

İSTANBUL BİLGİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ  
KÜLTÜREL İNCELEMELER YÜKSEK LİSANS PROGRAMI

INTERNET AS A PUBLIC SPACE AND ITS PROMISE OF  
EMANCIPATION

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2014

Bir Kamusal Alan Olarak İnternetin Özgürlük Vaadi

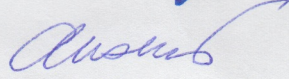
Internet as a Public Space and its Promise of Emancipation

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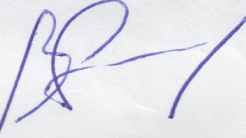
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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih

: 19.09.2014

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı:

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)

- 1) Yapı/Eyleyici
- 2) İnternet
- 3) Karnaval
- 4) Kamusal Alan
- 5) Özgürleşme

Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce)

- 1) Structure/Agency
- 2) Internet
- 3) Carnival
- 4) Public Space
- 5) Emancipation

## ABSTRACT

With the rapid emergence of technology, Internet and social media started to play an important part in our lives. It created a wide range of opportunities since it made everything easily accessible: from playing games to shopping, chatting to watching movies. After the interventions like gentrification are performed over physical public space, people who are bereaved of public space tend to find counterparts of everyday life activities on the Internet space.

This study aims to answer whether Internet can provide a basis for emancipation. However more opportunities Internet supplies for the agent, resources, knowledge and forms of capital is again needed for self-realization, for pursuing an emancipatory act. Nevertheless, due to its carnivalesque aspect, Internet is able to call for a carnival on the streets and due its accessibility, vastness and its intrinsic nature that is open for contribution, it is a convivial tool that can lead agent to emancipation.

## ÖZET

Teknolojinin hızlı ilerleyişi sonucu, İnternet ve sosyal medya hayatlarımızda önemli bir rol oynamaya başlamıştır. Oyun oynamaktan, alışveriş yapmaya, sohbet etmekten film izlemeye kadar her şeyi kolayca erişilebilir kıldığı için İnternet geniş imkanlar yaratmıştır. Fiziksel kamusal alana yapılan mutenalaştırma gibi kentsel müdahaleler sonucu, kamusal alandan mahrum bırakılan insanlar gündelik hayat aktivitelerinin muadillerini İnternet alanında bulmaya başladılar.

Bu çalışma, İnternet'in özgürleşme için bir temel sağlayıp sağlayamayacağı sorusunu cevaplamayı amaçlamaktadır. İnternet eyleyici için daha da fazla imkanlar sağlasa da, bireyin kendini gerçekleştirme ve özgürleştirici bir eylem için kaynaklar, bilgi ve sermaye biçimlerine ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Ancak, karnavalesk veçhesi sebebiyle İnternet sokaklarda bir karnavala çağrıcılık etme olasılığını sağlarken, erişilebilirliği, enginliği ve doğası gereği katılıma açıklığı ile, eyleyiciyi özgürleştirmeye götürebilecek şenlikli bir araç teşkil eder.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with immense gratitude that I acknowledge the help and help of my thesis supervisor Prof. Dr. Aydın Uğur for having guided me through my relatively short journey in social sciences which mostly encompasses my thesis writing process and also for showing his invaluable support. He has inspired me as both a person and a professor. I could not even have started this thesis if it were not for his encouragement and interest for my thesis.

It would be pity not to address my mother Aygöl Göksoy's continuing support and self-giving through my life, Prof. Dr. Tanju Göksoy's support and inspirations and insight he has been providing about academia and my little sister Başak Derensu Göksoy's patience.

Also, I would like to thank Asst. Prof. Dr. Selen Ansen and Bülent Somay, MA for their indispensable contribution to and their critique on my thesis as members of jury.

Furthermore, I am indebted to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ferdan Ergut who helped me and showed his support for me in my career move from engineering to social sciences.

I wish to thank all my friends for their tremendous support and help and especially, I feel obliged to thank private sharing and discussion platform *muhabbet-ül emin*.

Last but not least, I owe my deepest gratitude to Zuhale Güreli, for her continuing support, patience and understanding, without whom I feel I could not have managed to finish my thesis.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my uncle Levent Onguner and my grandfather Celal Onguner who both passed away during my writing process of this thesis. I believe without their inspiration on my imagination through my childhood and youth, I could have not been who I am.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

*"Now there is this trouble, Twitter, full of lies.  
That so-called social media is now the  
foremost trouble of societies."*  
Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

On 13 March 2014, then Turkish President Abdullah Gül approved the legislation known as Internet bans. Police had intervened harshly to the protesters on consecutive protests in January and February, after the legislation was declared. On 20 March, access to Twitter was banned by the AKP government. A week later, on 28 March, access to YouTube was also banned. Due to the effective use of Twitter and other social media during the Gezi Incidents and Arab Spring before, social media, as a whole, had become a powerful tool in social movements. This led to the several harsh regulations on Internet and some certain bans in Turkey.

Internet has always been a powerful tool since it enables users to nullify the distance and act together; reach everything they want in no time. During Arab Spring, I was taking courses required to finish my MA. I was working on subcultures on the Internet and some certain possibilities, opportunities and potentialities of the Internet for the subordinate. Everyday a news report reached telling the importance of Twitter for the protesters in Tahrir Square. That was the time I decided to continue my researches and thesis on Internet and freedom. It was seen that Egyptian people who, obviously, do not have one

of the best GDP's in the world use Internet and its technologies/opportunities to overthrow a government which oppresses the people for so long. I asked myself whether it was a coincidence that the Arab Spring started and succeeded in a time when circulation of mobile phones, Internet and social media was on top. So, I tried to formulate my research upon the relation between Internet and its use for emancipation.

Firstly, there was a problem of public space/sphere debate over Internet. I assumed that Internet space was a public space - and discussed it thoroughly in the upcoming chapters. In order to narrow down my question, I have looked for the differences between physical public space and Internet as a public space. It was obvious that there were intrinsic differences; however, what I was searching for was the differences of those when one is realizing or reflecting oneself. "Is there any major differences between them?" was my second question. After a little bit of research and my background research on subcultures in the Internet, I decided that there was a difference but I was not convinced that these differences were sufficient for emancipation. Considering the interventions in the physical public space, i.e. gentrification, urban renewal, constant intervention to public events/protests by the superiors, I set forth my research to gather information whether Internet space can be an alternative for avoiding these suppressions and interventions.

For my case study, I tried to look for some subcultures which could not find any chance to reflect themselves in the physical public space and try their

chance on the Internet. I thought that these subcultures would be best to analyze the dynamics of the Internet and the extent that it allows people to do what they are not able to do or what they are deprived of doing.

For a better understanding of emancipation opportunities in the Internet and obstacles encountered in public space, I chose to examine structure and agency dichotomy which is a major one in sociology field. To do so, I try to understand the dichotomy and works of theoreticians who were working to overcome this dichotomy and use their work in my analysis.

I saw that Internet has developed a new way for social protest. Sometimes it only gives inertia for subjects by signing petitions, attending protest invitations through social media or *hashtaging* important subjects of the agenda. Nevertheless, it seems to open a new way of protest and struggle which could not be possible in the physical life or which merely shapes the protests and struggles in the physical space.

Therefore, I decided to formulate my question as this: "Does Internet provides any chance of emancipation?" That is to say, can Internet provide a basis for those who are suppressed in the physical life? It can be both in everyday life practices and in struggles against the superior. To answer my question, I have established five chapters. In the next chapter, I will be trying to convey my understanding of freedom, how it can be traced in the Internet and social media, and as a starting point how social media acts as a base for a future gift society. In the third chapter, I will be dealing with the concepts and works

on structure/agency dichotomy and introduce the analyses and tools - which I will be using in my thesis - of two important thinkers, Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens who claimed to overcome the dichotomy. In chapter 4, I will bring public space into the game. I will be investigating what a public space is and to what extent Internet can be considered as a public space. Then, I will move on to analyze the possibilities of free roam/stroll in the public space and the possibilities of a counterpart in the Internet space with the interventions to both public spaces. At the end of the chapter, I will present my case study in order to clarify for the reader to what extent Internet provide a basis for emancipation for those who cannot make their voices heard in the social life. In chapter 5, my aim will be to formulate the strategies and tactics that can be deployed by agents to overcome obstacles and to discuss game metaphor in a broad sense. In chapter 6, I will offer some methods for a social movement in the Internet space which are already in use in some recent examples. I will try to show how Internet provide a basis for developing a carnivalesque aspect and as a convivial tool, how it can affect the physical life.

## 2. FREEDOM

"Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery,  
none but ourselves can free our minds!"

Bob Marley

### A. What is freedom?

When talking on freedom - in order not to pontificate, not to be misunderstood or simply to communicate - one should know what s/he is talking about. To make it clear, it should be known that what one meant by freedom when saying it. Actually, in everyday life conversations, no one thinks about the possible meaning of freedom or what is pictured inside the head of the listener. It is an indescribable word; as if it does not have a certain meaning: it is just like the other words for general use, like "life".

However, if we are up to *claim* something; we should state our business clearly. If we are going to use the word "freedom", what we meant by saying freedom should be crystal clear.

It is a very good start to look up the word "freedom" in the dictionary. When we look up the word in The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition VI; we come up with fifteen different meanings with some sub-definitions.<sup>1</sup> Considering the subject this thesis focused on, I eliminate some of them as irrelevant. The possible *relevant* ones are, for example 1.a.: "exemption or release from slavery or imprisonment; personal liberty." Maybe, releasing from

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<sup>1</sup> John Simpson, and Edmund Weiner, ed. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004. s.v. "freedom." pp.164-5

slavery is also irrelevant but personal liberty is interesting. Since, this sends us to the word liberty; we note it down. Furthermore article 2 is also seems useful: "exemption from arbitrary, despotic, or autocratic control; independence; civil liberty." Again liberty but this time it is *civil* and another word: independence. Definition 4.a is far more striking: " the state of being able to act without hindrance or restraint, liberty of action". So, when we are talking on freedom - in our situation we are going to, for a solid number of pages definitely - what do we mean? Is it independence or liberty? If it is liberty, is it civil or personal or of action? In The Oxford Thesaurus Second Edition, we can see that freedom means: liberty, independence - as we know - and deliverance, liberation, emancipation, exemption, autonomy also.<sup>2</sup> This only makes the question mark bigger and bigger. A limitation to the word "freedom" for this thesis is surely needed. But how shall I limit the "meaning"?

For this, I turn to the core subject, my main motivation when choosing this subject which I have already explained in the introduction part. With the ongoing processes of gentrification, people begin to lose visibility since it costs only to exist in the city.<sup>3</sup> Gentrification processes are done in order to gain city-users access to attractive spaces that are actually attractive since the history they belong to; but somehow, these spaces are extorted from their history - of course

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<sup>2</sup> Laurence Urdang, ed. *The Oxford Thesaurus*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. s.v. "freedom." p.169.

<sup>3</sup> In TV Series of FX, *Louie*, created by Louis C.K., an old friend of Louie remarks about New York City: "It's like 50 bucks an hour to exist in this fucking city." (*Louie - Episode 9 - "Eddie"*. DVD. Directed by Louis C.K.. New York: , 2011.)

with their residents. The houses are replaced with worldwide brands and the white-collar workers replace residents. Therefore, the people who are devoid of their rights to live where they live up to now since gentrification now are not able to express themselves. Nothing is forbidden actually; even, gentrification processes are done for the good of the concerning residents. They were living in old apartments, without a proper infrastructure etc.; but now, they are given modern houses without a price.<sup>4</sup> Now, they are left to live in the lonely suburbs of the city and, in fact, are kindly asked not to come back to the places they left since now they are for the ones with high living-standards, for tourists, for city-users - where use "covers production and reproduction, buying and selling, speculation, allocation, distribution, competition, as well as control, exploitation, theft, and destruction of space"<sup>5</sup>; Remembering the definition 4.a we have cited above, if freedom is the liberty action, to act without hindrance and restraint; can we call these people, these *victims* of gentrification free people? Of course, there is no identity check to enter one of the most crowded and beautiful places in İstanbul, İstiklal Street; however, is it ok for everyone to

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<sup>4</sup> Housing Development Administration of Turkey (TOKİ) says that they are planning to "save" people from indurable buildings; cleaning the cities from shanties and slums:

<https://www.toki.gov.tr/TR/Genel/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFAAF6AA849816B2EFAD2159C2926A9E50>

<https://www.toki.gov.tr/TR/Genel/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFAAF6AA849816B2EFBEC33B5F26CD2CF1>

<https://www.toki.gov.tr/TR/Genel/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFAAF6AA849816B2EF856F72A66C829B67>

<https://www.toki.gov.tr/TR/Genel/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFAAF6AA849816B2EF699AF77ED244DD6A>

<sup>5</sup> Herbert J. Gans, "The Sociology of Space: A Use-Centered View," *City & Community*, 1, no. 4 (2002), p.330

hang out there for sometime where average cost of a meal is more than 10 TL which is very expensive for a country that determines the minimum wage as 980 TL? Is sufficient money to order a coffee really enough to enter a beautiful cafe in Montparnasse for example or does it require one to have a nice and clean suit, shaven hair and face and "an intellectual look"? So, gentrification with the diffusion of multi-national stores to the everyday places creates a non-written violation of freedom - at least for one definition in the dictionary.

However, we are aware that we are not living in a classless society. There are obvious economic limitations. But, we do know that there is a freedom of choice *among the choices you are subjected to*. You are subjected to; because, your choices are constrained by the social position you are in or you belong to. Nevertheless, "the territory of my freedom itself is not matter of free choice."<sup>6</sup> Free will, limited to conditions of the society or limited to imagination which also may be limited by the conditions again, does exist. I can choose between choices. However, "freedom of choice does not by itself guarantee freedom to act effectively on one's choice; still less does it secure freedom to attain the intended results. To be able to act freely, I need resources in addition to free will."<sup>7</sup> Therefore, it is dependence on some position that defines your level of freedom. They are inter-connected.

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<sup>6</sup> Zygmunt Bauman. *Thinking Sociologically*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990. p.24

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p.22

It may cost loads of money only to survive in a city; however, it is only 1 TL average to surf on the Internet for an hour. You don't even need to have a computer to meet with the Internet. Yet, if you did, it had not been that much expensive or class-defining to have an Internet connection and a computer nowadays. So, a question rises for us to ask: can Internet grant or provide for any emancipatory practices? How well are the Internet and the Public Space conjoined? Is it possible to form the conjunction between these two or a very basic question: is it necessary? Is the Internet Life sufficient to achieve freedom?

## **B. “Freedom” on the Internet**

### **i. The Internet Life and Social Media**

Internet is one of the most important concepts of contemporary age. It is technologically groundbreaking, dazzlingly inventive and inclusive, open to all transformations, conversions, subversions or manipulations; all in all a revolution in communication. Also, its incredible pace of adoption in society - certainly, with the help of fast development of technology - should be noted as a milestone in history of communication. There are almost no computers without an Internet connection. People chat, shop, play games, learn, read, protest, complain, and even *travel* on Internet. As we have mentioned above, it is not a social signifier to be on the Internet or even to have a connection of it.

According to the statistics obtained by ITU (International Telecommunication Union),<sup>8</sup> almost 3 billion people are online and that means 40% of the total population of the world. Furthermore, 41% of the households in the world are connected to Internet. Also, Internet is not a media that can be accessed only through computers. By 2013 estimations, %30 of the inhabitants gains access to the Internet by mobile devices. This corresponds to a total number of 2 billion people throughout the world.

For Turkey, the situation is not different. As TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute) shows,<sup>9</sup> 48.7-47.4% of the population between ages 16-74 is using computer and Internet. Moreover, 47.2% of the households have an Internet access. If we look closely, İstanbul is the city with the highest ratio to have an access to Internet with 62.2-60.9% of its population. 37.8% of the Turkey population is regular user which means they, at least once, visited some page on web each day.

However, while we were marking this important and may be hard-to-be broken adoption record; social media gained momentum and wrapped up our lives. Now, there are almost no mobile phones without a connection to at least one social media network. Social Media, with the sites like Facebook and Twitter that has the biggest share, have nearly substituted the Internet itself.

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<sup>8</sup> Brahim Sanou. "The World in 2014 ICT Facts and Figures." <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/facts/ICTFactsFigures2014-e.pdf> (accessed July 30, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> Ayhan Doğan. "HANEHALKI BİLİŞİM TEKNOLOJİLERİ KULLANIM ARAŞTIRMASI." <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=10880> (accessed July 30, 2014).

Especially Facebook works as a large company and merges everything, every single little idea in itself or make the creators of them to join.

As December 2012, Facebook has more than one billion users worldwide, 82% of which are from outside the US and Canada and "829 million monthly active users who used Facebook mobile products as of June, 2014."<sup>10</sup>

According to most important Internet statistics agency SocialBakers,<sup>11</sup> Turkey is, with 32,438,200 users, the sixth country on Facebook by number of users. Also, Facebook penetration ratio in Turkey, that is ratio of users over total population, is 41.69%.

Therefore, we can easily conclude that a phenomenon this big should have an effect on social life. However, is it - as we search for - emancipatory one or conversely is it a lullaby, a medium where you think that you can realize your dreams, be everyone you want to be?

It is not easy to give a definite answer to this question; however, Arab Spring of 2011 gave a solid ground to discuss, argue and even claim that Internet and social media in particular has a potential to provide a *revolutionary* tool. As I have mentioned in Introduction part, neither ideas nor claims on social media can last without encountering with or being verified by effects of social media on Arab Spring, particularly in Egypt.

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<sup>10</sup> Facebook. "Company Info." <http://newsroom.fb.com/company-info/> (accessed July 30, 2014).

<sup>11</sup> SocialBakers. "Turkey Facebook Statistics." . <http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/turkey> (accessed July 30, 2014).

However, it should be considered that all in all, social media is a virtual ground. It is virtual: even if you have thousands of likes on Facebook or retweets on Twitter it does not have an official value equal to a simple petition. We all know it; but we still attend protests on Facebook. So, where does this virtuality stand?

## **ii. Virtuality**

Internet is a medium where all social interactions are carried to a virtual space. It rather seems as a written or literate space than a visual space; however, with the smileys substituting mimics or its intrinsic visual language, it is also a visual space. Since everything is written and nothing is read on the Internet; it is also an information waste. Despite its visual strength to deliver messages and meaning; Internet space is "not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images."<sup>12</sup> It is a spectacle as Debord puts it. It is a communicative space; however, *mediation by images* is done virtually via a constructed technology. It is a virtual space. Internet is constant both in past and in present. It includes and makes both intercept at the same time. Internet, in general, is a timeless space. Everything that is on the web is accessible here and now. Therefore, it is real and without being abstract, it is ideal.<sup>13</sup> The idea that the Internet is ideal without being abstract gives us a chance to derive an emancipatory way of using it. Being a chaos like

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<sup>12</sup> Guy Debord. *The Society of the Spectacle*. New York: Zone Books, 1994. p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> Gilles Deleuze. *Proust and Signs*. London: Continuum, 2008.

phenomenon - which is, in fact, due to the fact that it is easily accessible by many apart from the users' class, race, language and education level - Internet is an intersection of cultures, practices, approaches which defy each other constantly or merge with each other in order to form another.

All in all, Internet poses itself as a public space also. If we consider in Manuel Castells's terms, space is something giving a material support for time sharing social practices.<sup>14</sup> Internet as a medium enabling people to gather around, and communicate and interact with each other, today, posed itself as a public space and way more than an agora.<sup>15</sup> It constitutes a new kind of paradigm which is of electronic circuits, new technology super computers, big data solutions, cloud systems etc. It is more than a multimedia; it is another, a virtual space where citizenry are able to “find new ways to interact economically, politically, and socially”<sup>16</sup>. It is both independent of time and space and is *hic et nunc*. It is the ultimate - by now of course - “global village” in the context of McLuhan’s work<sup>17</sup>. What he foresaw was that the next step of the global village would be an extension of consciousness where a shared consciousness matters with the help of electronic technology. Therefore, Internet established itself to be another public sphere other than the “real” one.

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<sup>14</sup> Manuel Castells, "An Introduction to the Information Age." In *The Information Society Reader*. ed. F. Webster London: Routledge, 2004. p.147

<sup>15</sup> Castells here argues how studies to constitute an electronic agora and a cybercity in the face of a decline of urban culture fails by proposing that there is no chance for urban culture and for city to vanish, in detail. See: <http://www.publicspace.org/en/text-library/eng/1-espacios-publicos-en-la-sociedad-informacional>

<sup>16</sup> J. Camp and Y. T. Chien. The Internet as public space: concepts, issues, and implications in public policy. *ACM SIGCAS Computers and Society*, 30(3), 2000. pp.13-19.

<sup>17</sup> Marshall McLuhan. *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. Boston: MIT press, 1994.

Furthermore, as Loïc Wacquant says when interpreting Pierre Bourdieu's sociology, social and cognitive structures are recursively and structurally linked.<sup>18</sup> It is not that simple to say that this new public sphere is completely different and ineffective when compared to the actual public space. It can be observed best in its participatory formation.

### iii. Gift in Social Media

Internet has emerged through our lives strikingly and rapidly as well as social media has done right after. Decreasing the importance of distant, this electronic public space made it possible for everyone to reach and gather data, classify and evaluate it, whether sociological surveys or information about prices of a certain product or important information during social incidents.



