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Mass Media and Communications Research Network

Seminar on Current Research

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Abstracts

Hosted by
Ankara University Faculty of Communication



Organising Committee

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Wellcome

Dear Participants,

Welcome to Manavgat. On behalf of the Faculty of Communication at the University of Ankara, I want to extend a warm welcome to each of you. Faculty of Communication (İLEF) was founded as the School of Journalism and Broadcasting in 1965, in cooperation with UNESCO and the Association of Journalists, as the first university level institution for media education in Turkey. The school was restructured as a faculty in 1992. İLEF houses the three departments of Journalism; Radio Television and Film; and Public Relations and Advertising. Entry to the undergraduate programme is through the nationwide test. Our faculty does not limit itself with a practical, professional teaching, instead it combines vocational courses with more theoretical ones. Research activities and international academic conferences are implemented by many colleagues at the faculty. We have two refereed academic journals, *İletişim Araştırmaları* (Communication Researches) and *Kültür ve İletişim* (Culture and Communication). You can contribute to the second journal, *Culture and Communication* with your articles in English since the second one is bi-lingual as you can see in your files.

I attended conferences of European Sociological Association Media Network in Bremen and Thessaloniki previously myself. I believe this network provides a closer and ongoing interaction and stimulating academic environment for communication researchers in Europe. I am very honoured to host this conference on media and European public sphere as a Turkish academician. Even though Turkey's entering into the EU has been received with big suspicion in Europe, I have been always welcomed in the circles of critical media studies as a Turkish academician.

We are sorry that some of the colleagues could not attend due to some last minute obligations. There are also some participants who could not participate because the flight arrangements were not suitable for them. It is unfortunate that, there are less flights to Antalya in this time of the session compared to touristic summer session. The reason I insisted on organising this conference in here is to provide better opportunities for you in terms of conference room, accommodation, meals...etc. and also maybe some sunshine with a Mediterranean breeze. Also, we are very near to the ancient city, Side which hopefully you all will be able to see tonight. Side means pomegranate, the fruit with lots of seeds; symbolizing abundance and fertility. Thus, I wish you all a fertile meeting abundant in ideas.

Sincerely,

Mine Gencil Bek
Assistant Professor,
Faculty of Communication, Ankara University

November, 2006.

Program

Friday 3rd November

Session 1	11.00-12.30
Chairperson	Peter Golding
Peter Ludes	Key Visual Networks
Süheyla Kirca Schroeder	Globalization, Music Industry and Transnational Flows of Music Cultures: The Case of Turkey
Gamze Yücesan-Özdemir	Media in the Construction of the Neoliberal Citizen in Turkey: Regulation, Resistance and Contradictions
Levent Cantek	
Funda Şenol Cantek	
Lunch break	12.30-14.00
Session 2	14.00-15.30
Chairperson	Peter Ludes
Oğuzhan Taş	Activism in the Network Society: The Hacker Culture and New Ethics of Technology
Eser Köker	Ignoring Radical Media in Communication Studies in Turkey
Ülkü Doğanay	
Coffe Break	15.30-16.00
Session 3	16.00 - 17.30
Chairperson	Mine Gencil Bek
Günseli Bayraktutan-Sütcü	Screenwide Socialization, So New, So Familiar: Usage Patterns of New Media by Young People
Mutlu Binark	
Cristina Ponte	Different Voices, Different Choices? Towards Inclusive Research Of Children And Young People's Political Discourses
Sofia Leitão	

Saturday 4th November

Session 4

9.30-10.30

Chairperson

Mine Gencil Bek

Sarah Barnard
Peter Golding

The Brussels News Beat and the European
Public Sphere

Emre Gökalp

“Europe Europe! Hear Our Voice, This is The Sound
of the (Marching) Turk's Footsteps”: Identification
With Europe and the Construction of Europe as the
Other in the Turkish Sports Press

Tuğba Asrak Hasdemir

Governance, Citizens and Communication within
the Framework of Right to Information:
European and Turkish Cases

