central features of television as a narrative and viewing form. Television in the platform era can therefore be understood as a media form undergoing institutional, temporal, and experiential reconfiguration: one in which broadcast flow becomes platformized flow, viewer autonomy coexists with infrastructural guidance, and established narrative forms acquire new functions within on-demand temporalities.

CONCLUSION

This article has examined how digital platforms reorganize the temporal, narrative, and viewer-oriented structures historically associated with broadcast television. In response to the central research problem, it argues that digital platforms neither eliminate television flow nor simply reproduce traditional broadcasting within a new distribution environment. Instead, the organizational functions historically concentrated in broadcast scheduling are redistributed across catalogs, interfaces, recommendation systems, autoplay mechanisms, and on-demand viewing practices. The term platformized flow is used here to describe this transformation, in which continuity, sequencing, and visibility are increasingly organized through the interaction of platform infrastructures and user activity rather than through a single linear broadcast schedule.

This argument extends the relevance of Williams's (2003) concept of flow while recognizing the historical specificity of its broadcast form. It is also consistent with Lotz's (2018) understanding of television as a media form repeatedly reconfigured through changing technological, industrial, and distributional conditions. The contribution of the present analysis is to connect this historical understanding of television transformation with platformization research. While Poell et al. (2019) and Nieborg and Poell (2018) emphasize the infrastructural, economic, and governance dimensions of platformization, this article demonstrates how those transformations can also be examined through their consequences for narrative circulation, content visibility, and viewing temporality.

The analysis further shows that platformization redistributes rather than simply transfers control. On-demand access expands viewers' temporal agency by allowing greater control over when and at what pace content is watched. At the same time, algorithmic curation and interface architecture organize what becomes visible, discoverable, and easily accessible. The viewer-user therefore occupies a position defined by the coexistence of increased temporal flexibility and infrastructural guidance. Recommendation systems do not mechanically determine viewing choices, but they participate in structuring the field within which those choices are made.

At the narrative level, the findings indicate that platformization is better understood through refunctioning than wholesale formal replacement. Episodicity, seasonality, cliffhangers, recurring characters, and long-form continuity remain recognizable television forms, but their temporal functions may change under on-demand conditions. A cliffhanger may shift from sustaining anticipation across a weekly interval to encouraging immediate continuation, while a season may operate both as a narrative structure and as a catalog-based whole accessible through different release and viewing rhythms. The transformation of television

narrative therefore lies not simply in the emergence of new forms but in the reorganization of existing forms within altered temporal and institutional conditions. The theoretical contribution of the study lies in bringing broadcast flow, platformization, algorithmic curation, viewer agency, and narrative temporality into a single explanatory framework. The concept of platformized flow links these dimensions by identifying how continuity, visibility, and sequencing are redistributed across platform infrastructures and viewer practices. This framework conceptualizes the relationship between broadcast and platform television through rupture and continuity rather than through a binary opposition between disappearance and persistence.

The study nevertheless has clear limitations. As a theoretical and conceptual assessment, it does not empirically test platformized flow through comparative interface analysis, audience research, platform data, or systematic textual analysis of particular television series. Nor does it systematically compare platform business models, recommendation architectures, national markets, or release strategies. The argument should therefore be treated as a conceptual framework for empirical examination rather than as a universal description of all platforms or viewing practices.

Future research could compare how different platforms organize recommendation, visibility, and continuity; examine how viewers negotiate the relationship between temporal autonomy and platform guidance; and analyze how different release strategies affect cliffhangers, episode structures, season design, and long-form narrative continuity. Research in the Turkish context could further examine the relationship among local production practices, episode duration, platform release strategies, algorithmic visibility, and viewer experience, building on existing studies of digital series and online viewing practices (Kocagür, 2022; Sarı & Türker, 2021; Tüzün Ateşalp & Başlar, 2020).

Overall, television in the platform era is best understood as a media form undergoing reconfiguration rather than disappearance. Broadcast flow becomes platformized flow; viewer choice expands while remaining infrastructurally organized; and established narrative forms persist through altered temporal functions. Television therefore continues within platform environments not as an unchanged legacy medium, but as a narrative and viewing regime whose organizational principles are being redistributed under new technological, economic, and cultural conditions.

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