**Picture 1.** Crowdsourced map of civil infirmaries, free-wi-fi access, and police control

<sup>18</sup> Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant. *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. 1992. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996. p.14

For example this Picture 1.1<sup>19</sup> which was made during the Gezi Incidents in May-June 2013 in İstanbul, shows police points, civil infirmaries and free wi-fi accesses in Beyoğlu and around where clashes between police and protesters occurred mostly.

Starting from Arab Spring, Twitter use was widely considered as a faithful and up-to-date news resource. What had been passed through during Arab Spring was experienced in the Gezi Park Incidents also. On 31st of May, most of the mainstream TV channels did not give the incidents in the news. For example, CNN Turk broadcasted a penguin documentary instead and became the target of the protesters. After Gezi Incidents, mainstream media was started to be named as "Penguin Media."<sup>20</sup> With the decreasing credibility of media, crowdsourced<sup>21</sup> citizen journalism emerged rapidly. With the increase in smartphone use and ease it brings to access Internet, citizens now are able to "observe and report more immediately than traditional media outlets do".<sup>22</sup> Lots of people took action to broadcast live what was going on in Taksim Square and environs during the clashes between Police and Protesters in every social

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<sup>19</sup> <http://sosyalmedya.co/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Picture-1.png>

<sup>20</sup> This behavior of CNN Turk was even teased by CNN International:  
<http://www.medyafaresi.com/haber/109664/medya-cnn-turk-un-penguenleri-cnn-de-alay-konusu-oldu.html>

<sup>21</sup> In this article by Jeff Howe in Wired magazine, Howe tells how crowdsourcing took an active role in business and R&D and surpassed outsourcing methods. (Howe, Jeff. "The Rise of Crowdsourcing." *Wired*, June 14, 2006.) See:

<http://archive.wired.com/wired/archive/14.06/crowds.html>

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.hypergene.net/wemedia/download/we\\_media.pdf](http://www.hypergene.net/wemedia/download/we_media.pdf)

incident or protest.<sup>23</sup> All information on Twitter was able to be confirmed by lots of other and with live action videos, people became able to check more than twice the information they received or track the source of the information through the "retweet" option of Twitter.

Other than citizen journalism, Twitter, Facebook and other social media websites were being used for lots of crowdsourced aims. It is now much more easy to write a petition and open for signature of thousands via websites like change.org. In change.org<sup>24</sup>, anyone with a cause can create a petition and open it for signature via all social media websites and gather the expected signature and send it or give it to the relevant institutions/people. What's more, crowdsourcing via Internet is being used for wider implementations. For example, it is being used for gathering prayers from all around the country. In Facebook groups with an Islamic tendency, people ask for a (large) number of prayers to be said on behalf of them and members of the group take a role and participate for the sake of their wish and share the prayers to be said. Their wish could be a cure of a disease or simply for the sake of God.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> For example these two accounts still have the live footage taken in June 2013. Live broadcasters and sometimes smaller TV channels use ustream - a free live broadcast media website - in order to show what was happening actually: <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/diren-gezi-park%C4%B1> <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/diren-gezi-park%C4%B1-8>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.change.org/tr>

<sup>25</sup> These are various examples of prayer requests (most of them for hundreds of Yasin sura) in Facebook groups or in special events opened for request:

<https://www.facebook.com/Yarabbimm/posts/670566249654706>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/148234035224809/>

[https://www.facebook.com/note.php?note\\_id=410939609510](https://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=410939609510)

<https://www.facebook.com/events/308170932620683/>

<https://www.facebook.com/nurakadem/posts/355034431279575>

In addition, search for organ donation is also a popular subject in Internet. To exemplify, a recent campaign for a little girl, Melis, a leukemia patient, has been conducted successfully and for Melis, a suitable marrow was found and transplanted.<sup>26</sup> Social media campaign was conducted by lots of twitter account holders and popular figures on Twitter. The Melis İlik account<sup>27</sup> was opened on behalf of Melis and conducted the campaign. After Melis was recovered, the account continued its mission widening organ/marrow search for lots of other children with leukemia.

In addition to journalism, petitions and so on, knowledge has always been an important issue in Internet. Since it was scattered on the net and it is always hard to believe what was found on the net, some collaboratively generated information channels, websites, e-encyclopedias are on the move, nowadays. There are 161 million videos on YouTube when we search for "how to", some of them were made for fun, some of them were made for viral ads; but, most of them were really prepared, shot, edited and uploaded by people voluntarily. One can find how to cook a specific meal or how to install software, play a song on guitar or even learn to play the guitar. Examples cover everything one can imagine. Furthermore, it would be better to note the famous non-profit initiative Wikipedia here. It was founded by Jimmy Wales, an Internet entrepreneur, as a free online encyclopedia in 2001. Wikipedia has

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<sup>26</sup> Banu Şen. "Melis'e ilik bulundu." *Hürriyet*, November 8, 2013.  
<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/saglik/25064720.asp> (accessed July 31, 2014).

<sup>27</sup> [https://twitter.com/melis\\_ilik\\_](https://twitter.com/melis_ilik_)

given everyone opportunity to edit an existing article or create a new article. However, claims and arguments without any references to solid sources, books, newspapers etc. are labeled as "pending reference" and any attempt to create non-existing, unreal or invalid information, article, entry could always be revoked by thousands and even millions of Wikipedia users.<sup>28</sup>

As well as, encyclopedic information, Internet space provides for its users lots of daily life information. For example, Urban Dictionary<sup>29</sup> is a participatory dictionary where users define the slangs and/or culturally diverse meanings of the words they use or witness that it is used around their hometown or cities/neighborhoods they reside in. Users give a definition to a word or word groups as well as they use it in an example. For a website with broader usage, Turkish website, ekşisözlük<sup>30</sup> is an important example. Ekşi Sözlük (Sour Dictionary) is a website in which users are allowed to contribute in dictionary entries or create one where entry could mean anything from a simple word to an event, a daily life situation or even a political statement. In this website, it is allowed to write everything about an event, a person, an incident, a football match etc... However, despite its high number of users, it does not guarantee a reliability as Wikipedia does; but, reader can trace the

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<sup>28</sup> Here, Wikipedia tells its nature and operation in detail and in the links given, its reliability:  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia#Nature>

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.urbandictionary.com/>

<sup>30</sup> <https://eksisozluk.com/>. For further information:  
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=eksi-sozluk-a-turkish-internet-phenomenon-2006-08-14>

referenced entries or the disputes among members in an entry and have a general idea.

Crowdsourcing can also have a monetary aspect. This aspect which was called crowdfunding has been applied by many young entrepreneurs, artists, musicians or philanthropists. In crowdfunding, project creator/creators use websites like Kickstarter, Indiegogo to present their projects/aims to all Internet users and ask them to contribute with any amount they wish. For example, recently, LGBTI organizations in İstanbul started a campaign to finance Pride Week events in Indiegogo and gathered money.<sup>31</sup> There are lots of projects to be supported waiting in these websites. However, instead of just demanding money from people, project creators give something in return. For example, a production company started a project in the Kickstarter and asked for money to complete their film project *Man from Earth II*, a sequel for an acclaimed lo-fi sci-fi movie *Man from Earth*. In return, they announced to give different kinds of gifts/opportunities for different levels of donation.<sup>32</sup> They promise to give an HD download of the complete film for those who donate more than 33\$, and for those who accept to donate more than 750\$, a chance to discuss with Director Richard Schenkman or Producer Eric D. Wilkinson anything they want via Skype or by phone. More examples can be given in very different subject matters on these crowdfunding websites.

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/2014-istanbul-lgbti-onur-haftasina-destek-ol>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1759006687/the-man-from-earth-ii-man-from-earth-millennium>

To sum up, different kinds of contributions from all around the world were made possible by the World Wide Web. It brought a different exchange culture which actually is not unfamiliar. In his groundbreaking work, *The Gift*, Marcel Mauss showed that archaic forms of exchange, gifts and return gifts still applied for societies that are called primitive by some.<sup>33</sup> As I have shown above, lots of crowdsourcing implementations were carried out without looking after any benefit. Mauss says that thing also have emotional values and sometimes only have emotional and morality should not be purely commercial.<sup>34</sup> In websites like Wikipedia or Scribd<sup>35</sup>, where you can download any book or a paper on the website as long as you upload another that is not already in Scribd, or Gutenberg Project<sup>36</sup>, the first free e-book project, it is made possible to access all human knowledge, literary and artistic works by everyone with an Internet connection. These, concludes Mauss in 1925, are already "acclaimed as products of collective and individual mind and should be public property."<sup>37</sup> What he proposes in 1925 actually came to happen in 2000s world.

To further my proposition that archaic forms of gift actually are being realized now via Internet with crowdsourced/funded projects, enterprises etc.; I would like to remind Mauss' argument. Mauss finds relief in the existence of

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<sup>33</sup> Marcel Mauss. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London: Cohen & West Ltd, 1966. p.45

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p.63

<sup>35</sup> <http://tr.scribd.com/>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.gutenberg.org/>

<sup>37</sup> Mauss, p.65

means of expenditure and exchange other than economic ones.<sup>38</sup> To exemplify the resemblance of his inference from indigenous societies, I can, again, give a recent example. Zumbara<sup>39</sup>, is a time-sharing platform where money is not in use; rather, you give your time to help or teach someone and gain that much time to learn or receive help. It is clearly stated in their website that what kind of a world they desire<sup>40</sup>:

"We believe that such a world is possible where people let the time free, use money as gratitude, live in a gift culture with the consciousness of unity, integrity and abundance.

We contribute to this world in this way:

Raising awareness about sharing ethos and gift economy, opening spaces for people so that they can meet their needs by sharing their gifts (knowledge, skills, experiences, time) and generating trust based relationships and cooperating communities"

Mauss states that in the societies he examined, there are people who are less selfish and more generous and ready to give than our "modern" societies.<sup>41</sup>

However, with numerous formations, establishment, organization and platforms with the power of Internet, building trust over Internet and improving sharing practices again in the society and creating a generous gift economy/society start to seem more and more possible.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 75

<sup>39</sup> [www.zumbara.com](http://www.zumbara.com)

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.zumbara.com/en/what-kind-of-world>

<sup>41</sup> Mauss, p.79

### **C. Possibility of freedom**

Creating a gift economy, a gift society, a society independent of economic exchange is a possibility and as we have discussed above, it can be, at least partially/locally, realized. However, in a broader sense, what is the chance emancipation from all oppression, repression, suppression, limitation and restrictions? This brings us to our initial question: can Internet grant or provide for any emancipatory practices?

In order to examine this question further, we should, first, provide a basis for emancipatory practices. We have discussed above that free will is not sufficient for acting freely; we need resources too. We need resources which is given us by intrinsic nature of our social values, class, race, the country we are living in, our environment, neighborhood, family etc... Therefore, agency's freedom of choice should be backed by resources provided to her/him by structure. Agency is dependent to structure. It is possibilities of that structure what give agency a network/space of freedom. Conversely, it is also the restrictions of that structure gives power relations to agency, also. This reminds me that Michel Foucault's premise that when there is power, there is resistance; resistance is not an exteriority to power.<sup>42</sup> This could be our starting point for investigating emancipatory practices. If we accept that there are given power relations, we accept that our freedom is restricted by the structure itself, we

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<sup>42</sup> Michel Foucault. *History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978. p.95

should accept that there is resistance. Pierre Bourdieu, also, says that he does not see how relations of domination could possibly exist without activating resistance.<sup>43</sup> Also, Anthony Giddens adds that there is a capability of the weak to invert its weaknesses against the powerful in the context of socially constructing relations of autonomy and dependence.<sup>44</sup>

Now, let us think about the correlations and differences between life and Internet. Life seems limitless; however, Internet seems as a space. However, every development in Internet questions the limits of Internet. Internet, as a public space, proposes counterparts for nearly every physical space activity. These, for the beginning, include online gambling, playing games, even practical jokes which can be transformed into internet space as the ex-MSN Messengers vibration and "poke" function of Facebook, online shopping, betting, virtual sex, online sharing, chat, video conferences etc...<sup>45</sup>

Using Internet does not even necessitate a computer. According to TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute), there are over 32 million Internet subscribers<sup>46</sup> and Internet and computer usage in Turkey is around 48-49%.<sup>47</sup> However, considering that not all members of houses use Internet<sup>48</sup> and yet we

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<sup>43</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant, p.80

<sup>44</sup> Anthony Giddens, "Action, Structure, Power," *Profiles and Critiques in Social Theory*. London: Macmillan Press, 1982. p.39

<sup>45</sup> These will be examined thoroughly in the fourth chapter.

<sup>46</sup> [http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreIstatistikTablo.do?istab\\_id=1580](http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreIstatistikTablo.do?istab_id=1580)

<sup>47</sup> [http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreIstatistikTablo.do?istab\\_id=1615](http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreIstatistikTablo.do?istab_id=1615)

<sup>48</sup> [https://www.alternatifbilisim.org/wiki/T%C3%9CRK%C4%B0YE%E2%80%99DE\\_%C4%B0NTERNET%E2%80%99%C4%B0N\\_DURUMU\\_-\\_2013](https://www.alternatifbilisim.org/wiki/T%C3%9CRK%C4%B0YE%E2%80%99DE_%C4%B0NTERNET%E2%80%99%C4%B0N_DURUMU_-_2013) In these tables, it can be clearly seen that as the age increases Internet use dramatically decreases and number of women-users is significantly few.

have nearly the half of the population using the Internet; we can deduce the fact that there should be significant number of Internet users without a household Internet connection. These people could only be using mobile Internet as well as receive the service from Internet Cafes where hourly prices are given for Internet use. Therefore, we can say that with the emergence of technology, prevalence of Internet made it possible for everyone to reach Internet.

Even though using Internet becomes easier and easier and it does not require any capital; creating a new mechanism other than transformations of daily life activities, creating a new system, a new network that can allow people to realize what they can not in the physical space due to the restrictions they have in the context of their membership to specific class, group, race etc. is again requires resources and information. This brings us again to our initial question of freedom. Like Bauman says<sup>49</sup>, again, the territory of freedom is not a matter of free choice. Therefore, freedom in the Internet seems as a restricted freedom as part of given conditions. Without necessary resources and information which is, again, given to oneself as a manifestation of dependence to a certain group, it is not possible to create, operate, and promote anything to change the structure.

Similar to what Michel de Certeau cited from Michel Foucault<sup>50</sup>, purported freedom in the Internet space, is actually reorganized by *dispositifs*,

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<sup>49</sup> Bauman, p.24

<sup>50</sup> Michel de Certeau. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. p. xiv

"miniscule technical procedures acting on and with details, redistributing a discursive space in order to make it the means of a generalized discipline (*surveillance*)". In other words, what Internet provides, at first glance, could seem emancipatory; however, there is a larger dichotomy that includes both physical space and Internet space. In order to, answer the question, whether Internet space gives a realm of freedom for those who are restricted in the physical public space, we should discuss and examine the possibilities of freedom in the context of broader structure/agency dichotomy.

### **3. THE MOST IMPORTANT DICHOTOMY:**

#### **STRUCTURE/AGENCY**

*"Humanity's legacy of stories and storytelling is the most precious we have. All wisdom is in our stories and songs. A story is how we construct our experiences. At the very simplest, it can be: 'He/she was born, lived, died.' Probably that is the template of our stories - a beginning, middle, and end. This structure is in our minds."*

Dorris Lessing

#### **A. A Core Dichotomy**

Structure and agency dichotomy is a major debate over the years in the context of sociology. Agency implies the power of oneself/individuals for pursuing his/her own choices, free will in general; where, structure is the sum of social forces in macro level that agent is a part of. Lots of major sociologists participated in debate from numerous different perspectives, namely, Georg Simmel, Talcott Parsons, Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens etc.

By examining the literature on 20th century's one of the most controversial debates, I am planning to constitute a background for my research, and pave the way for answering my initial question.

As a part of our lives, bound with the same lawmakers and decision makers as we are, Internet space is also a part of the structure. However, does it allow agent to pursuit something different something that is not allowed for

him/her? Is there any possibility? To explain this, let's first discuss in general the dichotomy.

Sherman Tan categorizes three positions taken in structure agency issue.<sup>51</sup> First position implies that structures are so powerful and dominant that they organize all human individual actions. It is developed from Emile Durkheim's sociology emphasizing importance of social facts. This approach of sociology follows Durkheimian precept of treating social facts as things. This standpoint is also denominated as objectivism and submits that "social reality consists of sets of relations and forces that impose themselves upon agents."<sup>52</sup>

Second position, again explained by Tan, emphasizes on human agency. Furthermore, this standpoint argues that society is the sum of human creativity and rationality. It follows Max Weber's theoretical work of "human intentionality and calculation in the process of social action."<sup>53</sup> This approach is called as subjectivist.

Therefore, social analysis has two different and contrast approaches: objectivist and subjectivist, structuralist and constructivist. However as Loïc Wacquant argues, these two approaches are in a dialectical relation. Social structures restrict agent's practices by establishing limits and ordering directions. On the other hand, mental structures which constitute ignored subjective

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<sup>51</sup> Sherman Tan, "Understanding the "Structure" and "Agency" Debate in the Social Sciences," *Habitus*, 1, no. The Forum (2011): 36-50, [http://www.yale.edu/habitus/HABITUS\\_Vol\\_1\\_1\\_TheForum.pdf](http://www.yale.edu/habitus/HABITUS_Vol_1_1_TheForum.pdf) (accessed July 31, 2014).

<sup>52</sup> Loïc Wacquant, "Pierre Bourdieu," *Key Sociological Thinkers*, ed. Rob Stones. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. pp.266-7

<sup>53</sup> Tan, pp.36-7

representations of the agent must be considered since agents try to change or preserve structures through their guidance.<sup>54</sup>

These mental/cognitive structures and social structures are interdependent and it is their correspondence that makes social domination possible.<sup>55</sup>

This brings us to the third position Tan mentions. It is the reconciliation attempts of those two above. Third standpoint claims to establish a dialectical relationship between structure and agency which are important at the same level.<sup>56</sup> Wacquant summarizes this standpoint which also includes Pierre Bourdieu's approach<sup>57</sup>:

"A total science of society must jettison both the mechanical structuralism which puts agents 'on vacation' and the teleological individualism which recognizes people only in truncated form of an 'oversocialized cultural dope' or in the guise of more or less sophisticated incarnations of homo oeconomicus."

Now, let us turn our analysis to one of the most important sociologists of 20th century and a prominent figure of this third position, Pierre Bourdieu and his concepts proposed to reconcile structure/agency dichotomy.

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<sup>54</sup> Wacquant, p.267

<sup>55</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant, p.14

<sup>56</sup> Tan, p.38

<sup>57</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant, p.10

## **B. Bourdieu's Concepts**

### **i. Habitus**

As we have discussed above, as a member of third position social scientist, Pierre Bourdieu is an anti-dualist. He had always tried to escape both objectivism and subjectivism; "mechanical reaction without an agent" and "deliberate pursuit of a conscious intention".<sup>58</sup>

Above, I have mentioned that Bourdieu argues that cognitive/mental structures and social structures are dependent to each other. Therefore, Bourdieu develops an important concept<sup>59</sup> as the first step to overcome the dichotomy of structure and agency. It is a *cognitive and motivational mechanism* which activates the effect of social context in which the agent takes part. It is called habitus and provides tool/medium, a channel where resources and information are being transformed to activities shaped again by this resources and information.<sup>60</sup>

Habitus is actually an old concept used by Aristotle to Hegel, Weber to Mauss. Its relation with "habit" in Bourdieu's sociology, in fact, is a

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid. p.121

<sup>59</sup> It is worth to note here that Pierre Bourdieu never published a theoretical book that explains his 'concepts'. He rather chose to derive the concepts from his ethnographic researches he conducted in Algeria and France.

<sup>60</sup> Ümit Tatlıcan, and Güney Çeğin, "Bourdieu ve Giddens: Habitus veya Yapının İkiliği," *Ocak ve Zanaat: Pierre Bourdieu Derlemesi*, (in Turkish) ed. Güney Çeğin, Emrah Göker, Alim Arlı, Ümit Tatlıcan (İstanbul: İletişim, 2010). p.315

misunderstanding. Because, habitus is formulated as a system of *dispositions*, which are steady and commutable, by which we act, evaluate, consider, sense.<sup>61</sup>

Habitus is not the sum of habits repeated and gained by individual. It is not personal and it is half-automatic.<sup>62</sup> Actors/agents are not supposed to know the reasons of their behaviors; why they chose to do some specific thing but they did not chose otherwise. It is a matter of interest obviously; however, interests changes from group to group. So, it is not easy to explain the behaviors, choices, activities of agents only with considering that specific moment and that specific act.

Habitus, Bourdieu argues, is the extent that social structure is inside us; because, we learned from our previous experiences.<sup>63</sup> It is a mechanism that directs agents from the *inside*. It is the social structure inside the actor; internalized and shaping the choices of the agent.