Coffe Break

10.30-11.00

Session 5

11.00-12.30

Chairperson

Peter Golding

Serpil Aygun Cengiz

Ethical Failures in Suicide (and Suicide Attempts)
News in the Turkish Press

Carla Baptista

The 'Feminine' in the Portuguese Press:
Representation, Negotiation and Agency

Mirjana Kristovic

Theorising the Theoretical Reflections on
Post-Communist Transformation of Media Systems:
The Response and the Responsibility of Critical
Sociological Approach



Abstracts

Key Visual Networks

Peter Ludes

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Mass media visuals reach billions of people across the globe on a day and night schedule. Moving images, in interplay with sounds, voices, music, (and, mainly on the web, also written texts) notoriously move their recipients towards attention. Therefore, television will remain the major mass medium during the first decades of the 21st century, especially if we do not limit our views to the West. Already most children, in households with regular TV consumption, distinguish between TV and real life, and within the TV view between news and advertisement. But the "flows of messages and images", which Manuel Castells (1996: 508) saw as the "basic thread of our social structure", implying that "image-making is power-making" (ibid.: 507), are seldom focused upon. Castells (2001, 2004 and 2006) himself did not pay particular attention to this thread in his later publications. His theory of the "network society" therefore has an important hole, for which I will offer a key visual network in this essay. In order to accomplish this, section 1 will first offer a "review" of the concept of Key Visuals and integrate this concept into recent publications in culture, media and communication studies. Section 2 applies and illustrates the concept of key visual networks and offers examples for cultural analyses by detecting culture-specific and transcultural Key Visuals from TV annual reviews of 2003-05 from Brazil, China, Germany, and the United States (see www.keyvisuals.org). Section 3 complements this communication context with a focus on culture theory: Key Visual Networks are observers and show standards of behavior, linked to networks of technical distribution, symbolic and value generalization, and long-term means of orientation. Combining these views, a "final outlook" in section 4 can sketch proposals for culture management of the development of long-term means of orientation and communication, namely the world language of Key Visuals.

Globalization, Music Industry and Transnational Flows of Music Cultures: The Case of Turkey

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Theoretical debates about critical concepts, such as globalization, culture, and power are becoming more complicated in the 2000s, mainly through the global flows of media. The relationship between the 'centre' and the 'periphery' is multifaceted as there is more than one 'centre', in relation to which a whole variety of different cultural peripheries are constituted. This doesn't mean that we are now somehow beyond centre-periphery models of cultural flow. As Morley (2006) point outs the Anglo-American media continue to provide, for many people, the constitutive horizons of the 'Global Familiar' of our times. It is important to continue questioning the 'power-geometry' (Massey 1994) of culture, however, it is also important to acknowledge the complexity of global cultural flows and new cultural forms that are produced through the processes of 'transculturation' and 'hybridization', and 'intercultural networks'.

This paper draws attention to the complexity of global cultural flows and production of new cultural forms by focusing on the music industry. A few multinational companies based in USA control the production and distribution of pop mainstreams, however, the major recording companies started to face challenges over the last two decades. These challenges have been caused by the increasing importance of trans-global, intercultural networks which are both inter and intra - national. The emergent networks -world music, glocal scenes (e.g. rap and reggae), and regional blocs, (e.g. electronic dance sounds of Europe)-, (Toynbee 2002) constitute alternatives to the Anglo-American international music market.

By drawing on the work of Appadurai (1990), Toynbee (2002), Frith (2004), Lipsitz (1994), and the debates on the globalization of culture with relation to music industry and local/global music cultures, this paper will examine how the music sector in Turkey has responded to intercultural and multiple music networks, and furthermore the ways in which uneven flow in the circulation of sounds have influenced music cultures and the music market in Turkey. I will argue that these networks have not only offered a means of producing new hybrid musical forms in Turkey, which expanded the contexts of production and consumption of music, they have also provided a context for transforming cultural identities.