In *Outline of A Theory of Practice*, Bourdieu says that constituent structures produces habitus as structuring structures prone to operate as continuous, transposable tendency systems.<sup>64</sup> Habitus is being produced recursively. The extent that social structure that an individual, an actor, an agent

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<sup>61</sup> Wacquant, p.267

<sup>62</sup> Nicos Mouzelis, *Sociological Theory What went wrong? Diagnosis and Remedies*, London and New York: Routledge, 1995. p.110

<sup>63</sup> Craig Calhoun, "Pierre Bourdieu," *The Blackwell Companion to Major Contemporary Social Theorists*, ed. George Ritzer. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. p.289

<sup>64</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of A Theory of Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972, p.78

has inside is considered as habitus. Habitus shapes the practices/activities of an agent which changes or preserves the structure itself.

## **ii. Field**

Habitus over and over again reproduces itself this way. It also provides common experiences for members of the group and defines and redefines the group; gives itself its own identity and roots in a social topography. This topography is called "field" by Bourdieu.<sup>65</sup>

Agents and their social positions take place in this topography, in field. The position of agent in the field is the sum of intrinsic rules of the field, habitus of agent, and capital of agent (capital, here, is in Bourdieu's understanding and will be explained in the next part). Field has intrinsic rules; since, it is " a structured space of positions, a force field that imposes its specific determinations upon all those who enter it."<sup>66</sup> It provides distinctive opportunities, potentials, a set of tools and also responsibilities and compensations.

Thus, it is field which gives habitus its shape, its limits. It is a relation of conditioning and a relation of knowledge or cognitive construction. Habitus helps the constitution of a field as a meaningful world which possesses meaning and value and which is worthwhile to demand the investment of agent's energy.

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<sup>65</sup> Tatlıcan and Çeğin, p.318

<sup>66</sup> Wacquant, p.268

It is also an arena where participants of the same field tries to gain more capital in accordance with their interests. Participant actor/agent of the field always tries to differentiate itself more and more in order to lower the competition and impose a sense/definition of belonging, excluding others.<sup>67</sup>

However, to do so, agents require capital. Possessing different modes of capital in different levels enables agents to use distinctive tools and opportunities the field provides.

### **iii. Capital**

It is time to ask then: what is capital, in Bourdieuan sense? Bourdieu says that capital is accumulated labor and when possessed by agents or groups, allows them to appropriate social energy. It can be economic, cultural or social.

Economic capital is the capital that can be converted into money or property. Cultural capital can also be transformed into economic capital or can be solidify as education. As for social capital, it is the sum of social networks/connections and can be transformed into economic capital or title in the society (such as nobility).<sup>68</sup>

Also, there is a fourth type of capital, symbolic capital. It is one of the most important and complex concepts of Pierre Bourdieu. Symbolic capital is not seen as capital; however, provides the possessor an important status. It

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<sup>67</sup> Tatlıcan and Çeğin, p.319

<sup>68</sup> Pierre Bourdieu. "The Forms of Capital." *Marxist Internet Archive*, 1986 .  
<http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/fr/bourdieu-forms-capital.htm>  
(accessed July 31, 2014).

differs from social capital that social capital should be derived from social structure; however, symbolic capital is obtained individually. This capital roots in prestige, honor and status. For example, recently, a top student of a high school was given a chance for a speech in the award ceremony and dedicated his award to those who died during Gezi Park Incidents.<sup>69</sup> He was given a chance due to his cultural capital (his being top student) to give a speech in the ceremony; he used this chance for protest and his top student award was withdrawn. However, he became an important person, was interviewed lots of times by newspapers and he was supported by many. He, actually, transformed his cultural capital into symbolic capital.<sup>70</sup>

We have seen the basic concepts of Bourdieu at a glance. Before we set to use these theories in our analysis, we, first, should visit another "third position" theorist, Anthony Giddens and his concepts.

### **C. Giddens' Concepts**

Sociologist Anthony Giddens deals the structure/agency dichotomy with his famous theory of structuration. He defends that both micro and macro analyses; subjectivist and objectivist approaches fail to give a complete socio-analysis. Instead of structure and agency, Giddens proposes *duality of structure*.

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<sup>69</sup> "Okul birinciliği elinden alınan Işitan Önder: Beni yıldıramayacaklar." *Radikal*, June 18, 2014.  
[http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/okul\\_birinciligi\\_elinden\\_alinan\\_isitan\\_onder\\_beni\\_yildirama\\_yacaklar-1197805](http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/okul_birinciligi_elinden_alinan_isitan_onder_beni_yildirama_yacaklar-1197805) (accessed July 31, 2014).

<sup>70</sup> Fortunately, he was given back his award by decree of court, later.

According to this principle, social life is recursive by the fact that structure is both medium and outcome of reproduction of actions. It simultaneously takes part into the constitution of both the agent and social practices and it exists in the life-giving points of this constitution.<sup>71</sup>

### **i. Structure/Social Systems**

Giddens, in his theory, inspired from Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of language. Saussure proposes two concepts *langue* (language) and *parole* (speaking). According to this theory, *langue* is the principles of the language which is required for *parole* to be possible. *Parole*, on the other hand, is the concrete moments of the use of *langue*.<sup>72</sup>

While focusing on structure and social systems, he proposes that structure, also, consists of rules and resources that are independent of time and space; like Saussure's language (*langue*). It is conceptualized as a virtual system which recursively instantiated for each action and interaction of the agents. Therefore, it is paradigmatic.<sup>73</sup>

<i>langue</i> (language)	paradigmatic	structure
<i>parole</i> (speaking)	syntagmatic	social system

**Table 1.** Correspondence of Saussure and Giddens' Concepts

<sup>71</sup> Anthony Giddens. *Central problems in social theory: Action, structure, and contradiction in social analysis*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979. p.5

<sup>72</sup> Ferdinand de Saussure. *Course in general linguistics (3rd ed.)*. (R. Harris, Trans.). Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1986. p. 9-10 & 15.

<sup>73</sup> Mouzelis, p.114

Structure is paradigmatic in the sense that paradigmatic extent refers to continuity-producing, actual order of elements whereas syntagmatic extent refers to the instantiation in space and time.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, social system is the rigid set of interactions and relations as the manifestation of concrete practices of agents.<sup>75</sup>

## ii. Structuration Theory

Giddens, like Bourdieu, criticize interpretative sociologists for being weak about the structure and inversely, structuralist for being weak about the agency.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, he thinks that social analysis would always be insufficient whether we prioritize structure over agency or vice versa. Giddens develops duality of structure against the objectivism/positivism which argues that social reproduction is not dependent to agent, it proceeds as a mechanical imperative and against subjectivism which is in favor of accepting social action simply as a product of capabilities of agents.<sup>77</sup>

Giddens defines structure as "rules and resources" where it means the properties enabling the time-space in social systems to combine.<sup>78</sup> Structure as "rules and resources" corresponds to three extent of social life. First one is interpretation structures, meaning semantic rules; second one is legitimization

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<sup>74</sup> Giddens, *Central problems in social theory*, p.203

<sup>75</sup> Mouzelis, p.114

<sup>76</sup> Tatlıcan and Çeğin, p.328

<sup>77</sup> Anthony Giddens. *Tarihsel Materyalizmin Çağdaş Eleştirisi*. İstanbul: Paradigma, 2000. p.69

<sup>78</sup> Anthony Giddens. *The Constitution of Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984. p.17

structures, i.e. moral rules and values; third one is power structures which refers to unequally distributed resources.<sup>79</sup>

Agents use these structures to operate and manage social actions via *memory traces*. Structure is not external to the agents. Structure instantiates as these memory traces in social practices. It is not only restrictive but also enabling.<sup>80</sup> Actions consist of two important elements of human behavior. One is capability and the other is knowledgeability. Capability refers to the opportunity of the agent to do otherwise. In other words, capability is the conditions where agents consciously consider different potential alternatives and make a choice. Whereas, knowledgeability refers to everything that agents know about the society they are in and about their conditions of actions in that society.<sup>81</sup> So, agents benefit from memory traces to operate social actions which they are knowledgeable of. These memory traces which constitute the knowledge of agents enables social systems to instantiate and create structured properties of society through which we analyze institutions.<sup>82</sup>

On the other hand, knowledgeability involves practical and discursive consciousness.<sup>83</sup> They are two semantic levels in which agents have the knowledge of social environments where their actions take part or where they

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<sup>79</sup> Anthony Giddens. *Sosyolojik Yöntemin Yeni Kuralları*. Bursa: Sentez, 2013. pp.207-208

<sup>80</sup> Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, pp.20-22

<sup>81</sup> Giddens, "Action, Structure, Power." p.9

<sup>82</sup> Anthony Giddens. "Action, Subjectivity, and the Constitution of Meaning." *Social Research* 53, no. 3 (1986). p.579. See also: Tatlıcan and Çeğin, p.337

<sup>83</sup> Giddens substitutes Freud's *trinity* of id, ego and superego with unconscious, practical consciousness and discursive consciousness. See also: Tatlıcan and Çeğin, p.345

construct as a consequence of their actions.<sup>84</sup> For the unconscious, Giddens proposes the unacknowledged conditions of action. Similar to Bourdieu's habitus' internal directions, these conditions are called upon by agents, unknowingly. They are shaped by the structure that is inside the agents.

In conclusion, there is no fixed structure in Giddens' theory. Structure is structured/reproduced by the interaction of agents; and, *also*, it is the medium of this process of construction. Giddens' duality of structure shows similarity to German theorist Friedrich Schleiermacher's theory of hermeneutics. Schleiermacher says that it is not possible to understand the whole without parts and vice versa.<sup>85</sup> Likewise, here agency/action and structure; parts and whole are dialectically linked.

#### **D. Remarks**

Above, we have discussed the theories and concepts of two important figures of sociology in 20th century: Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens. They share some certain characteristics in their work but what's most important is that they both saw that major dichotomies like structure/agency, objectivism/subjectivism, and structuralism/culturalism should be overcome.

Furthermore, Giddens' practical consciousness reminds us habitus; since, it also refers to the knowledge which we know how it should be done however

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<sup>84</sup> Giddens, "Action, Structure, Power." p.31

<sup>85</sup> Friedrich Schleiermacher, "General Theory and Art of Interpretation," chap. 2 in *The Hermeneutics Reader*, ed. Kurt Mueller-Vollmer (New York: Continuum, 2006). sf.84-85

do not know "why". But, it is strictly a practical apparatus. However, equipped with the concept of capital, Bourdieu's habitus involves practical consciousness as it involves discursive consciousness of Giddens and Schutz's *projects*.<sup>86</sup>

Habitus, also, shows resemblance with structure notion of Giddens. If we try to examine habitus in Saussurean terms; we can see that it belongs to both paradigmatic (*langue*) and syntagmatic (*parole*) levels. In paradigmatic levels, habitus corresponds to unconscious, half-automatic tendencies. Nevertheless, Bourdieu argues that habitus shows tendency towards practical logic rather than theoretical one. From practical logic and ethnomethodology, it derives practical techniques which connect paradigmatic to syntagmatic.<sup>87</sup>

Also, Giddens proposes that there is no objective reality external to agent's interactions, actions; dependent of their will, desires, expectations. However, Bourdieu, primarily, shows the distribution of structures that restricts interactions and representations. Bourdieu adopts the first principle of Durkheimian sociological method: "treat social facts as things".<sup>88</sup> It is as what Marx said. Social world is relational, and they are objective relations exist independently of individual consciousness and will.<sup>89</sup>

Now, how should we use all these to answer our initial question? I will use Bourdieu's concept of habitus in order to analyze the practices of Internet users, actors in their approaches to politics, their transformation of daily

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<sup>86</sup> Tatlıcan and Çeğin, p.363 & Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*. p.6

<sup>87</sup> Mouzelis p.106

<sup>88</sup> Tatlıcan and Çeğin, p.359

<sup>89</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant. p.97

practices into Internet, their use of Internet for solidarity (from crowdsourcing to organize protests). Because, Bourdieu says that practices are the consequences of encounter between habitus or its tendencies and social field or markets restrictions, demands and opportunities.<sup>90</sup>

On the other hand, my research is on Internet basically. So, I would like to show that Internet is a field in Bourdieu's terms. Loïc Wacquant, in his article on Pierre Bourdieu, says that field is a *force* field, a *battle* field and a field with a certain *degree of autonomy*.<sup>91</sup>

For the first property, Wacquant argues, a field is "a structured space of positions [...] that imposes its specific determinations upon all those who enter it." Does Internet meet these requirements? Let's talk about an example: Internet forums. An Internet forum is an online message board, discussion and sharing medium. Most of the forums are free to enter. Since they define themselves over experience and labor given to that forum, it is only "free" to be a plain member. Forums are managed by admin (abbr. administrator) who mostly is the founder of the forum. Admins choose moderators (mods) to help themselves from most active and most experienced members of the forum. Forums can be about anything from computer games to sexual life, World War II armory to plant growing.

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<sup>90</sup> Pierre Bourdieu. In *Other Words: Essays towards a Reflexive Sociology*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990, p. 62-3

<sup>91</sup> Wacquant, p.268-9

Forums share lots of music, computer games or other kinds of entertainment for free. For example, a member of the forum, in order to gain experience and respect, share some links to download a music album. Most of the forums are open to enter for non-members; however, they protect the links. If you are not a member, an inscription meets you where you hope to find the links: "to see the links, please sign in."<sup>92</sup> After you become a member, it is expected for you to give "+rep" to the user whose links you have make use of.<sup>93</sup> For example in Islamic forum, Mumsema, giving +rep is recited with pictures.<sup>94</sup> As a matter of fact, to be online you only need to have an access to Internet whereas you should gain the "social capital" to reach some parts of the Internet.

For the second property, that the field is a battlefield, Wacquant says that agents and institutions<sup>95</sup> "seek to preserve or overturn the existing distribution of capital". Let us continue with the forum example. As I have said before, forums have ranks.<sup>96</sup> It is a hierarchical order for which you have to struggle and work. Moreover, this "struggle" for ranks is nothing with respect to

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<sup>92</sup> For a simple example: <http://www.forumexe.com/frm/metin2-genel/1492191-metin2-50-level-gorevleri.html>

<sup>93</sup> It is getting harder and harder to see the links; because, some forums has a thanks button you need to press to see the links. By pressing this thanks button, you increase the reputation of the forum user which is important for forum ranking. see also: <https://eksisozluk.com/linkleri-gorebilmek-icin-uye-olmalisiniz--1886828> (users share their experiences on the subject, unfortunately in Turkish).

<sup>94</sup> <http://www.mumsema.com/forum-duyurulari/23497-rep-verme-nasil-yapilir-resimli-anlatim.html>

<sup>95</sup> It is participant as Nicos Mouzelis argues. For Mouzelis, participants should not necessarily refer to an individual. It can be a participant of a social group, an organization, a group of elites or a nations-state. (Mouzelis, p. 97)

<sup>96</sup> Neoseeker forum has a broad definition of ranks. Alongside the admin and moderator, they have supermoderator, undercover and temporary moderator etc... (<http://neowiki.neoseeker.com/wiki/Ranks>)

the other struggles on the Internet. Most famous of these struggles are the disputes over Twitter. Whether political or personal, quarrels between famous people (celebrities, politicians etc...)<sup>97</sup> or twitter famous anonymous accounts (*fenomen* in Turkish, abbr. *feno*)<sup>98</sup> are very important in this context. Of course, there never is a winner; however, the number of retweets or favorites the tweets has is the issue. If a person gets more retweets (RT) or favorites (FAV), this user will probably have more followers which mean more people to reach and a wider influence area. For a final note, there are also lots of hackers which operates for political struggle as well as economic capital.<sup>99</sup>

Thirdly, a field, Wacquant proposes, has its degree of autonomy in the context that the capacity it has gained "to insulate itself from external influences and to uphold its own criteria of evaluation over and against those of neighboring or intruding fields." Internet itself offers innumerable opportunities to its users to transform their daily life practices and their habits. Internet creates a new jargon. Moreover, Tower of Babylon in Internet has been destroyed. It is now not surprising to find different distant spaces in the Internet that you cannot understand what is going on even though you speak the same language. Internet creates jargons organically and it continues to diversify.

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<sup>97</sup> <http://onedio.com/haber/melih-gokcek-ve-ahmet-hakan-in-ozanlara-tas-cikartan-atismalari-219892>

<sup>98</sup> <http://www.ensonhaber.com/fotohaber/twitter-fenomenleri.html>

<sup>99</sup> Turkish hacker team hacked 137 Israeli website:  
<http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2014/07/27/ayyildiz-tim-137-israil-sitesini-hackledi>

Additionally, it can be said that Internet offers a completely different field, it defines its own standards; thus it is a field "of an ongoing clash between those who defend autonomous principles of judgment proper to that field and those who seek to introduce heteronomous standards because they need the support of external forces to improve their dominated position in it."<sup>100</sup>

Notorious ban on Twitter in Turkey<sup>101</sup>, lawsuits for Twitter users in İzmir who supported Gezi Park Protests<sup>102</sup>, new Internet Act in Turkey<sup>103</sup> and all others should be read through this perspective.

While I try to answer my initial question, I will treat Internet as a public space and a field in Bourdieu's terms and I will analyze actors through Bourdieu's concept of habitus. It is important not to think habitus refers to "a subjectivity that is the unmediated internalization of objectivity." If it was, agents can only be the "apparent subjects of actions which have the structure as subject." However, it is when they become more aware of the social within them, they become immune to the externality that inhabits them.<sup>104</sup> Saying that habitus refers to a "virtual" subjectivity is a very reductionist approach and it means falling into objectivist trap that Bourdieu had always avoided through his theoretical work.

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<sup>100</sup> Wacquant, p.269

<sup>101</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/04/03/us-turkey-twitter-idUSBREA320E120140403>

<sup>102</sup> <http://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/316344--basbakan-erdogan-izmirdeki-quot-twitter-davasi-quot-na-mudahil-oldu>

<sup>103</sup> <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/internette-neler-yasak-yeni-teknoloji-1848925/>

<sup>104</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant, p.49

This point is also the point where I intersect Bourdieu's theory with the explorers of quotidian. Michel de Certeau supports Bourdieu and proposes a heuristic roadmap<sup>105</sup>:

"[The question] concerns as well the *status of the individual* in technical systems, since the involvement of the subject diminishes in proportion to the technocratic expansion of these systems. Increasingly constrained, yet less and less concerned with these vast frameworks, the individual detaches himself from them without being able to escape them and can henceforth only try to outwit them, to pull tricks on them, to rediscover, within an electronicized and computerized megalopolis, the 'art' of the hunters and rural folk of earlier days."

All in all, there is an extent that agents are in charge of their actions. Their actions enable their agency. People may also internalize and find the conditions of oppression and exploitation natural; however, even this does not exclude practical forms of resistance and the possibility of a revolt against those conditions.<sup>106</sup> However, thinking with what de Certeau has said, let us scrutinize where the possibility and opportunity of revolt against oppression corresponds to in the Internet space. Internet space, provides structured programs, administrations, redirections, links, structured and predetermined electronic corridors. So, if there is a possibility of revolt against oppression and restriction, can Internet space be challenged by the agency? Or will this possibility be compromised and reconciliated as user-friendliness, cheap online download

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<sup>105</sup> de Certeau, pp.xxiii-xxiv

<sup>106</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant, p.74

against pirate download, free music stream with lots of advertisement, cheaper and faster Internet with high surveillance?

In the next chapter, I am going to examine all the restrictions on the public spaces (physical and Internet) and present their similarities and differences and try to answer these questions.

## 4. WALKING IN THE CITY VS. SURFING IN THE INTERNET

*"Everybody's gone surfin' "*

The Beach Boys

In this part, I will try to understand differences, similarities and correspondences between physical space and Internet space, both as a public space and present the transformations of everyday life practices into Internet space as counterparts and equip my argument with the knowledge if these counterparts enable users to a certain extent to realize what they cannot in the physical space and - if they do not - I will try to develop an offer on what can be done, before moving on to the next chapter where I will be dealing with "how?".

First, I would like to enhance my definition of public space; then, I will give a brief history of walking around the literature of free roam/free stroll. After that, I will try to formulate the obstacles of free stroll as interventions to public space, i.e. gentrification etc.

Secondly, I will continue with the Internet space and give a general definition of it, I will try to revisit history of walking over the concept of surfing in the Internet.

Lastly, I will try to find out what the emancipatory acts are in the Internet space if there are any and propose an answer for my initial question for the moment.

## **A. Public Space**

### **i. What is Public Space?**

Honestly, I have no intention of defining what the public space is, how it was developed and transformed throughout the history and what the distinction between public and private space is. Also, it is clear that this intention goes beyond the borders of what this humble thesis tries to deal with. Obviously, it is a part of a greater, and ongoing debate which I am not a part of.

Rather, I would like to give a clear definition of the concept which I drew upon in my thesis. Jürgen Habermas, a member of Frankfurt School, says in his book, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, that events and occasions are called as public when they are open to everyone, contrary to those which are closed or exclusive.<sup>107</sup> It is something to do with the common. It is a common world where everyone comes together. Habermas argues that public space is the "society engaged in critical public space."<sup>108</sup> However,

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<sup>107</sup> Jürgen Habermas. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991. p.1

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. p.52

Habermas' work is more than that. He tries to define "a category of bourgeois society". Habermas comes up with the notion of bourgeois public sphere<sup>109</sup>:

"The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor."

In addition to this distinction Habermas presents, sociologist Richard Sennett introduces the concept of "Dead Public Space". According to Sennett, dead public spaces functions to separate "within" from "without." This is the basic idea lying under the notion/motive of "Isolation". Isolation means both "the inhabitants or workers in an urban high-density structure are inhibited from feeling any relationship to the milieu in which that structure is set" and "as one can isolate oneself, in a private automobile, for freedom of movement, one ceases to believe one's surroundings have any meaning save as a means toward the end of one's own motion."<sup>110</sup>

Thus, we learn that public space belongs to common; it is open to all. However, public space is not sole, uniform or solid. In itself, it can have hierarchy, schism, partition, and diversification. In subpart (iii) of this part, I will be dealing with these differentiations; how they are formed and operated as the interventions to "public space".

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<sup>109</sup>Jürgen Habermas (1989), *The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article. In Critical theory and Society. A Reader*, ed. Stephen E. Bronner and Douglas Kellner, 136-142., New York: Routledge, p. 27

<sup>110</sup>Richard Sennett. *Fall of Public Man*. New York: Knopf, 1977. pp.12-5

## ii. History of Walking

Before continuing on to interventions to public space, I, first, would like to deal with history of walking - in modern times - around the Situationist International concept of *dérive* and its influences.

Situationist International (SI) was formed by a very few member in 1957. All the members had roots in avant-garde art and Marxist critique of society that had been supplemented by concepts derived by Frankfurt School, as advanced capitalism, also. One of the most important figures of SI was French writer and filmmaker Guy Debord who is well-known by his book and the movie with the same name: *The Society of the Spectacle*. Thoughts and theories developed by SI may be well considered as some of the most important factors that led to May 1968 protests. SI was spreading their ideas by theoretical works written by members of SI as well as their magazine *Internationale Situationniste*. On the second issue of IS, Debord contributed with an article which presents a new theory: theory of *dérive*. He tells us that *dérive* is one of the basic situationist practices and “involves playful-constructive behavior and awareness of psychogeographical effects, and are thus quite different from the classic notions of journey or stroll.”<sup>111</sup> However, before going further, let us clear all concepts that are peculiar to situationist vocabulary. When talking about psychogeography,

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<sup>111</sup> Guy Debord. Situationist International Online, "Theory of the *Dérive*." Last modified December, 1958. Accessed June 20, 2012. <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/theory.html>.

Debord refers to a subfield of geography which is, with his words, the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals.<sup>112</sup> Dérive as a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances expects an awareness to a degree from its user. Also, daily work, banal activities or even fatigue are the impure elements in dérive.<sup>113</sup> So, seeing daily tasks or average practices as impure necessarily brings our minds the concept, *flâneur*.

Flâneur means stroller in French. Surely, we can take the roots of this concept well back, if we wanted; however I have the intentions to share the same path back with one of the geniuses of the twentieth century who introduced the concept flâneur to our knowledge: Walter Benjamin.

Before continuing deeply with *The Painter of Modern Life*, Charles Baudelaire who is one of the most important influences of Walter Benjamin about the concept; I would like to attract attention on a short story which is written by the great American writer Edgar Allan Poe in 1840. The story entitled as *The Man of the Crowd* and tells about a man who is following another ordinary person he chose for a day and after the chase, follower concludes that the man whom he is following is "the type and genius of deep crime due to his inscrutability and inability to leave the crowds of

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<sup>112</sup> Guy Debord. Nothingness Library, "Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography." Accessed June 20, 2012. <http://library.nothingness.org/articles/SI/en/display/2>.

<sup>113</sup> Guy Debord. Situationist International Online, "Theory of the Dérive."

London."<sup>114</sup> The man, the follower, the narrator chooses a man to pursue; however, the man he followed only unconsciously walks, strolls and wanders around the bazaars or shops buying nothing. He always manages to remain in the crowds. Nevertheless, is this a man of a conscious stroll, a man with a purpose which no one can understand or guess? Besides, why the narrator is following the man is uncertain. His conscious choice brings him an unconscious journey. However, let us follow the intentions of the narrator with the practice of the man followed, the voyager. This will move us one step forward to the real flâneur. This man is the one chattered in Paris Spleen of Baudelaire in the prose poem called Crowds. He tells us (he may well be Baudelaire himself) that enjoying crowds is an art, it is possible to be whoever you wanted to be and everything is open to him who enjoys the crowd unless it is not worth to enter.<sup>115</sup> As quoted from Benjamin, flâneur is on the edge of both big cities and bourgeoisie. S/he is not defeated to any of these and is not settled in any. Flâneur seeks "refuge in the crowd."<sup>116</sup> That must be the reason why Benjamin formulates his concept of flâneur upon Baudelaire's vision. However, as we have seen, flâneurs are some kind of not-yet- become-bourgeois'. Further, they are not in need of anything, they are not

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<sup>114</sup> Edgar Allan Poe. About.com "The Man of the Crowd," Accessed December 14, 2013. <http://classiclit.about.com/library/bl-etexts/eapoe/bl-eapoe-man.htm>

<sup>115</sup> Charles Baudelaire, Poem Hunter, "Crowds." Accessed on December 14, 2013. <http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/crowds/>

<sup>116</sup> Walter Benjamin, "Paris, The Capital of the Nineteenth Century," *The Arcades Project*, (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1999). p.10

poor or wanderers. They are more like the people called bohemians. They are not poor however not eager to spend lots of money. They are for leisure; they are idle and explorer. They are actors in the city; act against the so-called stability of the city in order to subvert this stability and explore its movements and directions. However, this point is not very clear; especially for Baudelaire since he was “between the stances of flâneur and dandy, a disengaged and cynical voyeur on the one hand, and man of the people who enters into the life of his subjects with passion on the other.”<sup>117</sup> As we have seen in Poe’s story, narrator called the man a genius; however, a flâneur - being aware of the environment - follows the city as the city unfolds before his eyes. His reconnaissance includes all encounters as Debord said, “possible rendezvous”. Possible rendezvous brought the drifter without warning to a place he may or may not know; he observes the surroundings. “Since he may never even have seen the other person before, he will be encouraged to start up conversations with various passersby.”<sup>118</sup> Again in literature, this corresponds squarely to the novel of the surrealist writer and artist Andre Breton: *Nadja*. In *Nadja*, the narrator encounters a woman while walking through the street, starts a conversation immediately.

In our chronological *journey* from Poe’s detective stories to Baudelaire’s -and Benjamin’s- *flâneur* let us ignore Situationist practices

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<sup>117</sup> David Harvey, *Paris: Capital of Modernity*. (New York: Routledge, 2003). p.14

<sup>118</sup> Guy Debord. Situationist International Online, "Theory of the Dérive."

for now and jump some decades later to an important contemporary artist Sophie Calle. Sophie Calle in her first major work *Suite Venitienne*(1979), after meeting in a party in Paris with a man whom she recalled only as Henri B., she followed the man for days to Venice.<sup>119</sup> Her work seems like an actual reproduction of the story of Poe's without the conclusion remarks. However, we will realize that her chase was not to formulate a man of genius, or not to pursuit for enjoyment, for possible rendezvous or for leisure. She is not idle, also. However, as an artist she is of course available for a chase of days. Being devoid of economical problems, nevertheless, brings contemporary artist nearer to *flâneur*. But, Calle's motivation in doing so was a pre-study - or may be this work experience may have led her to do such a project - of her next project *The Shadow*(1981). She arranged a private detective to follow and photograph her for days. As we realize, she was not after some exploration, but after providing photographic evidence of her own existence.<sup>120</sup> She was not after exploration, but after approval.

So, from Poe's stroller to Calle's Henri B. or Calle herself, where does the drifter of Debord stand? It is surely not a poetic, or a romantic approach like that of *flâneurs*. However, *playful-constructive* behavior reminds us *homo ludens*. Let us remember the first three rules of play written by the Dutch cultural theorist John Huizinga:<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Yve-Alain Bois. "Character Study: Sophie Calle." *Artforum*, April, 2000, pp. 126–31.

<sup>120</sup> Sophie Calle. *Talking Art 1*, ed. Adrian Searle, (London: ICA publication, 1993). p. 32

<sup>121</sup> John Huizinga. *Homo Ludens*. (Beacon Press, 1955) pp.8-10

1. Play is free, is in fact freedom.
2. Play is not “ordinary” or “real” life.
3. Play is distinct from “ordinary” life both as to locality and duration.

According to these rules, actually, drift *is* a play. It is about the openness of Baudelaire in *Crowds*. It is socially constructive against banality by means of time and route. It is not ordinary because it necessitates awareness and finds the daily life activities impure. This distinction from ordinary life as duration is a must for activity to be a play. As Berman states that the most basic problem of the twentieth century modernism is that the literature abandons the everyday life - with exceptions such as Joyce’s *Ulysses*.<sup>122</sup> As Turkish translator of the book, Nevzat Erkmen cites: in the movie *Anima Nera* Vittorio Gassman laughs and tells Catherine Deneuve to put Ulysses into *puzzle and pun* shelf.<sup>123</sup> *Ulysses is* also a play. Plays, roles, games are used much in social analysis as a metaphor by some of the important social theorists part of which were mentioned above: Pierre Bourdieu, Erving Goffman, Johan Huizinga, Michel De Certeau, Richard Sennett. However, we will return this subject in the context of strategies and tactics in Chapter 5.

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<sup>122</sup> Marshall Berman. *All That is Solid Melts into Air*. (Toronto: Penguin, 1988). p.146

<sup>123</sup> Nevzat Erkmen. *Çevirmenin Notu* (in James Joyce. *Ulysses*. İstanbul:YKY, 2005). p.2

All in all, *dérive* could be considered in the historical framework of *flânerie*. Its socially and playful constructive approach against banal activities; its explorative side and its search for freedom and its endeavor to unfold the layers and instructions and redirections and steerings in the city; all will be sufficient for us to consider the drift as a liberative act. However, it expects its user to be aware and to be aware the user should have knowledge to a degree and in order for user to drift purely he or she should be free of all banal activities including work in order to live. Furthermore, this unplanned journey that the aware situationists are on, again, although they are *aware*, have restrictions behind which it is worth to enter unlike Baudelaire says or have predetermined redirections that drifter is subjected to. According to de Certeau, in the part, Walk in the City, of his book *The Practice of Everyday Life*, the city is generated by the strategies of governments, corporations, and other institutional bodies who produce things like maps that describe the city as a unified whole. However, our drifter's route is never fully determined by the organizational bodies.<sup>124</sup>

However, we should consider that who are capable of overcoming predetermined directions, avoid directions of the structure or what shall be done in order to have such a capacity? In order to answer this questions, let us move on to investigate who are being exposed to restrictions, limitations and oppression in the public space and how.

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<sup>124</sup> de Certeau, pp. 91-3

### iii. Interventions to Public Space (or Different Perspectives of Vandalism)

13th Istanbul Biennial was about the "barbaric" interventions on the public space<sup>125</sup> with the motto borrowed from a Turkish poem written by Lale Müldür: "Mom, Am I Barbarian?" It was planned to take place between 14 September and 20 October 2013. At the beginning, curators were considering to exhibit all artworks in public space; they were going to use old juvenile court in Sultanahmet, some parks and squares. Works would be installed all around İstanbul. However, at the end of the May, Gezi Park Incidents started and curators and organizers who were protested for a number of times were afraid that works would be subjected to violence and cancelled its public part; thus, again, restrain the works behind the doors.<sup>126</sup>

I have started with this ironic and yet, self-revealing incident; since, sponsors of the biennial were also financiers, owners or contractors of lots of gentrification and/or urban renewal projects<sup>127</sup> in Istanbul which actually led to the events of Gezi Park.

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<sup>125</sup> Fulya Erdemci. İKSV, "13th Istanbul Biennial Conceptual Framework." Last modified October 20, 2013. Accessed January 28, 2014. <http://13b.iksv.org/en>.

<sup>126</sup> This information is based on personal experience and discussions with the biennial team and curators since I was a member of the art writing team of the biennial.

<sup>127</sup> Please see "Networks of Disposition" (<http://mulksuzlestirme.org/>) for a detailed work on these connections. Ironically again, this work was a part of the biennial and was exhibited in the Galata Greek School. For a critique on "Networks of Disposition" that it fails to show the link between minorities of Istanbul and Turkish bourgeoisie:

Göksoy, Ekin Can. "Kayıp Halka." *Birikim*, December 4, 2013.

<http://www.birikimdergisi.com/birikim/makale.aspx?mid=1055&makale=Kayıp Halka> (accessed August 1, 2014).

So what was it so powerful that gathered masses in the streets? What was the problem with the gentrification or urban renewal?

David Harvey argues that capitalism requires "urbanization to absorb the surplus products it perpetually produces."<sup>128</sup> In order to give solid evidence, he mentions about Baron Haussmann who was responsible of rebuilding Paris in the Louis Bonapart era. Haussmann's "mission was to help solve the surplus capital and unemployment problem by way of urbanization."<sup>129</sup> Later, he tells about Robert Moses who followed the footsteps of Baron Haussmann in the City of New York in 1950s and 60s.<sup>130</sup>

David Harvey presents, after giving the historical basis, that what is going on in cities in neoliberal era as "new urbanism" which "touts the sale of community and a boutique lifestyle as a developer product to fulfill urban dreams." Harvey concludes this new movement as a leading actor of "isolation" as Richard Sennett did.<sup>131</sup>

Partition of the city, of the public space continues in contemporary age, too. City divides in two rough levels. On the one side, there are wealthy neighborhoods with all kinds of services from sports complexes to private education institutions and on the other side there are illegal settlements even

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<sup>128</sup> Harvey, David. *Rebel Cities*. London: Verso, 2012. p.5

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.* p.7

<sup>130</sup> For an important work what Moses did and how it was received by the public: Berman, Ch.5

<sup>131</sup> Harvey, p.14

without sanitation systems.<sup>132</sup> This "creative destructions" goes on in the poor, underprivileged and marginalized neighborhoods with an obvious class dimension.<sup>133</sup>

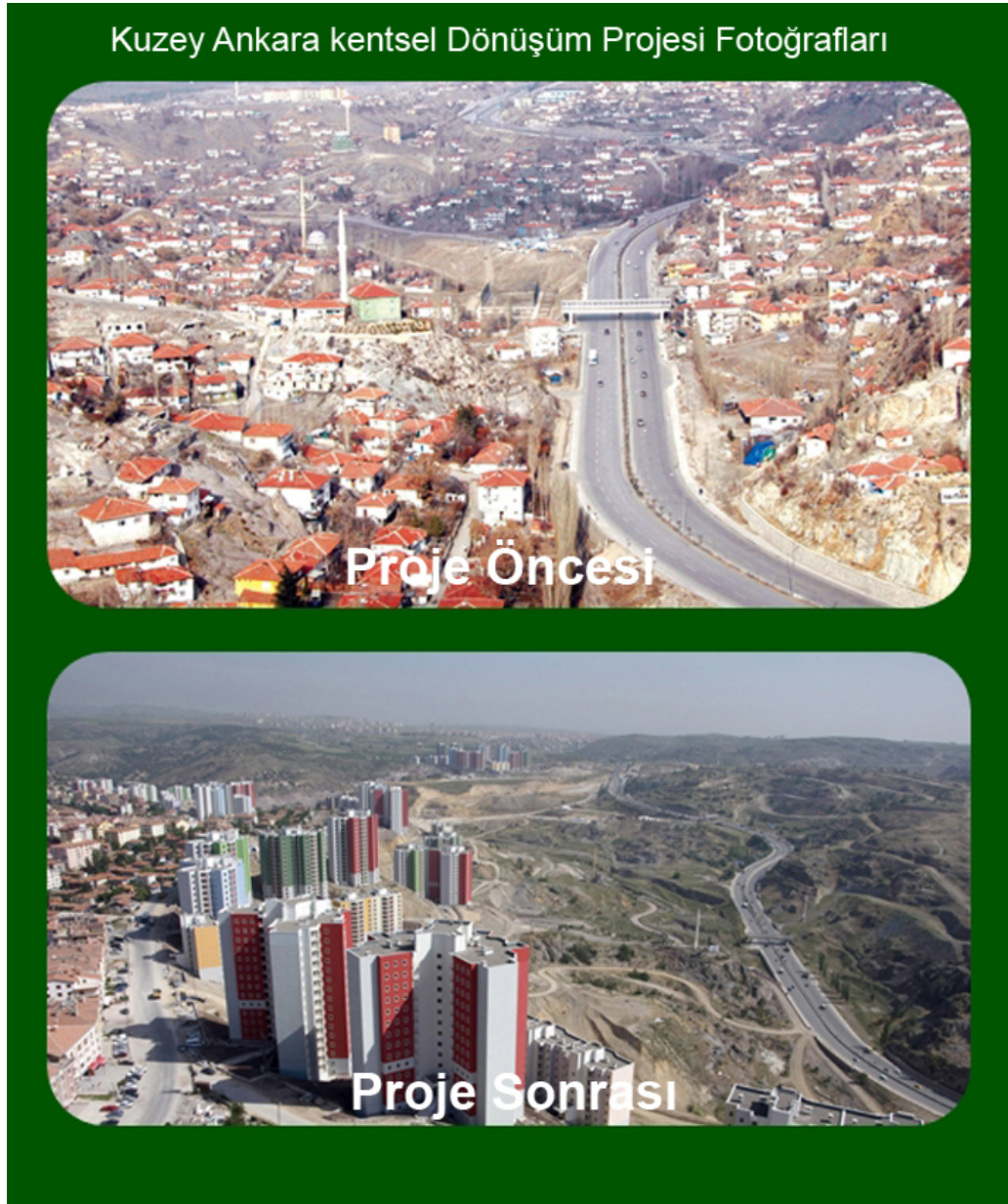
This can be seen in all slums and poor neighborhoods in Ankara and İstanbul. Being both a historical and an industrial city, and being capable of attracting tourists as well as workers, both blue and white collar; gentrification has always been on the agenda in İstanbul. For last years, urban interventions are started to be more and more clear and hot each day. As a city with large urban transformations in its history, different districts of İstanbul were transformed according to the needs of a metropolitan city. Starting from fifties, large roads like Vatan and Millet Streets in Aksaray and Tarlabaşı Boulevard in Beyoğlu were opened, satellite cities were formed and neighborhoods like Sulukule and Tarlabaşı were emptied. Furthermore, historical buildings were somehow renovated to become shopping malls. After Deveaux building which was demolished and built again to be Demirören Shopping Mall, Cercle d'Orient building which includes a historical cinema and an important piece of İstanbul's cultural heritage Emek Cinema are being demolished to be built again as a shopping mall. İstiklal Street, or Grand Rue de Pera (Cadde-i Kebir) as it was called in the late Ottoman period, has become the main stage of this commercialization of the public space since both Deveaux and Cercle d'Orient

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<sup>132</sup> Marcello Balbo, "Urban Planning and the Fragmented City of Developing Countries", *Third World Planning Review* 15: 1 (1993), pp. 23-5

<sup>133</sup> Harvey, p.16

were located on there. Tarlabası district being located adjacent to Taksim Square and İstiklal Street became the last target of gentrification after what Sulukule has passed through. These poor neighborhoods which were also close to tourist attractions were left without their residents. Residents of these places are made to move to satellite cities, constructed by government's estate organizations like TOKİ (Housing Development Administration).



**Picture 2.** Urban Renewal Project of TOKİ (before/after) in Ankara<sup>134</sup>

With TOKİ, government tries to evacuate people who were living in valuable neighborhoods which can be evaluated in order to absorb surplus

<sup>134</sup>[https://www.toki.gov.tr/TR/Genel/rg.ashx?DIL=1&BELGEANAH=629&RESIMISIM=habe\\_r\\_ici\\_foto1.jpg](https://www.toki.gov.tr/TR/Genel/rg.ashx?DIL=1&BELGEANAH=629&RESIMISIM=habe_r_ici_foto1.jpg)

products. These gentrified regions become flamboyant housing sites, business and entertainment centers; however, the poorness, insufficiency and hideousness is only transferred to somewhere else:

"[T]he scandalous alleys disappear to the accompaniment of lavish self-praise by the bourgeoisie on account of this tremendous success, but they appear again immediately somewhere else . . . The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished; they are merely shifted elsewhere! The same economic necessity that produced them in the first place, produces them in the next place."<sup>135</sup>

Other than eviction, governments find another solution to emerge out of poverty by awarding private property rights to squatter populations, like in favelas in Rio or in Okmeydanı in İstanbul.<sup>136</sup> However, the poor of these neighborhoods always tends to "be persuaded to trade in that asset for a cash payment at a relatively low price."<sup>137</sup>

Not only these people are bereaved of their houses one way or another, neighborhoods and their relations that they hold with the region; also, all other people are being bereaved of their public spaces. Gans says that "the major users of public recreational space are the people who cannot afford to buy or rent homes with private outdoor space."<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, as we have discussed above, public means that something is open to all. What was tried to be done in the Gezi Park was to take the public recreational space from free access and give it to the use of surplus product absorption in a bourgeois public space.

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<sup>135</sup> Engels, Friedrich. *The Housing Question*. New York: International Publishers, 1935. pp.74-7

<sup>136</sup> <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/50-yillik-tapu-sorunu-bitiyor/ekonomi/detay/1757089/default.htm>

<sup>137</sup> Harvey, p.20

<sup>138</sup> Gans, p.334

With those urban interventions to public spaces which were recently concreted in an attempt to build a shopping mall in Gezi Park which also led to important mass protests throughout the country, especially in İstanbul for whole summer of 2013, visibility and right to express oneself was destroyed since the involvement of people in public spaces was damaged. However, with the emerging technology, people can easily access to Internet which also poses itself as a public space.