Media in the Construction of a Neoliberal Citizen in Turkey: Regulation, Resistance and Contradictions

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In an era in which labour is not considered as a constitutive element of the society, the representation of labour in the state apparatus has been totally weakened and the apparatuses through which labour can explain itself have been eliminated both in central countries and peripheral countries such as Turkey. Under the pressure of neoliberal policies, the socially accepted concept, 'citizenship', for some, has lost its meaning and for others, has been reconstructed. The imagination of a neoliberal citizen, based on the system of hypotheses on human behaviours and institutions developed by the neoliberal theory, is reconstructed against the whole institutionalised welfare practices, state interventions in social policies and collective rights. The neoliberal citizen, rather than accepting the concepts of normative discourse of traditional 'citizenship' such as 'society', 'social peace', 'social justice' and 'compromise', reconstructs him/herself with the concepts such as 'individualism', 'rationality', 'the distinction of free market' and 'the high morality of individual responsibility'.

The imagination and the fiction of the neoliberal citizen in Turkey have to be thought together with the transformations in the economic, political and ideological reproduction processes in the post-1980s. In the meantime, the reflections of the global transformations on Turkey in the post-1989s have also to be taken into consideration. The opening-growing number of the private television channels in Turkey in these years is not a simple coincidence. This 'apparent' economic transformation underlines the role of the media, being an important component of the 'ideological' reproduction, in this process. Especially, the discourse developed against the public broadcasting, that is open to polemics, has had a normalising impact on the imagination of the neoliberal citizen. It is, however, also important to note the existence of some who are morally disturbed about this so-called 'normalisation' and the results of the neoliberal tendencies and who have a politics against cultural capitalism. The localisation of the global imagination of a neoliberal citizen and its adaptation to the country's peculiar circumstances has created a contested terrain. The question of what the form and content of the citizen created/to be created by the media will be, has led to a great deal of anxieties and different political circles and government has been highly involved in controlling the media. There is a dominant view about the media, as being the strongest weapon to manipulate the public space. The audience, imagined as being impressed and homogenised by the media, does not pay attention to these moral, political and intellectual discussions and is interested in the 'entertainment' content of the media. The interest gained by the 'entertainment'-based production does multiple moral anxieties and put social responsibility versus individual responsibility dilemma on the agenda.

This study aims to open up a discussion on how the neoliberal citizen, based on the fundamental hypotheses of the neoliberal economics and the neoliberal politics, is constructed or not constructed on the media in the post-1980s in Turkey. This study attempts to produce answers to the following questions: Are the neoliberal values accepted in cultural means? How is the neoliberal citizen expressed in today's media? Is the apolitisation of a wide range of people a result of the neoliberal politics? Does 'the distinction of market' leave the relationship of media and politics and media and ethics archaic? Did the media have a power in producing or manipulating the imagination of the citizenship in the past? Does the media continue to perform such a political action?

Activism in the Network Society: The Hacker Culture and New Ethics of Technology

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Today in the social sciences, the concept of network is frequently used as a metaphor of demonstrating the transformation of social structures. This transformation is said to be the result of, (1) innovations in computing, (2) flexibility as a new mode of capitalist production, (3) the rising of supra-national organizations in macro-politics. New techno-economic paradigm driven by ICT's has been forming a conceptual horizon for network-like structures in the re-organization of institutions (Eriksson, 2005: 308). The model of flexible network is evaluated as an alternative for hierarchical structure which is criticized to be strict and high-costly.

The trilogy of "Information Age", written by Manuel Castells, started new debates over the logic of social networks, cyber-space and over the power of new identities in the global culture. Castells analyzed the impact of ICT's at the levels of economy, culture and society and, presented a theory of "informationalism" as a new techno-economic paradigm. Furthermore, he described the topography of network society with the concept of "space of flows" and underlined that "cultural expression becomes patterned around the kaleidoscope of a global, electronic hypertext" (Castells, 2001: 189).