## **B. Internet Space**

### **i. What is Internet Space?**

Habermas once said that marginalization of culturally and politically mobilized "plebian" led the public to be pluralized.<sup>139</sup> As a consequence, subcultures and counter-cultures arose in the society. This plurality is, actually, what Bourdieu's concept of habitus relies on. Bourdieu had always stressed the flexible, polysemic and polythetic character of habitus.<sup>140</sup>

Opportunities of Internet have become wider and more diversified as different aspects of society, different cultures and approaches begin to make use of its offers. Access to Internet and computers became easier and easier with the advent of technology, emergence of mobile Internet technologies etc. Various subcultures take this as an advantage. The participatory culture was established

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<sup>139</sup> Habermas, Jürgen. "1990 Tarihli Baskıya Önsöz." In *Kamusalığın Yapısal Dönüşümü*. İstanbul: İletişim, 2010. p.19

<sup>140</sup> Mouzelis, p.107

through different variations as affiliation to a specific Internet community, creating new expressive forms, solving problems in collaboration and shaping the flow of media.<sup>141</sup> With the forums, video-sharing websites, blogs, music-sharing and hosting sites and pages and accounts in the social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. ; with this unique content created, distant locales were linked up around shared functions and meanings on the basis of electronics and digital devices while isolating the experience in the space of places.<sup>142</sup> Now, there are websites where you can shop anything, even in 3D like a real life experience<sup>143</sup>, you can share the music you made or the video you shot, you can publish your stories or simply your ideas about life. There are thousands of how-to videos on the net that teaches people to how to cook, sew, repair; or there are online courses giving real education with certificates. You do not have to have money or time to take a course; you can learn any instrument you want to play. You can create petitions for your cause and open it for signature to a well more amount of people than you can find in real life. You can play games, even children can play lots of games that they do not have to worry that they have no place to play outside. You can bet and gamble. Of course, the basic interaction of the human beings also exists on the Internet: talking. It is called "chat" but it is basically the same thing; you can even do

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<sup>141</sup> Jenkins, H. (2009). *Confronting the challenges of participatory culture: Media education for the 21st century*. The MIT Press. p.3

<sup>142</sup> Castell, M. (2001). "Informationalism and the Network Society" in: Himanen, Pekka (2001): *The Hacker Ethic and the Spirit of the Information Age*. p.171

<sup>143</sup> <https://www.epttavm.com/tr/sayfa/3d-deneyim-kilavuzu.html>

hand jokes - or a similar version of it that is allowed by this "virtual" space, i.e. poke in Facebook<sup>144</sup>, nudge in MSN (Windows Live) Messenger<sup>145</sup> - to people you are talking. There are video chat opportunities, even programs to organize video conferences; you can make polls to learn the public opinion about anything - even, lots of graduate students uses websites like Survey Monkey<sup>146</sup> for their researches. Apart from video chat, there are lots of people who are using different video chat websites for virtual sex.

All in all, Internet is being used for lots of everyday life practice; it gives, maybe, more opportunity to those who are not economically or culturally privileged. There is a counterpart for nearly all activities in the physical space. But, and that is a very large but, do they really correspond to the same thing? Do we really feel more comfortable with the Internet and its opportunities? Does it allow us to do things that we are not capable of doing or insufficient to realize? Does Internet really provide emancipation for its users? To answer these questions, I propose a comparison: a comparison between physical space and Internet space. First, around surfing versus walking debate and later on a specific sample.

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<sup>144</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/help/219967728031249> and

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poke\\_\(Facebook\)#Poke](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poke_(Facebook)#Poke)

<sup>145</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nudge\\_\(instant\\_messaging\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nudge_(instant_messaging))

<sup>146</sup> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>

## ii. Surfing vs. Walking (History of Walking Revisited)

In the part above, *History of Walking*, I have talked about the opportunities of free stroll / free roam in the public space. We have said that it is possible; however, in order to be capable of this, one shall need resources and knowledge. One shall be on the "edge of bourgeoisie." With all the interventions on the public space we have talked on, how can one pursuit its goal of free stroll without resources and knowledge. Internet as a public space succors.

We have started, as we all remember, by saying that Internet's entrance to our lives was very fast; it has an incredible pace with the developing technology. The more the technology developed, the cheaper and faster we have the information. In the contemporary age, in our Internet age, everything is easy to get. Surf, I claim, is the drift that you do not have to be aware of the environment but you are not just a stroller. To surf means to search through (a computer network or TV channels) for information or entertainment.<sup>147</sup> Internet medium by its immanent traits allows its user to stroll *freely* by clicking links, following hypertexts or simply writing an address to an address bar. Therefore, surf is actually the basic activity of the Internet user searching for information or entertainment: a leisure time

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<sup>147</sup> dictionary.com, "Surf." Accessed June 20, 2012.  
<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/surf?s=t>.

activity. However, as we know from the literature Aristotle to Veblen,<sup>148</sup> the leisure time activity is endowed only for the ruling class or the rulers, the masters of the society unless we are talking about exceptions like banquets or carnivals. With the arrival of Internet and social media, the concept, surf, marks the search for leisure time in our virtual world

First, you do not have to be aware but you should know the rules or the properties of the Internet medium. Since you have not *thrown into* the Internet world as we all had into earth; it still necessitates knowledge to some extent. It is the knowledge to make you exist in the virtual world.

Zygmunt Bauman cites that children passes through a primary socialization where they interiorize social skills in life and introduces a secondary socialization that may emerge from changes in external conditions.<sup>149</sup> These changes in external conditions may well be urban interventions, eviction or change in social structure. However, primary socialization of young individuals includes the Web since rapid emergence of Internet and technology; furthermore, needed social skills for a 21st century teenager cover also Internet skills. Therefore, these youth subcultures formed in the Internet while passing through a secondary socialization due to the urban interventions carried out in their neighborhood, instead of being like a fish out of water transforms their social activities into and find a place to express

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<sup>148</sup> For what I have in mind, please look: Aristotle - Politics and Thorstein Veblen - Theory of the Leisure Class

<sup>149</sup> Bauman, Zygmunt. *Thinking Sociologically*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990. p.34

themselves in Internet for which they have already gained the skills. For example, some young people open Facebook pages (both as a fan page or as a personal account) that share nothing genuine, nothing they have created and only present their cool stance against the world and they got thousands of followers or got thousands of likes. Therefore, they are able to make their voice heard maybe not by everyone but by others like themselves throughout the country; moreover, they are able to set standards and "impose" these standards to their followers or the others who follow their way, also. To exemplify, they criticize the problems of "follower and like system" of Facebook and insincerity of Internet in a video.<sup>150</sup> These cultural groups chose to subvert the threats made to their social life, though unconsciously or rather unknowingly, "not by rejecting or altering them, but by using them with respect to ends and references foreign to the system".<sup>151</sup> It was made easy for groups from different classes, different locations and personal histories to present their way of life, or even to justify their existence on the streets.

Surf is also a faster activity than drift and this allows user to spare some time for banal activities or daily life or the most important: work. By this, surfer does not need the whole day off and surfer itself can be any ordinary person that can afford an Internet connection. It is nothing to do with being on the edge of bourgeoisie, with any class difference, with being a bohemian, a

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<sup>150</sup> dokuyanemre., "Abonelik ve Beğeni Üzerine Facebook Sohbetleri," Veysel Kılıçarslan, Web, <http://alkislarlayasiyorum.com/icerik/67590/abonelik-ve-begeni-uzerine-facebook-sohbetleri>.

<sup>151</sup> de Certeau, p. xiii.

dandy, a hipster or a *flâneur*. You just need to have the basic knowledge on Internet (and if we look how many people use internet nowadays, we can conclude it is some very basic knowledge); for any further knowledge or any advanced information, you can just Google it or ask YouTube for any tutorials! The awareness of *dérive* or the taste of the *flâneur* cannot be found in the surfer; however, there are websites that directs you to what you have in mind. For example, StumbleUpon is a website; after you sign in, you just tick your interests and with one click (one stumble) you will be redirected to a website that you might like to visit; if you do not like or do not find it interesting or not appeal to you, you can inform the site or just stumble again. At the entrance it says “We help you explore new and interesting things from every corner of the Web.”<sup>152</sup>

Surf is not a sub-concept of the drift. It is not the actual counterpart of the drift on the Internet side. Surf is the transformed version of the drift into virtual world. It opens drift activity to all people regardless of class or leisure time they have. It opens it to all those who have no opportunity for a good education or who would never reach to the *awareness* that Debord mentioned. Situationists showed a way for exploring and passing through varied ambiances; however, Internet without predetermination or without theorizing it gave this opportunity to all. One question can be asked: what de Certau said about the city that it had been generated by some bodies can be applied to the

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<sup>152</sup> [www.stumbleupon.com](http://www.stumbleupon.com)

Internet space as well? If it can, as the city-user, would internet-user also take shortcuts in spite of the strategic grid of the streets?<sup>153</sup> These will be the questions that we are going to try to answer in the next part.

### iii. A Case Study: Arabesk Rappers

Up to this point we have talked about the opportunities of Internet. Internet gives you a certain degree of freedom. For a free roam in the city, to avoid the interventions, one should have certain resources and knowledge which is inhabited in the habitus, internalized by all past socializations.<sup>154</sup> In the field of physical public space, with the interventions operated on it, not everyone is allowed to do it. However, when it is about Internet *field* which is also a public space, it is easier to do a free stroll - even though, when Twitter was banned in Turkey, people find ways to get in there and number of users in Turkey increased more than 30%.

However, does this simply mean that Internet provides emancipation for individuals or groups (or *participants*)?

To be able to answer it, I propose a case study on Arabesk Rappers who are a subculture using these opportunities of Internet to make their music accessible to everyone and express themselves<sup>155</sup>.

Arabesk rappers are just a subculture; claiming that they are *delikanlı*

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<sup>153</sup> de Certeau p.93

<sup>154</sup> Mouzelis, p.99

<sup>155</sup> For a monographical work on arabesk rappers which is, also, the basis of this part, please see: Ekin Can Göksoy, "Bir Altkültür Tezahürü Olarak 'Arabesk Rap'," *Birikim*, no. 285 (2012): 93-97.

(upright and brave) and presenting coolness by expressing their agony due to life they live, arabesk rappers shot video clips and share them on social networks. This genre, this blend of genres to be exact, is not something that you can look for in the music stores, or online shops. However, the so-called fusion of the two acclaimed genres of music, arabesk and rap, did not end up as a new popular genre of music. There are no official records, no sales on market, and no information on traditional media; furthermore, this genre does not seem to attract any producers. But if we look up in YouTube, there are 51400 results with the tag “arabesk rap”; hundreds of “arabesk rap” videos in different video hosting sites; lots of entries and tags related to “arabesk rap” in ekşisözlük. So, how should we read this inconsistency?

In order to show that why arabesk rap arose in the Internet and only in the Internet, first I would like to investigate the efforts to be visible on the Internet and Internet-specific subculture formations. In 2005, in Sulukule, a neighborhood located near the Byzantine city walls which were included into UNESCO World Heritage Site and where a significant Roma population was living, an urban renewal project was started. Being a dance and music culture cradle of İstanbul, Sulukule has passed through a gentrification intervention and lost its characteristics since the Roma population was evicted.<sup>156</sup> However, social organizations gathered and worked against this gentrification project,

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<sup>156</sup> For a detailed information about Sulukule Urban Renewal Project both with its legal and urban planning edges: <http://untappedcities.com/2011/04/25/the-face-of-urban-renewal-and-preservation-in-istanbul/>

significantly after UNESCO's critique against the project in 2008.<sup>157</sup> Sulukule Platform and all other organizations, in addition to social and legal struggle against the project, carried out some important projects with children, women and youth of the neighborhood, including the launch of a youth rap band - not an arabesk rap band, though - Tahribad-ı İsyān, which made and released a video with the efforts of the members of these organizations against gentrification.<sup>158</sup> This way, they were able to convey their stance against the life to large masses with the help of professional video clip forms and through Internet. This made them famous in a certain aspect; giving them a chance to perform a concert in an important concert and event hall in the scope of 13th İstanbul Biennial which was also about the "barbaric" interventions on the public domain<sup>159</sup> with the motto borrowed from a Turkish poem written by Lale Müldür, "Mom, Am I Barbarian?" and to take place in a video where they were performing against gentrification in Sulukule shot by famous contemporary artist Halil Altındere whose works were also exhibited in the Biennial.<sup>160</sup>

Internet as a public space offers important opportunities for these subcultures, music groups, activists or even individuals; however, considering

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<sup>157</sup> UNESCO, "REPORT ON THE JOINT WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE/ICOMOS MISSION TO THE HISTORIC AREAS OF ISTANBUL WORLD HERITAGE SITE." Last modified June 2008. Accessed March 25, 2014. [http://whc.unesco.org/download.cfm?id\\_document=100746](http://whc.unesco.org/download.cfm?id_document=100746).

<sup>158</sup> Tahribad-ı İsyān., "Ghetto Machines," Web, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wx36mnZvEO0>.

<sup>159</sup> Fulya Erdemci. İKSV, "13th İstanbul Biennial Conceptual Framework." Last modified October 20, 2013. Accessed January 28, 2014. <http://13b.iksv.org/en>.

<sup>160</sup> Tahribad-ı İsyān., "Harikalar Diyarı / Wonderland," Shot by Halil Altındere, Web, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GnI-QRxMRXA&list=PLXqJYNI1kWoGaoyA5F0Y\\_4VGC6jj1H8dp&index=4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GnI-QRxMRXA&list=PLXqJYNI1kWoGaoyA5F0Y_4VGC6jj1H8dp&index=4).

that being visible in the Internet is not simply using Internet and social media for certain purposes. One needs to be accepted or rejected, praised or hated, shared or suggested to be visible more and more in the social media or in general on the Web. Similarly, the rise of the so-called “arabesk rap”, which we retrace how it is called this way further later on, occurs in collaboration with the rise of the recording and editing technology both in audio and in video. But to clarify how it gained importance and known or rather named as arabesk rap; first, we should point out two distinctive characteristics of it; one being the low quality technique (form) and other being strong emphasis on being poor (content). While the so-called “amateur or newly arisen” Turkish “gangsta” hip-hop tries to reify and to underline the richness, being like a “gangster”, having affairs with lots of women; “arabesk rap” have been oriented on infidelity, impossible or platonic love, brotherhood, rebellion against destiny etc... If we compare the way the videos produced, the form, “gangsta” rap has rather more quality than “arabesk” one. The former has used, is able to do and more interested in doing a “quality” work. By quality, I mean the use of a more sophisticated camera and advanced editing techniques, a rather crowded cast and signifiers of richness, i.e. BMWs, a pimp-like attitude towards women etc. Even though what they rhyme contradicts with what the video shows us, the video Bizik (We Are)<sup>161</sup> by an amateur rap group Fate of Adana is a good

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<sup>161</sup> Fate. "Bizik." Video. YouTube . New York: YouTube, 2010. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uw\\_zfFEB6qA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uw_zfFEB6qA). (Retrieved on January 29, 2014)

example. In the video, performers pose themselves as the “stigmatized” residents of backstreets; however, declaring themselves as the “kings” of the neighborhood, based on earned coolness on the neighborhood.<sup>162</sup>

After clearing the difference between two different kinds of amateur rap in Turkey, we can sail on to explore what “arabesk rap” tells us and despite its being far from mainstream and low quality why it is getting more popular. “Arabesk rap” is basically the music of the rap rhyme over a slow and dramatic music. This is done by taking a familiar melody or an instrumental version of a famous song; then, rhyming on it and combining the two on a basic computer audio program; mostly, freeware. For example an important arabesk rap band Hatay Crew's song "Ben Aşka Tövbeliyim (I Repent for Love)"<sup>163</sup> uses the melody and music of a famous nineties pop band Ayna's song "Gelincik (Corn Rose)"<sup>164</sup> with different lyrics and rap rhyme. Videos are shot by a webcam or an old 8 mm camera and edited either on a basic editing program or by camera editing, where you do the editing by the camera's on/off button. Lyrics have the classical message, as in arabesk music, of rebellion against destiny, against fortune and bad luck; a rebellion that is arisen from the unsatisfied love.

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<sup>162</sup> Considering the emphasis on black neighborhoods and mafioso relations and controversial killings of two important figures, Tupac Shakur and Notorious B.I.G. (<http://articles.latimes.com/2002/sep/06/business/fi-tupac6>) and violent themes of lyrics, i.e. anti-police approach and misogyny (<http://www.uic.edu/orgs/kbc/hiphop/hiphoggangs.htm>), Bizik can be concluded as "gangsta" rap. However, gangsta rap and its relations in Turkish amateur rap is a wide subject and should be discussed thoroughly elsewhere.

<sup>163</sup> Mc Aliko. , & Mc Mahmut,. "Ben Aşka Tövbeliyim" Posted December 12 2011. Web, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TzYhP4siYs0>. (Retrieved on March 23, 2014)

<sup>164</sup> Ayna. "Gelincik" Recorded February 27 2010. Web, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSKEG1Oc1VA>. (Retrieved on March 23, 2014)

Before introducing a general examination of arabesk rap bands and how they formulate their message and with what intention they were named as "arabesk" rap bands, I would like to propound the shared characteristics of their music with the arabesk genre. As Meral Özbek asserts that, while considering Orhan Gencebay's work, arabesk music uses a language expressing the rising expectations, desires and frustrations of urbanizing popular masses and while using this language, embodies all themes in lyrics about love since it is the dominant theme.<sup>165</sup> In the arabesk rap genre, lyrics are completely about unrequited love and suffering performer goes through when his girlfriend left him. As in the arabesk, arabesk rap also, mostly, addresses the beloved; however, unlike arabesk, addressee would never become God or fate. Instead, arabesk rappers only show God their witness for their suffering or their love. Also in arabesk rap, beloved is "just and compassionate, she is depicted as the sun, life and happiness itself." However, the beloved in arabesk rap has left her lover for a rich man or at best, without a reason. Nevertheless, in both genres, "I" is always an innocent person; therefore, he gets to blame the one who keeps him away from living his love/life.<sup>166</sup> Furthermore, in arabesk rap, performer shows his ex-lover as the reason for his misbehaviors, i.e. drug abuse. Arabesk and arabesk rap relation could be considered around the transformation in the arabesk genre in 1980s. In 1980s arabesk music, love theme was still dominant;

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<sup>165</sup> Meral Özbek. *Arabesk Culture: A Case of Modernization and Popular Identity. Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*. Edited by Sibel Bozdoğan, Reşat Kasaba. Washington: University of Washington Press, 1997. p.215

<sup>166</sup> Ibid. p.216

however, political protest and tension between grief and hope was lost.<sup>167</sup> For example, in an important arabesk figure, Müslüm Gürses's 1977 song "İçiyorsam Sebebi Var (There is a Reason to My Drinking)"<sup>168</sup>, lyrics began to lost the hope or protest inclinations:

"[...] Others have my lover now/Bliss is far from me [...] I don't drink pointlessly / Have no hope for future."

As well as in arabesk rap, lyrics became completely a sorrowful cry for lost love:

"God is my witness / I love you so much / You left my pure love / I ask you now tell me your answer / Can anybody love you like I do?"<sup>169</sup>

To understand the common characteristics of arabesk rappers and to state the reasons behind why they were called as "arabesk rap" even though the foregoing differences and even though they do not choose to be called as such, let us examine some important examples of arabesk rap in detail. At first glance, it can be seen that excessive use of soft drugs is the main common characteristics of the videos tagged as arabesk rap. The depressed mood itself they have, or the very degree of their melancholy, is embodied on the videos as the representation of excessive and explicit use of heavy drugs. For example,

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid. p.221

<sup>168</sup> Müslüm Gürses. "İçiyorsam Sebebi Var" Recorded March 28 2008. Web, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdfoJnL1sxs>.

<sup>169</sup> Depresif Buğra. "Serseri Dediler." Video. Alkışlarla Yaşıyorum . İstanbul: Alkışlarla Yaşıyorum, 2011. <http://alkislarlayasiyorum.com/icerik/60863/depresif-bugra-serseri-dediler-arabesk-rap>. (Retrieved on 29 January 2014)

the untitled video of “Dertler Derya Records”<sup>170</sup> by DJ Abdullah & Ahmet-K opens with a sequence showing the vocalist of the group using marijuana with a primitive bong, known as “kova (bucket)” in Turkish because it was made by using a bucket and a plastic bottle and the video has an artificial smoke effect which was added with a video editor program, representing being high. Even though it starts with a sequence that can be considered an illegal act since in Turkey no recreational drug use is allowed, the following sequence – in which the rhyming begins – we see the vocalist performing in front of a Turkish flag that has nothing to do with anything in the video. This sequence, in my humble opinion, points the importance of the drug use by saying that the performers are nationalist and in peace with the official discourse in the way that they are respectful to laws, state and its national/inseparable identity which is embodied in the flag; yet, they have been made to use drug, to do something that is illegal and maybe immoral, by the conditions they face i.e. problems with their beloved. They are stigmatized due to the problems they are facing, mostly related to love life and desperately cling to drugs even if illegal. This becomes clearer with the scene where the boys in their desperate hours, in their time of need, starts to gather money in order to buy “grass” in the video “Bulamadım Anne (I Couldn't Find, Mother)” by Efecan<sup>171</sup>. Another important example of

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<sup>170</sup> Dertler Derya Records, DJ Abdullah & Ahmet-K. "Untitled." Video. Alkışlarla Yaşıyorum . İstanbul: Alkışlarla Yaşıyorum, 2010. <http://alkislarlayasiyorum.com/icerik/34545/dertler-derya-kasetcilik-gururla-sunar>. (Retrieved on 29 January 2014)

<sup>171</sup> Efecan. "Bulamadım Anne." Video. Alkışlarla Yaşıyorum . İstanbul: Alkışlarla Yaşıyorum, 2011. <http://alkislarlayasiyorum.com/icerik/57018/efecan-bulamadim-anne-mezarlikli-arabesk->

the despair that arabesk rappers go through is in Depresif Buğra's "Serseri Dediler" (They Called Me A Punk) video clip<sup>172</sup>. Buğra's friend, who also does the backing vocals, sympathizes with Buğra's problem since he seems sorrowful and asks what was wrong; however Buğra asks him for a favor, to roll him a cigarette with marijuana by that way he would be able to tell what was wrong by rapping. Furthermore, Buğra asks for this favor in order to have a bit of a relief, and then to rap to relieve his suffering completely. In his song, Buğra addresses his girlfriend by making the audience witness and tells her what he has come through after she left him. In the lyrics he says that he suffers from being lovelorn and curses his fate. In other words, the way he raps becomes the signifier of his agony and his rebellion against the visible conditions that created it.

In these videos, the way they use the written language<sup>173</sup>, the way they name themselves and the way they make their hair and dress can be considered as common factors also. The fluffy and fuzzy hairdos fixed with excessive use of hair gel, the imitation silver or gold necklaces, rings, wristlets or diamond earrings, and shiny sunglasses are some of the visible characteristics of arabesk rap performers. For example in an earlier example of arabesk rap, Ankara

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rap. (Retrieved on 29 January 2014)

<sup>172</sup> Depresif Buğra. "Serseri Dediler."

<sup>173</sup> For a comprehensive study on social class and speech code relations: Bernstein, B., "Social class and linguistic development: a theory of social learning." Halsey, A.H.; Floud, J.; Anderson, C.A., eds. Education, economy and society, p. 288–314. New York, Free Press

Crew's untitled video<sup>174</sup> is created with the stills and Star Wars type sliding lyrics. Lyrics are written with using "q" for "k" and "g", spelling mistakes of suffices –de/-da or –ki are made, and majuscule and miniscule letters are used together both in lyrics or in bands' names and performers' nicknames. Arabesk rappers give themselves names with the "DJ" prefix or the word "stayla", sometimes include the traffic plate number of their hometown or their ages in their names, such as KarİzMa.19, MaHKum.55. In addition, as a frequent characteristic, the English word "crew" is used in the names of bands, e.g. Ankara Crew, Hatay Crew...

Recently this style and appearance and use of language were culturally coded as "apaçilik" by the middle class receivers. Therefore, it should be mentioned here what does "apaçi" refer to and in which points "apaçi" and "arabesk rapper" resembles each other and in which points they differ. "Apaçi", meaning Apachee in Turkish, first used in the late Ottoman period borrowed from France and used with the transliteration from French, as "Apaş". Apaçi or then Apaş was described as "perturbator, townie, disturbing, ignorant riffraffs."<sup>175</sup> Nowadays, apaçi is a word given to young people who "wear fake clothes, have spiky hair and dance near or on overpasses in the city centers with

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<sup>174</sup> Ankara Crew. "Untitled." Video. Alkışlarla Yaşıyorum . İstanbul: Alkışlarla Yaşıyorum, 2009. <http://alkislarlayasiyorum.com/icerik/21749/ankara-crew>. (Retrieved on 29 January 2014)

<sup>175</sup> Abdullah Güner and Ömer Miraç Yaman. Popülist Kültür, "'Böyle giyinirsem belki kentli olurum'." Last modified December 30, 2013. Accessed March 26, 2014. <http://www.populistikultur.com/boyle-giyinirsem-belki-kentli-olurum/>.

tecktonik music."<sup>176</sup> However, in arabesk rap, we rarely see performers in the city centers; either they perform at home or in graveyards, ruin-down places, outskirts of the city. Furthermore, they never dance since the inner characteristics of their music were based on sorrow. Unlike apaçi, arabesk rappers create, compose or at least edit their own music where apaçis are not the ones who composed the tecktonik pieces they dance. For example, a song known as Apaçi Marşı (Apaçi March) was a piece called Outro Lex by Flowshakerz.<sup>177</sup> All in all, arabesk rappers have some common characteristics with apaçis as well as their music with arabesk genre; however, arabesk rap poses itself different from those two, formulating a unique concept.

Their lifestyle with all aspects is labeled as “apaçilik”, and the one who lived in that lifestyle whether s/he is producing or listening arabesk rap was coded as "apaçi" wrongfully as we have stressed above. Low quality of their videos, the way they rebel and the cool stance they present their message, also the thing they are revolting against, i.e. drug use and so on, are considered as low, shallow; hence, again, “apaçilik” when we look for the social media reflections. These have been the signifiers of "apaçilik" myth. "Myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification, and making contingency appear eternal. Now this process is exactly that of bourgeois

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<sup>176</sup> Necmi Erdoğan. "'Beyaz adamlar' ve 'Apaçiler',." *BirGün*, August 7, 2011.

<sup>177</sup> Flowshakerz. "Outro Lex" Recorded January 11 2010. Web, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FvNQ2h0B2Y>.

ideology." says Barthes.<sup>178</sup> There stands the middle and upper middle class. There are two reasons behind that I can easily say that the decoders, therefore, the ones who made arabesk rap popular in the social media, belongs to higher classes. The most important argument is that by the comments under the videos we can clearly see that decoding procedure is applied by the middle and higher classes, by the ones who try to distinct themselves from the "apaçılık". Since, as Ayşe Öncü asserts, prevailing stereotypes and typifications cannot be thought apart from the middle class culture which is also defining them<sup>179</sup>; middle class people distinct themselves from the lower class by seeing the rebellion of the "arabesk rap" subculture as shallow and low. For example, the top comment under the video of "Dertler Derya Records" is:

"The blood that gives color to the flag hasn't been spilled for you to use the flag as your song's background accessory."

As I have mentioned before, flag is nothing to do with anything in the video, yet the performer chooses to perform in front of it. Also, it is not awkward for a Turkish home or some business place to have a flag on the window or on the wall. However, the commentator gets angry, addressing a nationalist common sense. This attitude could only be linked with the hatred or repulsion towards the performer or what he represents. Another example is an

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<sup>178</sup> Roland Barthes. "Myth Today." 1998. Ed. J Storey. *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*. London: Prentice Hall, 1998. p.117

<sup>179</sup> Ayşe Öncü. *Istanbulites and Others: The Cultural Cosmology of Being Middle Class in the Era of Globalism. İstanbul: Between the Global and the Local*. Edited by Çağlar Keyder. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999. p.98

entry in ekşisözlük under the title “arabesk rap”.<sup>180</sup>

"Invention of 'apaçi style'. A mixed up, unstable music of mixed up, unstable individuals."

This entry uses "apaçi style" as an insult since for the user "apaçilik" was put on par with shallow and low culture. Because what s/he means as apaçi is in appearance, in speech and in lifestyle, completely different from him or herself; user finds the arabesk rap and its performers "mixed-up" or even unstable.<sup>181</sup>

This hostile approach is actually what made arabesk rap notorious. In other words, arabesk rap became well known by means of the humiliating look of the upper/middle class receivers down to the ‘apaçis’ as members of a pathetic lower class. They condemned and denounced it as something to be laughed at for its depreciable social status.

Now, let us turn to our analysis of how this genre is popular in social media and how it is perceived by receivers. Stuart Hall proposes three hypothetical position in the invaluable essay of his, “Encoding and Decoding”,<sup>182</sup> on which decoding of a message can be based. First one is dominant-hegemonic position in which the receiver decodes the message in

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<sup>180</sup> Husnueditor. "arabesk rap." *ekşisözlük*. <http://www.eksisozluk.com/show.asp?t=arabesk rap>. (Retrieved on 30 January 2014).

<sup>181</sup> Öncü. p.104. Öncü tells here how arabesk culture was seen as an in-between culture polluting and contaminating both urban lifestyle and artistically established forms.

<sup>182</sup> Stuart Hall. "Encoding, Decoding." 1999. Ed. S During. *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, 1999. p. 515-17.

terms of reference code it has been encoded. Second one is the negotiated position where receiver broadly accepts the meaning, however sometimes subverts the meaning for his/her own position. Third one is the oppositional position in which receiver decode the message in a globally contrary way. Then, we can consider the hostile reception of arabesk rappers as oppositional position. However, we should keep in mind that this positioning is based on the "assumption that the latent meaning of the text is encoded in the dominant code."<sup>183</sup>

Hall considers that both receiver and sender, while meaning the structures, based on their frameworks of knowledge, relations of productions and technical infrastructures.<sup>184</sup> However, arabesk rappers while encoding their message use dominant position of their subculture which is obviously not the dominant code. By inverting the positioning of Hall, we can say that the receivers are in the oppositional position of Hall due to dominant position of arabesk rap subculture. So, they "understand the preferred reading but do not share the text's code and reject this reading, bringing to bear an alternative frame of reference."<sup>185</sup>

In this being in the oppositional position process for the middle-class receivers, myth constituted around the concept "apaçi" plays an important role. For Barthes, myth transforms history into nature. Receiver considers all use of

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<sup>183</sup> Daniel Chandler. Aberystwyth University, "Encoding/Decoding." Last modified January 03, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2014. <http://users.aber.ac.uk/dgc/Documents/S4B/sem08c.html>.

<sup>184</sup> Hall. p.510

<sup>185</sup> Chandler, D. "Encoding/Decoding."

language, appearance, clothing and suffering which formulates arabesk rappers as a subculture separate from apaçi, as an inductive system rather than a semiological<sup>186</sup> system. In his/her eyes, signifiers and signified have a natural relationship.<sup>187</sup> Arabesk rappers, appear as a counter-myth in the eyes of the receiver within the same subculture. Apaçi myth does not apply to members of arabesk rap subculture, both performers and listeners, since they have the same characteristics. For them, message in both sending and receiving ends have the same denotative value, as well as the connotation of the meaning.<sup>188</sup> It changes according to the cultural frame of the sender and receiver. This makes "apaçi" a counter-myth in John Fiske's terms for them;<sup>189</sup> despite this fact and its general rebellious character arabesk rap does not appear as a counter-culture.

Critical approach and reception towards arabesk rappers in social media also reveals the common characteristics of the receivers. I have said that according to Hall, these receivers, while decoding the message as shallow and

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<sup>186</sup> This case study aims for structuralist/semiology analysis of perception of arabesk rappers in social media. However, reader should keep in mind that there is a large critique of structuralist analysis literature. For example, there is a point of view that an ethnographic and phenomenological analysis should accompany these kind of analysis discussed broadly here (McQuarrie, Edward F & David Glen Mick (1992): 'On Resonance: A Critical Pluralistic Inquiry into Advertising Rhetoric', *Journal of Consumer Research* 19: pp.180-97). In addition, Susan Hayward argues that semiotic analysis tends to downplay the affective domain (Hayward, Susan (1996): *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London: Routledge). I agree partly with these critiques but yet, I left out these since my aim is to show only why arabesk rap could not find a way to be represented in traditional media and in a commercial way, though it was shared, commented in social media, frequently.

<sup>187</sup> Barthes. p.116

<sup>188</sup> John Fiske. *Introduction to Mass Communication Studies*. London: Methuen, 1985. pp. 90-2

<sup>189</sup> Ibid. pp.94-5

low, have their feet on the frameworks of knowledge which denote their social and cultural background. This brings the taste discussion introduced by famous French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu into this study. Bourdieu asserts that tastes are firstly formed as distastes or the contempt rose by sick-making of the tastes of others.<sup>190</sup> It is an aesthetic judgment in the end and it is "an eminently social faculty, resulting from class upbringing and education."<sup>191</sup>

Distastes in the case of arabesk rap rise primarily from arabesk rappers failing to associate with contemporary norms of music video-making. Because, for example, the gangsta rap example I have given before, Fate's "Bizik" - or even other subcultures mentioned above such as those who criticize the follower and like system in Facebook - follow the same formula of presenting themselves as "cool" personalities. As Dick Pountain and David Robins argues, cool is "a permanent state of private rebellion."<sup>192</sup> As in our case, arabesk rappers present their coolness while cry for their love by still rapping, still having their hairdo and accessories and with the strict commitment to the motto, "love cannot be bought or sold". In addition, cool has a meaning against *good*.<sup>193</sup> Pountain and Robins give the example of coolness of using coke. It does not mean that one becomes a good citizen by using coke; on the contrary,

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<sup>190</sup> Pierre Bourdieu. *Distinction A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), p.56.

<sup>191</sup> Wacquant. p.270

<sup>192</sup> Daniel Pountain and David Robins. *Cool Rules. Emotions: A Social Science Reader*. Edited by Monica Greco & Paul Stenner. New York: Routledge, 2008. p. 152

<sup>193</sup> Ibid. p.155

becomes cool. Arabesk rappers present their cool stance in addition to those mentioned above with use of excessive drugs also. Gangsta rappers in Turkey also present their coolness with defiance to authority - not in a collective way though.<sup>194</sup> However, why they are not coded as "apaçi" or why they are not perceived as shallow or low is directly linked with the canon of video making. By saying that, I mean the use of professional equipment, professional editing and sound and video quality. Since arabesk rappers failed to produce videos that are similar to those in the music industry, e.g. that are capable of broadcasting in MTV; their proposed coolness, content of their videos and whole characteristics that made them a subculture is condemned in order for higher class to define their taste by negating the taste of lower classes.<sup>195</sup>

We see that, of course other than YouTube, the videos of arabesk rappers are shared on websites, such as [alkislarlayasiyorum.com](http://alkislarlayasiyorum.com)<sup>196</sup>, which provide visitors with popular material, which makes them either to look retrospectively at the past, at collective childhood memories and kindle nostalgia, or to sympathize with or to laugh at social and cultural differences or different accents. These popular web sites, as well as social media, help the creators of arabesk rap to share with the other users their music. Users watch, laugh and comment on arabesk rap clips, only to locate themselves in a social

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid. p.152

<sup>195</sup> Wacquant. p.271-72

<sup>196</sup> [Alkislarlayasiyorum.com](http://alkislarlayasiyorum.com), [izlesene.com](http://izlesene.com), [vidivodo.com](http://vidivodo.com) etc. are websites providing "funny" content for which are not intended to be comedy, like arabesk rappers, videos from rural parts of Turkey, people with different accents etc.

status higher than those who make the music they are laughing at. One of the reasons why one cannot make money in the mainstream music industry with arabesk rap despite the fact that it is very popular - as I have mentioned before there are more than fifteen thousands of arabesk rap in YouTube whereas arabesk rap has no coverage in traditional media or in music industry, is that it counts as something to be laughed at, not to be consumed as a cultural product in music industry.

I have explained, until now, that arabesk rappers have some common characteristics as well as vital differences with apaçis, and the reasons why middle/high class receivers consider performers of arabesk rap as apaçis. I have also explained above that their music has also share common characteristics with arabesk genre. In that case, even though they do not choose to be named as "arabesk rappers", why they have been called as such? Meral Özbek cites that arabesk musicians refused to describe their music as arabesk since the term has "dirty" connotations.<sup>197</sup> Similar to arabesk musicians, arabesk rappers also pass through a harsh critique in terms of their music and their self-representation in the videos. What was coded as arabesk revives in the stance against arabesk rap. Those who listen or perform arabesk were called "kıro" and "maganda"<sup>198</sup> and in addition, in 1960s, 70s whole migrant culture in İstanbul was being named as

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<sup>197</sup> Özbek, M. p.220

<sup>198</sup> How "maganda" concept was created and perceived was discussed thoroughly in the context of cartoons and comics in Öncü, A. (1999)

arabesk.<sup>199</sup> The signifier of the rebellion in arabesk was determined in the self-harm, razorblade scars ("faça" in Turkish). Only after arabesk was accepted as a genre of music in the late 1990s, and other musical subcultures were become visible in the Internet, the distinction mechanism was transformed into these newly arisen genres, namely arabesk rap. The old "kıro" became "apaçi"; razorblade scars, "faça" were shifted into drug abuse, "kova" in the context of self-harm. Therefore, receivers were led to name this new genre as "arabesk" rap, both remembering the "dirty" connotations of the word and considering the common characteristics of the genres.

All in all, this adopted humiliating look made the receiver consume the myth s/he created. Music that arabesk rappers produce was not consumed as music, as a cultural product but as a myth. Just because, the high form of message transfer is art and these messages have nothing to do with the canon of art, higher-class member receiver condemns the message and its sender as low class since "a class is defined as much by its perceived being as by its being."<sup>200</sup> The need to have a social distinction from which is culturally "low" and allegedly "shallow", is based on the different frames of knowledge in which culture means Culture. As Raymond Williams<sup>201</sup> states, culture is "a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group, or humanity in general, whereas in "works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity,"

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<sup>199</sup> Özbek, M. p.212

<sup>200</sup> Bourdieu, P. p.564

<sup>201</sup> Raymond Williams. *Keywords A vocabulary of culture and society*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983. p.90

culture becomes Culture.’<sup>202</sup> In the case of arabesk rap, this seems to render the upper/middle classes a culturally “superior” group and gives them the liberty to look down upon others. Bourdieu demonstrates that hierarchy of lifestyles is the misrecognized retranslation of the hierarchy of classes and for each major social position, there is a class habitus corresponding broad kinds of tastes.<sup>203</sup> The upper/middle class members consume the myth in order to define the borders of their social distinction.

In conclusion, arabesk rappers formed a subculture via Internet connection, even though they have not chosen to be named as such. Their music did not, and maybe will never, find a chance to popularize as arabesk genre; however, they find a way to convey their message to the members of this subculture and even if they are made fun of in social media, to express themselves to the crowds. This brings us to the starting premise: Can Internet provide a space where similar voices come together? For arabesk rappers, it did.

Can Internet space give a realm of freedom for those who were made to leave the streets? It seems that it is nothing to do with the socialization or easy access to the Internet. Internet, again, is a *battlefield* where one, again, should bring one's own modes of capital. Internet opens a public space to all; however, it does not equip its users with certain forms of capital or it is not a place that nullifies the differences arising from the levels of capitals owned.

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid. p.90

<sup>203</sup> Wacquant, L. p.271

So, is there any chance for Internet to be an emancipatory field?

### **C. An Emancipatory Field?**

Internet gives us a certain extent of freedom; however, it seems to be the extension of freedom we have in the physical space. Thus, Internet seems not to be providing any emancipation to those who were deprived of certain freedom. However, it is not completely pessimistic. Mouzelis, when trying to explain Bourdieu's argument that "generative schemata of habitus are not automatic internalization of objective social structures", says that social beings even under pressure and regardless of their class-belongings, can approve or reject or maybe, select external social structures to internalize.<sup>204</sup> Agents are not atomized particles that can be attracted or repulsed. They have a tendency to act according to the forms of capital they equipped with. However, it is not simple as this. Because, according to Bourdieu, social positions do not guarantee a certain stance (*prise de position*). Agents can have different stances or positions when faced with different positions and roles with different rights and obligations. Moreover, even though the agents have predetermined forms of knowledge, obtained by socialization, on the instant of social encounter, this does not have the power to determine what happens in the interaction.<sup>205</sup> Therefore, *habitus* is not a determinist scheme and there may be many numbers

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<sup>204</sup> Mouzelis, p.108

<sup>205</sup> see: Erving Goffman, "The Interaction Order", *American Sociological Review*, c. 48, 1983

of exceptions. The question is actually that what should be done to increase the number of these exceptions and make them the *rule*? Is there any way to do it? If there is, how could it be? On the other hand, can Internet give us a specific opportunity to do so?

If we accept that Internet is at least an extension of the physical space; we should keep in mind that premise of Bourdieu<sup>206</sup>:

"If we grant that symbolic systems are social products that contribute to making the world, that they do not simply mirror social relations but help constitute them, then one can, within limits, transform the world by transforming its representation"

To answer our proposed set of questions, now we are going to talk about, strategies, tactics, games and roles to derive satisfactory methods for emancipation via Internet.

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<sup>206</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant. p.14

## 5. LA RÈGLE DU JEU

*"The awful thing about life is this: Everybody  
has their reasons."*

Octave (Jean Renoir), *La Règle du Jeu* (dir. by Jean Renoir)

Up to now, our discussion was on to what extent our daily life practices whether restricted, unemancipated or not, can be transferred into Internet space and that do this transfer provide any emancipation in the sense that giving an opportunity to those who are restricted, incapacitated of certain actions in the physical public space somehow.

Now, we will be trying to answer our questions and propose some solutions or methods.

First, I will be talking about strategies and tactics; then, my aim will be to analyze the theories which uses game and play as their metaphors of social life and discuss the strategies and tactics over these metaphors as an encounter of interests.