This paper will discuss the hackers' new ways of thinking informational economy and intellectual property, called as "the hacker ethic" by Pekka Himanen (2001), and hacker activism (hacktivism). Hacker activism has a critical status in the network society because the hackers are in the scope of network society as the heroes of the computer revolution, the visionaries of the internet and the principle architects of cybersociety (Gunkel, 2005: 596). But, "hacker" poses the negative connotations in day-to-day language. Noted by Gunkel (2005: 596), the word came to employed to name various forms of computer crime and network intrusion. Himanen diverges from this point of view and considers them as the founders of an ethical system against network commercialism and global knowledge market. The hackers' "jargon file", compiled collectively on the Net, defines them as people who believe that "information-sharing is a powerful positive good, and that it is an ethical duty of hackers to share their expertise by writing free software and facilitating access to information and to computing resources wherever possible" (Himanen, 2001: 9). For instance, the open-source movement is seen as a powerful struggle against commercialisation of information systems in recent years. The notion of "copyleft" has been developed by net-activists so as to reject intellectual property rights on softwares and to support free distribution. The aim of this paper is to investigate how this ethical system offers an alternative to the dominant operation of network society and whether hacktivism can serve to broaden critical reflections on technological innovations and social change.

Ignoring Radical Media in Communication Studies in Turkey

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Attention to alternative media, which challenges through intermittent endeavours and minor organizations, the hegemonic strategies and perspectives has been rather meagre in Turkey is the main argument of this paper. In the field of communication studies, an important part of the interventions with the aim of securing a critical stance may be qualified as theoretical studies. These studies are either discussion of basic texts of critical schools of thought in the West or concentrated on the critique of texts produced by the hegemonic media. Backed by critical theories, most studies of this kind remain at a remarkable distance to the communication forms and networks of political groups in Turkey. Examination by journalists, sociologists or political scientists of the universe of meaning of communication forms and outcomes of new social movements has not been sufficient in filling the gap of knowledge in communication studies regarding radical alternative media. Scrutinized by a critical stance and within an interdisciplinary perspective, underground press, billboards, graffiti, video movies, films, internet, exhibitions, jokes, songs, may translate a reinterpretation of oppositional strategies into the academic field. Lack of this translation renders communication studies rootless, hence leaving undiscussed the forms of resistance characteristic of the new social movements which have had their stamp on the last twenty years. Like the meagreness of the academic attention to the newspapers and journals of the leftist movements, the founding agent of oppositional political organizations in Turkey between 1960-1980 (İşçi ve Köylü [Worker and Peasant], Tüm [The Whole], Proleter [The Proletarian], Öncü [The Vanguard], İleri [Avanti], Emek [Labour], Dönüşüm [Transformation], Aydınlık [Illumination], Ant [Testament], Türk-Solu [Turkish Left], Özgür İnsan [Free Humanity], Yoldaş-Haval [Comrade], Yürüyüş [March], Yeni Ses [New Voice], Özgürlük Yolu [Road to Freedom], Kurtuluş [Emancipation], Devrimci Yol [Revolutionary Path], Birikim [Accumulation], to name some of them), the media of new social movements (billboards, posters, pamphlets and forms of political campaigning) have not found a place in the body of knowledge compiled by critical communication studies in Turkey. This situation suggests the requirement for a revision of the political priorities of communication studies. This paper attempts at elaborating on the reasons for this revision and a debate over its possible outcomes.

Screenwide Socialization, So New, So Familiar: Usage Patterns of New Media by Young People

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In this paper usage patterns of new media by young people are discussed. The similarities and differences between online and offline communication patterns, with whom and for what purpose young people socialize in their daily routines are questioned. For this inquiry, 1. st year students of Başkent University Faculty of Communication in the 2005-2006 academic year are chosen as participants. They recorded their experiences with new media in own techno-diaries between 05-07 May 2006. The recorded techno-diaries are the basic source of this field study, in which personal narration is considered very crucial. Later on, a focus group is also held with students among these diary recorders. All of these findings give us an idea and frame about how the new media affect young people' everyday life and social relations.

There are two basic outcomes of the research; firstly, young people communicate with people whom they are already in contact in real life, like peers, friends or relatives. There are certain meanings and results of this limited socialization; they are uninformed about the political, social and economical macro agenda of the country and the rest of the world. They stack in their micro agenda. Thus, the limited socialization in offline is reproduced in and by online communication. So, at the public sphere they continue to be members of their egocentric and hedonist groups, and outside of their group relations they act as easy going persons without any curiosity about the public agenda. Based on the construction of such a kind of persona, they do not practice any kind of active citizenship.

Second outcome denotes the content and purpose of the communication they establish with their offline groups. They see place of and time spent for new media, as a substitution of limited and boring real life. Although they use new media for a substitution for RL, they do not attempt to search for new potential online contacts and keep on locating themselves within the existent offline lifestyles and consuming patterns on online. Within the group membership, these young people share same social and cultural tastes, and carry same engagements to online activities. They also constitute a particular language for online relationships in which the signification practice of the text is no more necessary. Online and offline relationships and lifestyles overlap in the sense of searching activity in order to get rid of being bored. There is no production in any sense, but there is a kind of participation on the basis of consumption. Thus, the basis of their common engagement is established on commonly preferred consumption practices in their daily routines.

As a result, these young people form consumption communities composed of egocentric individuals, and their groups articulate global and local flow of the mainstream culture.

Different Voices, Different Choices? Towards Inclusive Research of Children and Young People's Political Discourses

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Children and young people have frequently been portrayed as absent from news media discourse. Such absence can be generally characterised by different forms of exclusion. First, by an exclusion from significant representations in the news; secondly, by an exclusion from use both as producers and consumers of news. Journalism studies, in particular, have paid very little attention to the ways in which children and young people relate to the news; this has consequences on how their status as citizens is constructed. It is assumed that children and young people are disconnected from any form of participation on the public sphere, and few studies have focused on the subject. What representations prevail in the news media, and what impact do media discourses have on collective representations of childhood and youth? How do children and young people read such discourses, and what do they have to say about issues concerning their daily lives?

Recent research indicates that these groups are neither absent from media discourse, nor are they incapable of presenting thorough ideas on a diversity of subjects of interest to them. Research on news media discourse denotes an incidence of themes related to risk, reporting specific events illustrating children and young people at risk and the associated juridical measures. Still, the voices of the young are seldom presented in a significant manner. What do we know about these individuals' views on the public sphere? We know about their disengagement with traditional news media, but we know little of their thoughts on the media agendas and news coverage, and of the alternative means through which they may be expressing themselves. Also, the role that the new technologies are playing in the construction of new forms of participation and citizenship needs to be further addressed.

This paper presents two research projects which represent efforts in understanding how children and young people think the public space, with a particular emphasis on issues of risk. The first study, a Portuguese project entitled Children and Adolescents in the News, addresses both news media and young people's discourses. The quantitative data analysed has revealed a clear predominance of risk-related news on the main national broadsheet newspapers. The Child at Risk category included pieces on events where children's lives, welfare, or development is at risk, contemplating social risk (as defined by the Portuguese legislation) and other risks such as accidents, conflicts, natural catastrophes, etc. , as such, the audience research will privilege children and young people considered at risk. The second study, EUKids Online, funded by the EC and coordinated by Prof. S. Livingstone from LSE, will examine research on the uses of the Internet and new media by children and young people in eighteen EC member states in order to assess, among other subjects, how risks and young people's and parents' responses to them are affected by the social, cultural and regulatory contexts of each country.

Theorising the Theoretical Reflections on Post-Communist Transformation of Media Systems: The Response and the Responsibility of Critical Sociological Approach

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Theoretical start point of this paper presents a comprehension of legitimacy and assignment of sociological rethinking the (different) theoretical reflections of (different) social phenomena, which includes the rethinking the social condition of appearing, reception, presence - main or alternative - of some of the scientific approaches, and social consequences of its (un)application.

Mentioned approach's legitimacy, assignment of its acceptance and practicing, when it is about present theoretical reflections of media, its functioning in today's different, social contexts, show to be undebatable and unavoidable. The fact that the media are, long time ago, powerful factor of creating the social consciousness and social praxis in contemporary world refers to such statement - but also the need for perceiving recent changes in this field, its global ranges and consequences does it.