### **A. Strategies and Tactics**

In this Chapter 5, part A I will be dealing with the strategies and tactics as it might help us to propose a better vision for emancipation in and change via Internet. Strategies and Tactics concepts give me a chance to relate structure/agency theories I follow (those of Giddens and Bourdieu) with daily life theoreticians.

To start with, let us follow a simple remark on strategy of Michel de Certeau. According to French philosopher, strategy is "the calculus of force-relationships" made possible after a subject of will and power is isolated from the environment. Strategy requires an existence of predetermined place which enables a basis for generating relations with a distinction. By this model, political, economical and scientific rationality can be build.<sup>207</sup>

Moreover, Pierre Bourdieu has a rather different perspective on strategies. He says that strategy is not to pursue calculated goals in a purposive and preplanned way. They may or may not be following rules consciously or aiming at premeditated goals by a strategist. Rather, it is an active emplacement of objectively oriented "lines of action". These lines of action follow regularities and establish compatible and socially comprehensible models.<sup>208</sup>

It seems that they attribute different functions to the notion, strategy. In order to clearly show the difference and possible resemblance, let us consider de Certeau's concept of tactics. For de Certeau, tactic is<sup>209</sup>:

"[...] a calculus which cannot count on a 'proper' (...), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance. It has at its disposal no base where it can capitalize on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to circumstances. The 'proper' is a victory of space over time. On the contrary, because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time - it is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized 'on the wing.' Whatever it wins, it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into 'opportunities.' The weak must continually turn to their own ends forces alien to them. This is achieved in the propitious moments when they are able to combine heterogeneous elements (...); the intellectual synthesis of these given elements takes

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<sup>207</sup> de Certeau, p. xix

<sup>208</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant, p. 25

<sup>209</sup> de Certeau, p. xix

the form, however, not of a discourse, but of the decision itself, the act and manner in which the opportunity is 'seized'."

It seems to me that what Bourdieu says about strategy is analogous to what de Certeau says "tactic". Besides, Giddens when talking about motives stands in a similar position. For him, motives have a tendency to correspond to direct action only in unusual situations which break the routine. Motives provide programs or plans in which action will be conducted.<sup>210</sup> So, it is not vital for everything to be rational in decision-making process; however, consequences are a mix of conscious, less conscious and unconscious elements. Habitus composes of less conscious or unconscious predecessors with conscious ones, taking part in the construction of intentional strategies.<sup>211</sup>

Giddens, furthermore, asserts that an intended result can come up from an aggregate of courses of intentional actions. For him, involvement of time and space is also obvious; emphasizing upon the significance of connecting unintended consequences of action with institutionalized practices, those deeply embedded in time and space.<sup>212</sup> It seems to me as melting strategy and tactic concepts of de Certeau's in the same pot. If we reformulate the arguments of Giddens with de Certeau's concepts, it means that intentional action which is derived from the dependence of strategies to space leads to unintended consequences which are derived from the dependence of tactics to time.

Giddens, at the same time, refers to the game theorists, also. For game

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<sup>210</sup> Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, p. 6

<sup>211</sup> Mouzelis, p. 110

<sup>212</sup> Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, p. 13

theorists, outcome of rational actions which are conducted individually by different actors can end up being irrational for all of them.<sup>213</sup>

It can be said that rational actions are the actions that are compatible with the strategy. Besides, it is not possible to say that tactics are irrational. They may not be rational; in addition, they are not planned. However, they are conducted as a matter of that specific time and space. De Certeau, as an example, tells about anthropological findings about Indians under the rule of Spanish colonizers<sup>214</sup>:

"Submissive, and even consenting to their subjection, the Indians nevertheless often *made of* rituals, representations, and laws imposed on them something quite different from what their conquerors had in mind; they subverted them not by rejecting or altering them, but by using them with respect to ends and references foreign to the system they had no choice but to accept. They were *other* within the very colonization that outwardly assimilated them; their use of the dominant social order deflected its power, which they lacked the means to challenge; they escaped it without leaving it."

A similar example can be shown from another study, a study on Internet space, an article written by Deirdre Hynes. According to Hynes, Internet users design and create their own relations between technology. They are transforming the Internet, continuously, as something valuable and meaningful.<sup>215</sup>

These examples remind us about the habitus principle of Bourdieu. According to him, it is a strategy generating principle allowing agents to overcome contingent and varying conditions.<sup>216</sup> In order to clarify his reasoning,

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<sup>213</sup> Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, p. 13-4

<sup>214</sup> de Certeau, p. xiii

<sup>215</sup> Hynes, Deirdre. "[End] Users as Designers: The Internet in Everyday Life in Irish Households." *Anthropology in Action* 16, no. 1 (2009): 18-29. p.19

<sup>216</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant, p. 18

Bourdieu mentions about a study he conducted with de Saint Martin on bishops. He shows that same habitus can lead to different, even contrasting, results. In this study, he mentions about the bishops underwent the same education in different years, and presents that they are totally different in political perspective. It was bishops in 1930s that make people kiss their ring and it is again bishops, today, who are called "red bishops", emphasizing their left tendency. For Bourdieu, habitus is a spring that needs to be triggered and result in numerous ways depending on the stimuli and structure of the field.<sup>217</sup> So it is better to use *strategy* instead of *rule* in order to enable time, rhythm, intention and unrepeatability of time again.<sup>218</sup>

Michel de Certeau, when distinguishing tactic and strategy, says that tactics shows us that reason cannot be considered apart from daily struggles and pleasures linked to those struggles. On the other hand, strategies hide their relations with power which are preserved via place or institution pertained and supported by this means behind objective calculations.<sup>219</sup> Thus, strategies are dependent to space.

However, it is Giddens' approach which seems more realistic. He argues that power which possesses continuity to certain extent in space and time in social systems assumes regularized dependency and autonomy relations between agents and groups in the context of social interaction. However, all forms of

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid. p.135

<sup>218</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of A Theory of Practice*. p.9

<sup>219</sup> de Certeau, p.xx

dependency provide different kinds of resources which dependent can use to affect the actions of superiors. This is called by Giddens as "dialectic of control."<sup>220</sup>

In other words, structure - which possesses the continuity within space and time - is what agent is contingent upon. However, this arms subordinate agent against superiors.

But, how should agent use his/her arms of strategies and tactics in daily life?

## **B. Gameplay and Interests**

Fifteenth century, or if we use the term that Renaissance historians use *quattrocento*, marks the birth of the Renaissance Man, known as *Novus Homo*. These men, as depicted in the artwork below, seem calm, well-settled, dignified, well-behaved people with minimum motion. However, in the picture below, we can see the other people on the background with exaggerated movements in a constant motion and gestures of limbs. Renaissance, also, brought into the game the distinction between play and work/seriousness. As a *rebirth* of the ideas of the Ancient, Renaissance introduced the ancient thoughts to the fifteenth century people, i.e. Stoicism. Stoicism is indifference and according to Bourdieu, it is to be "unmoved by the game". That was the aim of the Stoics, to

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<sup>220</sup> Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*. p. 16

achieve *ataraxia*. However, *illusio* is the interest itself; it is a constant participation to the game.<sup>221</sup>



**Picture 3.** Delivery of the Keys, Pietro Perugino, Sistine Chapel, Rome

Craig Calhoun emphasizes on Bourdieu's relation with the game. Bourdieu refers to games in order to clarify his understanding of the social life. Games are strategic and it is the weaknesses and strengths of the opponent and one's own which determine what a good strategy is as well as the rules of the game.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant, p.116-7

<sup>222</sup> Calhoun, p. 275

Bourdieu proposes a link between field and capital by emphasizing the mechanisms which motivates agents, equipped with forms of capital to choose between strategies, subversion or conservation, or even indifference and exit from the game. This is the notion of habitus.<sup>223</sup>

In brief, Bourdieu thinks that there is a resemblance between field and game. Investment in game, *illusio*, is in question. Players participate the game to the extent that they share the belief in game and their bet in the game, i.e. *doxa*. Players accept that, only by participating it, game is worth playing. Furthermore, strategies of the players and everything that determine a game is strictly related to evolution of structure and amount of the capital that player has in time, that is, to its social route and their tendencies, thus, habitus. Players always try to change or exchange the rates between different modes of capital in order to provide the player the best rate for which s/he will be using in the encounter.<sup>224</sup>

According to Bourdieu, habitus corresponds to the source of practical logic and sense of play.<sup>225</sup> Therefore, "play/game" which defines the character of the field is an important metaphor for understanding social movements, struggles which arise between those who hold different positions in the field.<sup>226</sup> This reminds the distinction of Giddens between institutional analysis and strategic behavior analysis. In institutional analysis, institutions are considered

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<sup>223</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant, p.120

<sup>224</sup> Ibid. p. 98-100

<sup>225</sup> Ibid. p. 122

<sup>226</sup> Tatlıcan and Çeğin, p. 320

as constantly reproduces resources and rules and skills and consciousness of agents are suspended.<sup>227</sup> However, in strategic behavior analysis, what's in the center is agents' ways of using structural characteristics when constituting social relations.<sup>228</sup>

Strategic behavior analysis could be very useful for us when analyzing the emancipatory approaches in Internet field, considering the unique and inherent nature of it.

In the artwork above, there are two kinds of people. One is dignified, saint-like, in slow motion; believes in seriousness which is a self-proclaimed virtue, calmness, in ataraxy. Other, however, never knows where to stop, always in motion, always chatting, always in play. This perspective of the artwork also reflects the perspective of some certain class/group/superiors. Those are not keen on playing, those who have the sufficient capital and wish to keep it that way. Those who are in the background, who are in the game may be able to change this perspective. But, in our terms, in our approach to the Internet, can it be possible to do it?

Now, let us stop here for a bit and remember what we have come through. I have tried to demonstrate the relationship between Internet and freedom, brought my theoretical discussions into the game; then, I showed the importance of capital by comparing surf and drift. What's more, I have

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<sup>227</sup> Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*. p. 375

<sup>228</sup> Ibid. p. 288

conducted a case study to show that it is not that much different in the Internet field. Lastly, I have presented, for a change, what can be done to change something with strategies and tactics. I assert that it can be found out in the schism of play and work. In the next chapter, I will try to formulate how social media adopt a new language of humor and this recursively shaped the social movements and social movements shaped social media's humorous, convivial opposition.

## 6. RÉSISTANCE CARNIVALESQUE

*"If you obey all the rules, you miss all the fun."*

Katharine Hepburn

*"all work and no play makes jack a dull boy"*  
English proverb

We have talked above how arabesk rappers, being lack of certain forms of capital, failed to convey their message and were made fun of by the dominant culture. Habermas in his 1990 preface to his eponymous work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* says that popular culture is not an offstage composing the passive environment of the dominant culture; rather, it was a hidden, severe and periodically receding revolt against hierarchic projection which was constituted by domination with its ceremonies and everyday life disciplines.<sup>229</sup> However, in order to oppose the dominant culture, one should use existing media or create a medium to realize this kind of revolt. Arabesk rappers did not convey their codes within their message; thus, their attempt was decoded as ridiculous. As an example of revolt through an acclaimed media, cultural theorist Mikhail Bakhtin cites carnivals. Bakhtin shows how carnivals and official ceremonies were diverged and how carnivals were refunctioned as means of revolt within the recognized limitations of humor. Bakhtin says that carnivals and activities of laughter were sanctified by tradition also. They were completely different from all religious, political,

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<sup>229</sup> Habermas. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. pp. 20-1

official ceremonies and offered a non-official, non-religious, non-political side for the world, for people and for all relationships between them. It was another world, another life that was kept apart from the serious one and participated by everyone for a certain period of a year. In the light of what Bakhtin said about carnivals, it can be said that neither humor nor laughter can be condemned to despicement. Laughter and humor has always had a different function; it was a convivial revolt of popular culture, of culture despised by dominant culture. However, Bakhtin also argues that in a structure that is strictly restricted, it is not possible for two levels of social life, official/serious and carnival/humorous, to coexist. In such structure, all forms of laughter should be transferred into a non-official, unserious level.<sup>230</sup>

I argue that this forms of laughter transferred into a non-official level again find a life as a means of revolt in the Internet space thanks to its intrinsic nature. Before asserting my argument further, I believe it would be better to examine carnival thoroughly. In carnivals all social relations were negated and nullified. It can be said that, contrary to the official feasts, carnivals was where all privileges, hierarchical orders, restrictions, limitations and norms were suspended.<sup>231</sup> In addition, a new both ideal and real type of communication is established during the carnivals. This communication also formulates new speeches or gives new meanings to existing ones. People start to use harsh

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<sup>230</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin. *Rabelais and Its World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984. pp. 5-6

<sup>231</sup> Ibid. p. 10

words and swear affectionately and tease each other. Abuse is ripped off from its meaning and context and used as proverbs. Abusive words are in function of humiliation and mortification whereas they also serve as a revival and renewal tool.<sup>232</sup> Grotesque is an important concept for carnivals. It is degrading, and lowering what is high, spiritual, ideal or abstract and transforms them into material level, brings them on earth. Laughter degrades and materializes.<sup>233</sup>

We have also seen that, above, agents do not have to strictly connected to their habitus, that same habitus may lead to different results and outcomes, different actions and activities.

In the light of these premises, let us move forward to show that middle class or upper/middle class users use Internet in a different way than their same class members which despised and made fun of arabesk rappers; and, Internet has an aspect that is similar to the carnivalesque life.

Internet is also a field where people can elude different "identities" and which has a "language/jargon" and distinctive use of its own. Sociocultural, political and conceptual differentiations built within agents, are always in reconstruction as the Internet takes an important part in everyday life.<sup>234</sup> To exemplify, I will be talking about "incisözlük"<sup>235</sup> and "incicaps"<sup>236</sup>.

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid, p. 15-6

<sup>233</sup> Ibid, p. 19-20

<sup>234</sup> Marianne Franklin. "POSTCOLONIAL SUBJECTIVITIES AND EVERYDAY LIFE ONLINE." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 3, no. 3 (2001): 387-422. p.388

<sup>235</sup> <http://inci.sozlukspot.com/>

<sup>236</sup> <http://www.incicaps.com/>

İncisözlük uses the same/similar interface and have the same usage with ekşisözlük we have talked about before. In their credits, they have a motto: "we cannot change the world; however, we can raise an awareness." İncisözlük actually is known for its "attacks" organized through entries anonymously. They organize attacks to choose the most unlikely option in the surveys conducted on-line or conducted for TV programs; send e-mails and connect the live broadcast to cause anchormen/anchorwomen or the show presenter to say comic stuff (swear words etc.).<sup>237</sup> They immediately became a social phenomenon. In addition, they conducted pseudo-campaigns. For example, when Turkish pop singer Atilla Taş made a song that is nearly same as international hit Gangnam Style by PSY, they tried to relaunch Atilla Taş as a Greek pop singer Atillas Thassos through social media.<sup>238</sup> In their "dictionary", they use swear words, insults and politically incorrect phrases intentionally, for the sake of laughter. They found a way to change Turkish translation of words and phrases in Facebook and change them into offensive and even, insulting words or phrases.<sup>239</sup> Also, creators of İncisözlük found a bug in Twitter and

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<sup>237</sup> Aktaş, Anıl. "İnci Sözlük Saldırıları." Youtube. October 28, 2012. Accessed September 23, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpgYi65X7I8>.

<sup>238</sup> "Social Media Campaign Tries to Brand Turkish Song as Greek." Hürriyet Daily News. October 14, 2012. Accessed September 23, 2014. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/social-media-campaign-tries-to-brand-turkish-song-as-greek.aspx?PageID=238&NID=32364&NewsCatID=374>.

<sup>239</sup> "Facebook Prank, Lost in Translation." Trend Micro. Accessed September 23, 2014. <http://countermeasures.trendmicro.eu/facebook-prank-lost-in-translation/>.

used it to make celebrities follow them on Twitter.<sup>240</sup> What is the most important action of İncisözlük is to nominate an independent MP for Turkish parliament in 2011 General Elections in Turkey.<sup>241</sup> Ahmet Yılmaz who got famous for his footage video<sup>242</sup> that shows him, while drunk, throwing bottles of beer to people outside of a small shop after they quarreled was nominated as an MP by İncisözlük users and a campaign conducted for him. However, he was not elected.

İnci Sözlük, also, provided important concepts for social media. They created what is known as "caps." Caps actually is the shortened form of captured pictures/captions. It is used for frames captured from videos or from TV; or used simply for photos or screenshots. It is actually strongly connected with "pics or it didn't happen" slang<sup>243</sup>. İncisözlük members transformed it into caps or didn't happen mostly for photographic evidence for stories told in entries in the dictionary.<sup>244</sup>

Furthermore, caps, actually, enlivened in the website İncicaps. İncicaps which has a sub-title as "humor culture for white-collar" is a website where users can post pictures (photographs or captions) with a message (mostly

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<sup>240</sup> McCarthy, Caroline. "Twitter Confirms Awkward 'auto-follow' Bug." Cnet. May 10, 2010. Accessed September 23, 2014. <http://www.cnet.com/news/twitter-confirms-awkward-auto-follow-bug/>.

<sup>241</sup> "Eskişehir Milletvekili Adayımız Ahmet Abi." İncisözlük. April 5, 2011. Accessed September 23, 2014. <http://inci.sozlukspot.com/e/33742589/>.

<sup>242</sup> Emre Ergün. "Ahmet Abi Tekel Savaşı." Youtube. May 6, 2010. Accessed September 23, 2014. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50cpIGD2\\_DY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50cpIGD2_DY).

<sup>243</sup> <http://de.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=pics%20or%20it%20didn%27t%20happen>

<sup>244</sup> "Caps or It Didn T Happen." İncisözlük. June 27, 2010. Accessed September 23, 2014. <http://inci.sozlukspot.com/w/caps-or-it-didn-t-happen/>.

funny) written in white on a red strip at the bottom of the picture. After İncicaps, caps had a new meaning of pictures with these attributes. İncicaps, slightly similar to 9gag<sup>245</sup>, has become an important platform for this politically incorrect humor.

Internet provides a basis for everyone to stay anonymous with nicknames. İncisözlük and İncicaps are no exception. In full anonymity, they make fun of everything from PM or ministers<sup>246</sup> to important personalities and celebrities<sup>247</sup> in the most inconvenient way. İncisözlük and İncicaps are only the two examples of this carnivalesque aspect of Internet field. With this kind of interventions, this kind of usage, it becomes unimportant what Internet was meant for. Because, even though technologies come within fixed meanings by designers and manufacturers, users reconfigure these meanings and meanings always change.<sup>248</sup> On certain "backstreets" of Internet - as a public space - all kinds of societal values are exposed to be made fun of.

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<sup>245</sup> <http://9gag.com>. In 9gag users post pictures for everything from greater causes to personal messages, from pictures of laughter to beautiful women.

<sup>246</sup> <http://www.incicaps.com/b/binali-y%C4%B1ld%C4%B1r%C4%B1m/> and <http://www.incicaps.com/b/recep-tayyip-erdoan/>

<sup>247</sup> <http://www.incicaps.com/b/serdar-orta%C3%A7/> and <http://www.incicaps.com/b/bilalo%C4%9Flan/>

<sup>248</sup> Hynes, p.27



**Picture 4.** A picture from İncisözlük, titled "urgent guys i can't abolish the caliphate"

For example, in the picture above, an İncisözlük user opened a topic as "urgent guys i can't abolish the caliphate." Other users, below, treat it as a problem of computer as if it is a problematic program that could not be uninstalled and give advices in computer language, i.e. "try installing republic."<sup>249</sup> Thus, every priority, every status and position was suspended; everything was transformed into some kind of humor object just for the sake of laughter.

This carnivalesque aspect of Internet goes beyond the field and affects the physical life also. All these social media jokes, all these ridicules, kidding and jibes find counterparts in the physical public space in some certain places

<sup>249</sup> <http://ccc.incisozluk.cc/w/halifeli%C4%9Fi-kald%C4%B1ram%C4%B1yorum-beyler-acil/>

and time; actually, they all were revived in the physical public space as a supporting means of protest constituting the humorous aspect of opposition. Before continuing on this, I would like to emphasize smaller dynamics in this carnivalesque aspect of Internet.

It is surprising to see that different and smaller dynamics of this carnivalesque aspect of Internet triggered larger movements, campaigns or protests. Independent MP campaign of İncisözlük in 2011 General Elections is an example of this. In addition, searching organs to transplant for those who need, as we have talked before, is another example. We can add ALS Ice Bucket Challenge of 2014 as another example also.

Nevertheless, it is, for me, more important to state that protests organized via Facebook or campaigns organized and/or conducted via Twitter hashtags. In hashtags, users, by putting # symbol before a word or a phrase, categorizes their tweets on a certain subject by which other users, by clicking these hashtagged word, can reach to other tweets related to that subject also<sup>250</sup>. Hashtags are used in order to refine the tweets and to see only the interested subject. If you click a hashtag, you can see every tweet with that hashtag in another screen. It is a lake of ideas about some certain event, incident or subject to which you can contribute by adding a hashtag in your tweet. It is a public meeting which you only need to use proper hashtag to join. At this point, like

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<sup>250</sup> "Using Hashtags on Twitter." Twitter. Accessed September 23, 2014. <https://support.twitter.com/articles/49309#>.