Sociological inquiring of indicated subject's direction certainly, and it could be said especially, gets on its justification as a theoretical engagement focused on critical perceiving of condition and direction of scientific elaborations of characteristics and implications of post-communist media system transformation process, in countries which are seized by this process. Obviously, transformation of media, as well as the other spheres of social praxis, is conducting as a part of global neoliberal strategy: deregulation, privatization, commodification are accepted and media organizations get characteristics of industrial organizations, which is putting the task of opening and articulating issues which became unroundabout, considering their changed status which determinates their functioning. That would mean opening and articulating these issues, considering concrete social context, but surely, considering presence and imposing of economic imperative, as a characteristic of globalization process.

It is about issues which present an immanent topic of examination, in the structure of one special theoretical approach which is present and active in Western world. That is, of course, critical political economy of media. When it is about the global aspect of mentioned problem, it is noticed that representatives of this approach "emphasize the economic dynamics of global media markets", and that "such dynamics favour the free market model and in general promote capitalism". (McQuail, 2000.)

Considering that, it is justified to ask the question about presence - in fact, marginalization - of critical discusses which belong to this theoretical direction, in the social milieus which are in direct effect of global neoliberal strategy expansion. Examining of reasons, as well as consequences of its marginalization is stated as a sociology task. This kind of researching is assigned equally regarding the other disciplines to which media are also immanent topic of interesting - including media sociology. In last case, theoretical engagement, which inquiring is trying to explain in this paper, would be carried out as a critical sociological self-reflection.

The Brussels News Beat and the European Public Sphere

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This paper assesses the development of a 'European public sphere' in the light of research into the production of news for UK audiences by journalists based in Brussels. It is based on original research data generated in interviews with UK journalists based in Brussels, whose primary role (often not their only remit) is to report the EU for London based UK media. Personnel from the UK Representative to the Commission in Brussels and the Commission Representation to the UK in London were also interviewed. The purpose of the interviews was to understand the process of EU news management and production and the underlying perceptions and views of the journalists working in the news process. It is through their work that citizens acquire knowledge of the European Commission and the European Parliament.

The news media, despite the availability of many alternatives (including publications by the Commission, its many websites, material provide for schools, the actions and pronouncements of MEPs, etc) remain the most likely source of information about the EU available to most European citizens. The paper situates this research in wider discussion of the formation of consciousness about Europe among European citizens.

“Europe Europe! Hear our voice, this is the sound of the (marching) Turk's Footsteps”: Identification with Europe and the Construction Europe as the Other in the Turkish Sports Press

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The representations of the international football matches of Turkish national team and other club teams in the sports pages in Turkey play a crucial role in the perpetual reconstruction of the Turkish national identity in relation to the West/Europe identification/opposition couplet. In this respect, in a period which Turkey is in negotiation talks with the European Union, Turkish football culture and the press coverage of the international football matches constitute a significant field of analysis to the imagination of Europe/West which has been constructed within the complexity of identity/difference and resentment/admiration toward Europe/West. In short, the sport pages offer an opportunity to see the paradox in the reconstruction of Turkish national identity in relation to the West/Europe. This paradox is apparent in the headlines used for the European football matches as well as it exists in the discursive space.

In this context, this paper examines the representations of the international matches of Turkish national team and Galatasaray football club from 1990's to 2005 in three high-circulated dailies and two daily sport newspapers in Turkey. It tries to discover the discourses deployed by various newspapers and closely looks into the resources used in constructing the Turkish nation and Europe - such as discourses of national unity, homogeneity and shared past and glorious future. The paper also looks at the way in which discursive strategies are employed to reconstruct (Turkish) national uniqueness and the forms of otherness. Then, it demonstrates how the 'rival' teams/countries/nations are 'othered' by the Turkish press.

In this paper, it is argued that it is certain- through either positive or negative references- that the discourses of both popular football and the football press in Turkey is Europe-centred. The major dilemma of the Turkish nationalism is that admiring and opposing Europe/the West is extremely noticeable in the football press. It is finally claimed that Turkish press contribute both to the feelings of otherness and feelings of common identification with Europe at the same time.

Governance, Citizens and Communication within the Framework of Right to Information: European and Turkish Cases

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Right to information as a form of right to petition is one of the cornerstones in the formation of the modern constitutional state. The main aims of the practices related with this right is to serve publicity of acts and actions of political power, and in this way, strengthen the relation between state and civil society. Beside other fundamental rights and freedoms like freedom of thought and expression, right to assembly and union, freedom of press etc., the right to information contributes to the practices of political participation and also to the notion of democratic legitimacy, strengthen the communication between citizens and state, and it takes place within the regional and the universal documents of human rights. Nowadays, right to information comes to fore as one of the important rights establishing new forms of interaction between citizens and state worldwide as well as in the European region. It has close ties with the principles of European governance, like openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence, which were lately stated by the European Commission in the document named as "White Paper on European Governance".

Specifically, right to information has been in the agenda of the European Community since May 1999, the date on which the Treaty of Amsterdam came into force. This treaty has contained an article about the principle of public Access to the European Parliament, The Council and The Commission documents. Rules related with this right were laid down in the Regulation No 1049/2001 under the name of "right to public Access to documents". Beside this regional development, some member states have national regulations related with right to information/documents individually. In the case of Turkey, as a candidate country, the scope, limits and arrangements for exercising right to information were laid down in a law and then in a regulation which came into force in 2004.

The main aim of this study is to elaborate practices of right to information in the European context. The importance of this right shall be questioned by taking into account the principles of European governance. Beside different application of this right in various European nations, rules and procedures and also implementation of this right at the regional level as well as in the Turkish case will be analyzed comparatively. The main questions posed in the study are as follows: at the regional level and in the Turkish case, what is the scope and limits set by the existing legal documents on right to information? In which ways do the practices of this right contribute to the communication between citizens and state/European institutions? In terms of the relation between individual rights and collective rights what is the importance of right to information? In terms of short term results, did the practices of this right serve to realize its objectives related with the principles of European governance, specifically with the principles of openness and participation. In this research, legal documents and reports on this right as well as important relevant documents like the "White Paper" in the European level, and in the case of Turkey, legal documents and general annual reports opening to public by Turkish Parliament, and also reports of Council of Cassation on Right to Information will be employed beside secondary sources in the analysis.

Ethical Failures in Suicide (and Suicide Attempts) News in Turkish Press

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Suicide (from Latin *sui caedere*, to kill oneself), which is the act of ending one's own life, is considered differently by philosophers. For the philosophers like Mill, Godwin, Kant, Hobbes, and Locke suicide is immoral and unethical. Some other philosophers claim that suicide is acceptable under certain conditions like old age and incurable disease. But there are also some other philosophers such as Schopenhauer, who argue that human beings have the right to choose between life and death. Thomas Szasz (a philosopher and a psychiatrist), goes further by claiming that suicide is the most basic right of all. According to the medical view, suicide that is caused by depression is the result of an emotional crises which can be treatable; as many mental health professionals say, "suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem". Every year nearly one million people are committing suicide all around the world. One of the many reasons which make people commit suicide may be media reports on suicide cases; this so-called "Werther effect" designates imitation (or copycat) suicides.

When Goethe's novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* was published in 1774 it was reported in different countries of Europe that many young men committed suicide by shooting themselves like Werther, the main character in the novel who experienced an unrequited love. Researchers like Schmidtke, Schaller and Danuta have shown us that media reports on suicide (or suicide attempts) affect those people who are under risk of committing suicide; because it is well known that most of the people who think about committing suicide are ambivalent and can be affected in both ways easily. So according to the document of World Health Organisation (WHO) titled as "Preventing Suicide - A Resource for Media Professionals" (2000) in order to prevent suicide attempts (or at least not to cause to Werther effect) media professionals should "refer to suicide as a completed suicide, not a successful one; present only relevant data, on the inside pages; highlight alternatives to suicide; provide information on helplines and community resources; publicize risk indicators and warning signs; not publish photographs or suicide notes; not report specific details of the method used; not give simplistic reasons; not glorify or sensationalize suicide; not use religious or cultural stereotypes and not apportion blame".