Internet has a carnivalesque aspect, I claim that hashtags show similarity to *banquets* of 19th century which played an important role especially in 1848 revolutions<sup>251</sup>.

Banquets were organized in order to unite the supporters of electoral and parliamentary reform.<sup>252</sup> They were organized in 1847-1848 locally in France, in each district of the capital Paris. They were the efforts to bring all those who had ideas about a reform, a change together. Therefore, I believe, they are similar to hashtagged campaigns; furthermore, hashtags can be considered as counterparts of banquets in Internet field. Like hashtags can due to going-beyond-borders nature of Internet, banquets "frequently tended to become local, as well as national, interests."<sup>253</sup> In July 1847 the Reformists began to hold "banquets" which would be last until revolutions of 1848 at which toasts were drunk to "République française", "Liberté", "Egalité"

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<sup>251</sup> For an extensive reading list of banquets, please see:  
Gay, Peter and R. K. Webb (1973); *Modern Europe*, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.  
Jones, Peter (1991); *The 1848 Revolutions*, New York: Longman.  
Lichtheim, George (1971); *Marxism, An Historical and Critical Study*, New York: Praeger Publishers.  
----- (1970); *A Short History of Socialism*, New York: Praeger Publishers.  
Merriman, John M. (1996); "French Revolutions, 1830-1871", in Iseer Woloch (ed.), *Revolution and the Meanings of Freedom in the Nineteenth Century*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.  
Skocpol, Theda (1979); *States and Social Revolutions*, Cambridge University Press.  
Stearns, Peter N. (1974); *1848: The Revolutionary Tide in Europe*, New York: W. W. Norton.  
Tarrow, Sydney (1998); *Power in Movement*, 2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
Wheatcroft, Andrew (1983); *The World Atlas of Revolutions*, New York: Simon and Schuster.  
<sup>252</sup> Baughman, John J. "The French Banquet Campaign of 1847-48." *The Journal of Modern History* 31, no. 1 (1959): 1-15. p.3  
<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.* p.5

and "Fraternité."<sup>254</sup> Banquets were also platforms that tend to make participants more radical and all interventions to banquets or forbidding them led to more and more radical protests.<sup>255</sup> They apparently had an influence on 1848 revolutions and it can be said that banquets paved the way for political consciousness that led to revolutions of 1848, especially in France. Similarly, hashtags in Turkey in 2013 were used intensively to share information, raise awareness and call for action. For example, an analysis conducted on June, 11 days after "Gezi Resistance" started shows that #direngeziparki was shared for nearly 2.5 million times. Similarly, #occupygezi which was an attempt to bring occupy movement and Gezi resistance together was shared for 3 million and 750 thousands times. Also, Gezi Incident tweets were specialized into other categories. For example, hashtag #direnankara, which was created for harsh and violent attacks police organized against protesters in Turkey's capital, Ankara, was shared for 700 thousands times in Twitter.<sup>256</sup> It specialized further when other characters of the resistance came up.

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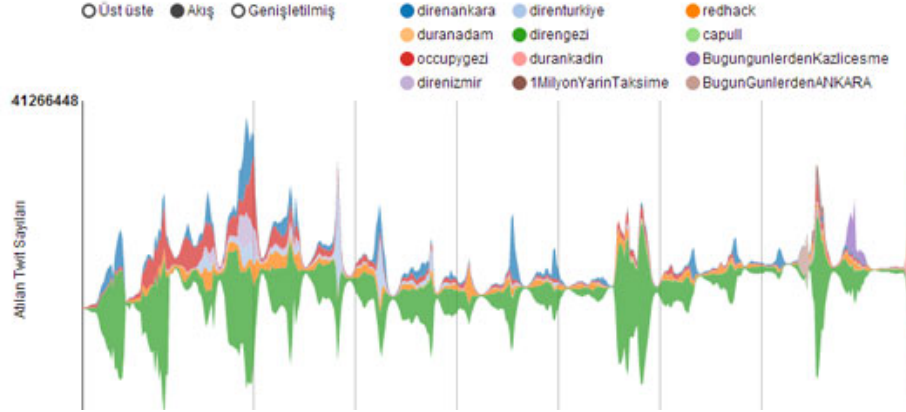
<sup>254</sup> Karl Marx, "Class Struggles in France" in the *Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Volume 10*, p.54

<sup>255</sup> Baughman, p.6 & 14

<sup>256</sup> Muzaffer Kurt. "Gezi Direnişinin En Popüler Hashtagleri." Media Cat Online. June 8, 2013. Accessed September 23, 2014. <http://www.mediacatonline.com/gezi-direnisinin-en-populer-hashtagleri/>.

#### #GeziParkı - Gündem takip aracı - Grafik

Gündemi Twitter'dan izler ve sonuçları interaktif grafik üzerinde takip etmenize olanak sağlar. Aşağıda 30 Mayıs - 18 Haziran arasında, seçilen hashtaglere göre tweetlerin grafik üzerindeki dağılımları gösterilmektedir.



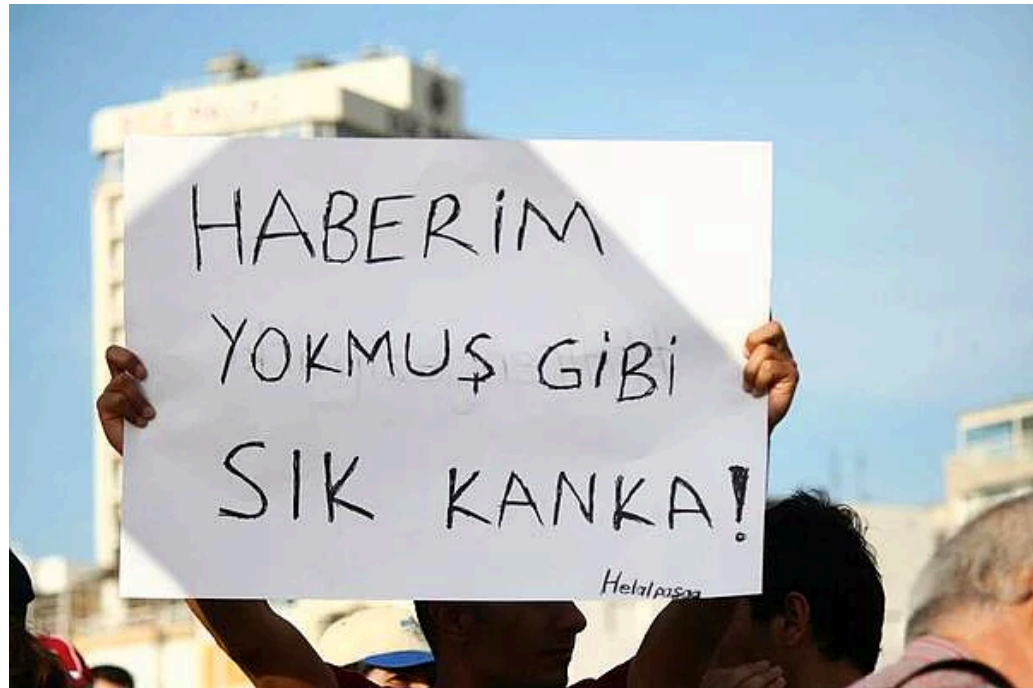
**Picture 5.** Hashtags used during the Gezi Incidents between 30 May - 18 June

To exemplify, if we consider the picture above, #duranadam and #redhack were used frequently when a man organized a passive aggressive protest by only standing in Taksim Square for hours and when left-wing hacker team organized attacks to support Gezi protesters, respectively.<sup>257</sup> Similar to banquets which evolved into revolutions in the history, hashtags can evolve into large social movements or at least, provide a supporting basis for them.

I will argue that we can observe that people who go to streets for protests by and with these kinds of movements/actions in the Internet space which can affect the physical public space also, are capable of bringing the carnivalesque aspect of Internet space into the streets, the physical public space.

<sup>257</sup> Salih Kural. "Gezi Parkı Direnişi Twitter'a Nasıl Yansıdı? [Analiz]." Sosyalmedya.co. June 21, 2013. Accessed September 23, 2014. <http://sosyalmedya.co/gezi-parki-direnisi-twittera-nasil-yansidi-analiz/>

In order to show that I will try to give some examples of street writings and banners inscribed in Turkey during Gezi Incidents in 2013 that are based on social media phenomena.



onedio Sosyal İçerik Platformu

<http://onedio.com>

**Picture 6.** "Spray it like I don't know, buddy!"

In the picture above, it can be seen that a protester in Taksim Square, İstanbul holding a banner read "spray it like I don't know, buddy." It is a challenge against police emphasizing on their excessive use of tear gas. However, the context of this phrase is a social phenomenon that makes fun of ordinary people to celebrities who pose for cameras in a way that they are not aware that their photo is being taken.



**Picture 7.** "Shoot it like I don't know, buddy"

For example, in the picture above, Fatih Terim, famous football manager, is posing for lots of sports photographer.<sup>258</sup> Below is the photograph of a random teenager with the same inscription, making fun of him trying to be cool.<sup>259</sup>

<sup>258</sup> <http://galeri.uludagsozluk.com/r/haberim-yokmu%C5%9F-gibi-%C3%A7ek-panpa-449294/>

<sup>259</sup> [http://galeri2.uludagsozluk.com/364/haberim-yokmu%C5%9F-gibi-%C3%A7ek\\_456222.jpg](http://galeri2.uludagsozluk.com/364/haberim-yokmu%C5%9F-gibi-%C3%A7ek_456222.jpg)



**Picture 8.** "Shoot it like I don't know, buddy"

In the picture below, a street writing is inscribed on the ground. In it, calling police due to an attack of police is ironized by common phrase that ridicules the way teenagers text each other - without vowels - and how they attitudinize against unimportant things. It becomes a social media phenomenon rapidly that it was used by celebrities<sup>260</sup>, or discussed by forums and "dictionaries."<sup>261</sup>

<sup>260</sup> <https://twitter.com/ahmethc/status/296388485860958208>

<sup>261</sup> "mşglsn snrm bn ytyrm ii gclr." İtüsözlük. May 18, 2012. Accessed September 23, 2014. <https://www.itusozluk.com/goster.php/m%FEglsn+snrm+bn+ytyrm+ii+gclr>



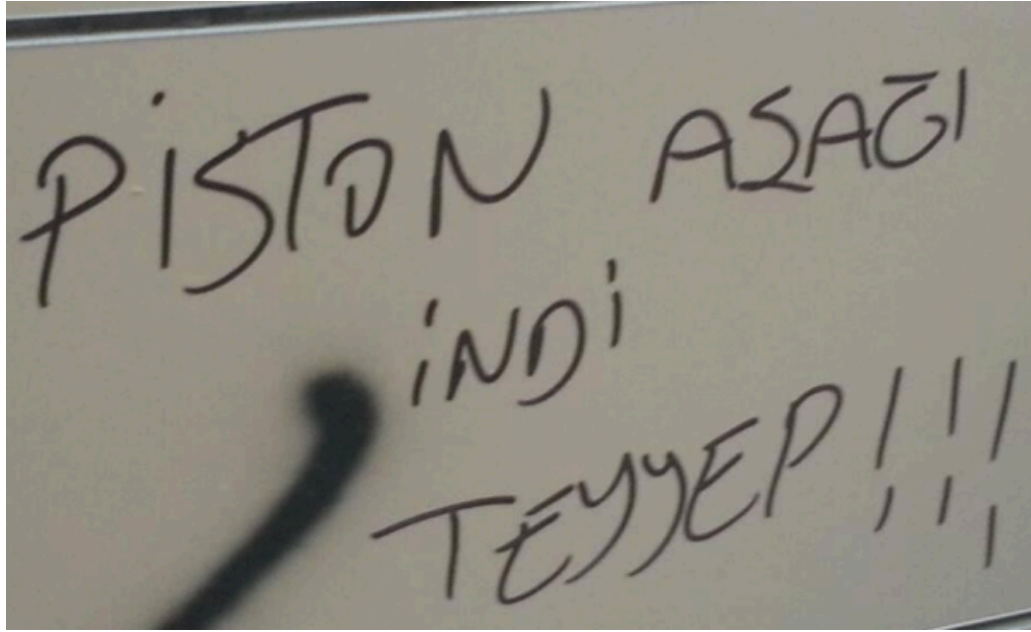
**Picture 9.** "Help Police! Whatever, I think you're busy"

In picture 10, it reads "Piston went down Tayyip". It is a funny challenge against then PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan with the phrase "piston went down" which became a social phenomenon after a video on the Internet where a public bus driver in Sakarya, Turkey allegedly says "piston went down" and everybody in the bus rush to the exits of the bus.<sup>262</sup> It became an instant hit that lots of remakes of that video was done by different groups of people, employees of creative agencies etc...<sup>263</sup> Although the driver said that he did not say "piston went down", instead he said "stop, get off"; social phenomenon of "piston went down" went on.

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<sup>262</sup> "Piston Aşağıya İndi (İzle İzle Gül)." Youtube. March 5, 2013. Accessed September 23, 2014. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4\\_hXpbgiZA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4_hXpbgiZA).

<sup>263</sup> "Piston Aşağı İndi Top 10." Youtube. March 23, 2013. Accessed September 23, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9biTJWmLR9Q>.



**Picture 10.** "Piston went down Teyyep [Tayyip]!"

During the Gezi Park Incidents people were protesting against every kind of ban, restriction and limitations. In the picture 11, we can see that the writing inscribed on the ground is against the ban on a certain porn website, XHamster, that is banned to access in Turkey. Lots of websites have been banned for access and 95% of them are porn websites.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> "Engellenen Sitelerin çoğu Porno." HaberTürk. March 25, 2011. Accessed September 23, 2014. <http://ekonomi.haberturk.com/teknoloji/haber/614225-engellenen-sitelerin-cogu-porno>.



**Picture 11.** "Open access to XHamster!"

In addition to these, lots of hashtags used for resistance during the protests were reflected on the streets of protest in a humorous manner. For example, the picture below - from İstanbul - reads "#direnyozgat" which is a resist call for Yozgat that is a city known as conservative and most of the votes from there goes to AKP government.



**Picture 12.** "#resistyozgat"

We can trace from these dynamics that there is a recursive relationship with the physical life and Internet as a public space. It can be seen that it is possible to humor in the Internet can revive in the streets of protest as opposition, grow in that streets and it is again reflected back to Internet (considering I have found all the footage of Gezi Incidents from the Internet)<sup>265</sup>. It is possible for each space to extend or restrict each other.

When talking about the nature of Internet and possibilities it presents to its users, I have given lots of examples. From how to do videos (from culinary tips to information on how to diagnose yourself) to academic education, Internet provides enormous knowledge for those who seek it. Idiosyncratic cultural theorist Ivan Illich says that our understanding of nature leads us to industrialized cybernetic and electronic age. This will take us to a level where specialized workers are promoted further; more and more bureaucrats come up. "There will be a further increase of useful things for useless people."<sup>266</sup> However, science can be used in two opposite ways: one is for specialization of functions, institutionalization of values and centralization of power that transform people into the accessories of bureaucracies or machines. Other was, however, can extend people's competence, control and initiative only to be restricted by the principle of equality.<sup>267</sup> Therefore, Ivan Illich proposes a

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<sup>265</sup> "Gezi Parkı Direnişini Anlatan 83 Duvar Yazısı #occupygezi." Listelist. June 4, 2013. Accessed September 23, 2014. <http://listelist.com/gezi-parki-direnisini-anlatan-83-duvar-yazisi/>.

<sup>266</sup> Ivan Illich. *Tools for Conviviality*. Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1973. p. 48

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.* p. 12

*convivial* society where social arrangements guaranteeing "free access to the tools of the community and limit this freedom only in favour of another member's equal freedom."<sup>268</sup> His vision is simple: we should use our limited resources to "provide many people with free access to the records of their choice."<sup>269</sup>

It clearly reminded us the possibilities of Internet. As a convivial tool, nothing can be better than Internet and its opportunities. Moreover, Illich also states that there are structurally convivial tools, giving telephone system as an example.<sup>270</sup> Considering Internet which is able to create its own languages, communication systems, allows people to do anything they want and provide platforms for doing they want, conviviality, as Illich understands, is meant for Internet. We can do everything; learn everything from Internet. Everyone can be his or her own specialist and might be able to revoke the institutionalized powers of hospitals, TVs, schools and even more. Even people are able to build the world they desire starting from Internet.

Bourdieu says that one thing to do if an artist wants to get into trouble is to "gave a function back to art."<sup>271</sup> What these protesters did was struggle for change, leading the society for change and providing better. It was also an artistic action, since a sense of creativity is needed for proposing ways, methods

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<sup>268</sup> Ibid, p. 26

<sup>269</sup> Ibid, p. 46

<sup>270</sup> Ibid, p. 35

<sup>271</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant. p.110

or strategies to change.<sup>272</sup> Like banquets chanting for change, what they brought into life is festivity; it creates a possibility, a longing for better. Therefore, this kind of protest is a festive life; thus, a carnivalesque one.<sup>273</sup> It also encompasses the hopes and dreams of a better future.

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<sup>272</sup> Jasper, James M. *Ahlaki Protesto Sanatı*. İstanbul: Ayrıntı, 2002. pp. 37-39

<sup>273</sup> Bakhtin, p. 8

## 7. CONCLUSION

"*Stadluft macht frei.*"

German proverb

Internet has grown more and more important in our lives taking place nearly in all our everyday life activities. As a member of the last generation which remembers the time when there were no Internet connection, I think that it is also fascinating that how fast we have adopted all technology and still continue to do. As it brought our lives new concepts, it also provided a platform for new opportunities and possibilities. We can shop, do banking activities, communicate, learn, teach, show, watch, listen, play and do lots of other stuff via Internet. It changed our lives, obviously. However, we cannot decide whether this change is good or bad.

In my thesis, my initial question was whether Internet can provide a basis for emancipation. In the chapter "Freedom", I have tried to formulate what my understanding of freedom was and show what kind of emancipation Internet has to offer. I have tried to demonstrate that Internet can be a base for a future *gift society*.

I have tried to show that Internet changed our lives, gives us opportunities and possibilities; however, it is not a way to escape from every oppression of life. Even so, it is very helpful for those who struggle against the obstacles they are exposed to. It gives you various techniques as a support; what is more, it enables you to develop your own.

Then, I deployed my theoretical dispositifs and examine structure/agency dichotomy and discuss the concepts of Bourdieu and Giddens who claimed to overcome the dichotomy. By using Bourdieu's terms, I concluded Internet space as a *field*. In the fourth part, I, first, showed that how it is not possible to free roam/stroll in the physical space due to the interventions and what makes it possible is the forms of capital that the agent has. Then, I tried to present that what could be done without those forms of capital in the Internet field. I raised a comparison between surf and *drift*/walking and clearly show that one does not have to have any forms of capital, rules or resources other than gained during one's socialization process. Nevertheless, I managed to conduct a case study over arabesk rappers to show that no rules or resources needed in order to use Internet as a way of self reflection, self realization, on the contrary to physical world; however, it is again the rules, resources and forms of capital that make one's voice heard and convey its message in terms of sender. Keeping in the mind that fact, I tried to introduce strategies and tactics that agents can use in order to change and make a difference in their lives in chapter five. So, I showed that it is not possible to break all the oppression and emancipate through Internet. Therefore, we need to find out to what extent Internet can provide us a basis for emancipation.

I have concluded as that Internet can only provide a basis for emancipation if it presents an opportunity for conviviality. As a tool with lots of opportunities, Internet can be used as a convivial tool in order to revoke the

power mechanisms. Furthermore, with its carnivalesque aspect, Internet can become a medium to call for carnival itself. Carnival, from Latin *carne* meaning flesh, can only be realized in the streets and Internet has a chance for that realization.

For me, to what extent we can use or we can equip the technologies, offerings of Internet for a total emancipation is far more important than formulating a possibility of emancipation via Internet. Since, second one, besides its chances being weak, seems to be a virtual and escapist approach for social life.

Thus, I kept on going to find out. How should people use Internet in their struggles from everyday life to greater causes? Are there any examples for these? Actually, examples are there, everywhere. Because, it is a way to deal with problems when one search the address of the place that s/he needs to go. It is way to deal with problems when searching for a recipe of a certain meal or taking advice about relationships through Internet. It is a way to deal with problems or to offer alternatives that creating communities, subcultures, jargons in Internet. Making fun of everything in a carnivalesque manner, bringing laughter into the game again and posing humor against the restrictions and all kind of limitations or prohibitions via Internet are ways of struggle, maybe tiny but not unimportant steps through a convivial society where institutionalized power, greater mechanisms of structure will not be able to crush individuals for the sake of the structure/power/state itself.

Pierre Bourdieu once said: "If the sociologist has a role, it is probably more to furnish weapons than to give lessons." I did not try to give a lesson, of course, and I am not the one to offer a formula, after all I do not believe a "formula" exists. However, in conclusion, I feel compelled to say that Internet provides us so much for total emancipation of humankind (for those who are ready to be optimist, of course); and I feel that its support will always be very important. People can organize even a revolution through social media, through Twitter like they did in Egypt 3 years ago. However, you need to get to the streets to actualize that revolution, you need to get to Tahrir Square and occupy there. In the end, *la beauté est dans la rue*, isn't it?



**Picture. 13** "LEFTISM :)"

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