For this research, seven major Turkish daily newspapers which are from different political perspectives (Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Tercüman, Zaman and Yeni Şafak) are analyzed all through the year 2005 and also some samples from the Turkish local press are investigated. Media professionals should be aware that they have the responsibility to aid in the diminishment of suicide as being, as Camus says in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, "the only serious philosophical problem". My textual and image content analysis seeks to prove that the Turkish media (both national and local) do not report suicides in an accurate manner. More awareness of the appropriate use of language could prevent many people's dying because of suicide.

**The 'Feminine' in the Portuguese Press:
Representation, Negotiation and Agency**

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The communication will present some data from an on-going research project that aims to explore the construction of feminine identity in the Portuguese press as well as the forms through which women negotiate this representation in their daily lives. In a first instance, this project will focus on the discursive production of the 'feminine'. This will entail three phases. Firstly, we will analyse those issues that are constituted as important to women in the Portuguese press. Secondly, we will explore the extent to which a discourse on the 'feminine' in the Portuguese press reflects other institutional discourses, namely religious, judiciary, medical or educational. Thirdly, we will read the press as regulating the appearance of 'women issues' in the public realm by serving as a possibly intermediary between different groups of civil society, each with its particular interests and readers.

About ESA

The idea to organize a European Conference of Sociology was first developed in an informal meeting during the Biannual Congress of the Austrian Sociological Association in Graz 1987, devoted to the theme "Societies at Borders. Social structure and social consciousness in East and West Europe". In the following, Max Haller, then president of the Austrian Sociological Association, organized a First Preparatory Meeting for a European Conference of Sociology in Vienna on 16 December 1989. This meeting was attended by 13 participants from 10 countries (H. Adriaansens, T. Boje, F. Charvat, B. Danermark, M. Haller, R. Richter, W. Kwasniewicz, D. Lane, R. Radaev, M. Thomas).

A Second Preparatory Meeting was organized during the ISA-World Congress in Madrid, 10 July 1990; 22 sociologists from 15 countries participated. They elected an Organising Committee composed of: Max Haller (Austria) and David Lane (Great Britain) as co-chairs, and G. Amendola (Italy), T. Boje (Denmark), A. Gunes-Ayata (Turkey), M. Illner (Czechoslovakia), W. Kwasniewicz (Poland), and R. Richter (Austria) as members.

After the decision for Vienna as the place of the First European Conference of Sociology, also a local Organising Committee was established, consisting of Eva Cyba, Max Haller, E. Jandl-Jager, Rudolf Richter and Ronald Pohoryles.

The First European Conference of Sociology in Vienna in August 1992 attracted 631 sociologists from East, West, North and South Europe, and from a total of 33 countries. The conference was organised by both international and local programme committees with the cooperation of 38 panel organisers from 19 different European countries. Papers from this lively and successful conference have been published.

It was at this conference that a meeting of representatives from the national sociological associations of Europe and other interested parties endorsed the desire to form a European Sociological Association and charged a Steering Committee with the task of building this.

This Steering Committee of around 25 people drawn from all corners of Europe met regularly over the three years from 1992 to 1995 drafting Statutes and planning activities.

The draft Statutes and other information were sent to national sociological associations for comment. At the 2nd European Conference of Sociology in Budapest on 29 August 1995 the first meeting of the Council of national representatives of European sociological associations unanimously endorsed the Statutes of the Association and its programme of activities.

The Network

The interests of this research network are in fostering research and debate about the social role of communications, information and media in the constitution of the public sphere, and in the sociological analysis of the role of communications in contemporary social change.

The Mass Media and Communications Research Network has met at all the ESA biennial conferences since 1997. It has also held network meetings in intermediate years at the University of Naples, and at the International University of Bremen and the Aristotle University of Thessalonica.