

Efforts of Control of Political Power over the Social Media in Turkey

Onur Dursun

University of Hitit, Turkey

0163

The Asian Conference on Media and Mass Communication 2013

Official Conference Proceedings 2013

Abstract

Mass media can be put down with constituted rules and enforcements of economy. However the situation becomes different when it comes to social media. Controlling the social media is not quite possible. Nevertheless political power is able to apply enforcement over the social media in the hazardous times, and people, who freely explain their ideas on the social media, can be punished. The Turkish political power struggled with social media in the process of “Gezi Park Resistance” which started on the date of May 31, 2013 and went on about a month. The protests that started in the square of Taksim spread all over Turkey through Facebook and Twitter. Social media became an important means to organize the society. When the ruling government recognized that protests spread, it resorted to enforcements about social media. Because of the claims of ‘subvert’, ‘sedition’ etc., the ruling government took some users of Facebook and Twitter into custody who showed some ways to protesters, shared slogans, caused the protests to spread and tried to make people passive users of social media. In this study, the control of political power on the social media in Turkey will be researched within the context of “Gezi Park Resistance”. The efforts of controlling the social media, which are done by illegal means will be legalized in the future and the social media which is pro-democracy will have an anti-democratic basis. It seems that social media will confront the evolution, which the traditional media has faced.

Introduction

Mass media which is under the control of political and economic powers and one-sided broadcasting are among the most basic problems of many countries. The problems like these are higher in countries having problematic democracies. According to Development Index of United Nation 2012, in terms of democracy, Turkey is placed in the group of the countries having developing democracy which owns problematic democracy in the world. In the 2012 Human Development Rank (HDR), Turkey was ranked 90th out of 187 countries (UNDP Turkey, 2013). Turkey has some democratic problems some of which are related with the lack of human rights, social security, educational problems, and high unemployment rate and so on.

As it is known, the most important element of democracy is to ensure people to explain or share their ideas. What we need is free public spaces to explain the ideas freely. However, in order not to lose their own legal positions in the society, political powers try to hinder people from explaining their ideas freely or control any opposing speech with the help of legislation. Nowadays Turkish Political Power has been trying to control internet/social media control and to block alternative/opposing discourses. The efforts to block alternative/opposing discourses became much clearer during Gezi Park Demonstrations. As traditional mass media some of which are under pressure could not sufficiently inform the society, social media took over the responsibility from traditional media. In a short time social media succeeded to spread demonstrations all over the country. For this reason, Turkish political power focused on blocking off social media/internet and taking the social media users into custody. Before I explain using the process of social media and its controlling anti-legally within the context of Gezi Park Demonstration in Turkey, I firstly would like to talk about the usage of internet and its legal limitations.

Laws and Regulations about Traditional Mass Media in Turkey

In the field of traditional mass media, many regulations are in force to control and regulate its content. Some regulations dealing with newspaper (or publishing), radio and television (or broadcasting) are as follows:

Laws or Regulations on Traditional Mass Media In Turkey

- The limits of press are determined by Press Code (Law no. 5187, *TR Official Gazette*, 2004), Law on Relations between Employees and Employers in Press (Law no: 5953, *TR Official Gazette*, 1952), Law on Protection of Minors from Obscene Publications (Law no. 1117, *TR Official Gazette*, 1927), many articles of Turkish Penal Code (Law no: 5237, *TR Official Gazette*, 2004), and some articles of the other codes and regulations. If crimes are committed through the press, penalties are increased twofold or threefold.
- The limits of radio, television along with their context and institutional structures are determined by The Law on the Establishment of Radio and Television Enterprises and Their Media Services (Law no: 6112, *TR Official Gazette*, 2011). On the other hand, some articles of the other codes can also be used in this direction. At the same time, if crimes are committed through the radio and television, penalties increase twofold or threefold.

Institutions and Laws/Regulations Related with Internet in Turkey

The number of laws on delimiting or controlling electronic communication and internet content providers/companies and internet users has been increasing from year to year in Turkey. There are directly three main institutions which regulate every aspect of internet in Turkey. The first and the most important one is **Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM)** which makes law on internet. The second one is Presidency of Telecommunication Communication (TİB) which was founded in 2006. The last one is Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) which was founded in 2008. By-laws on internet in Turkey are generally enforced by these institutions (BTK and TIB). BTK tries to determine the technical infrastructure of the electronics communication and internet as well as having responsibilities for internet providers/companies. TİB's task is to determine and control the usage of information technologies/internet content along with the moral dimension of the contexts.

In Turkey, nowadays some regulations/laws are directly connected with internet and electronic communication. Apart from these regulations, some articles of the other regulations/laws, which are indirectly connected with internet and electronic communication, interfere electronic communication, contexts of internet and publications on the internet. The number of the regulations on delimiting or controlling the internet is over 15 in Turkey. Some of them are as such;

Directly:

1. The Law on Publications on the Internet and Suppression of Crimes Committed by Means of Such Publications (Law no: 5651, *TR Official Gazette*, 2007).
2. The Regulation on The Procedures and Principles For Granting Operating Certificate to Access Providers and Hosting Providers by The Telecommunication Authority (*TR Official Gazette*, 2007).
3. The Law on Electronics Communication (Law no: 5809, *TR Official Gazette*, 2008).
4. The By-Law on Consumer Rights in Electronic Communication Sector (*TR Official Gazette*, 2010).
5. Regulation on Procedures and Principles Regarding the Safe Use of the Internet (2011).

Indirectly:

1. Law on Crimes Against Atatürk (Law no: 5816, *TR Official Gazette*, 1951).
2. Turkish Penal Code (Law no: 5237, *TR Official Gazette*, 2004).
3. Law on Turkish Criminal Court, articles between 135-138 (Law no: 5271, *TR Official Gazette*, 2004).
4. Law on the Foundation and Duties of Ministry of Religious Affairs, Article 6 (Law no: 633, *TR Official Gazette*, 1965).
5. Law on the Regulation of Betting and Gaming on Football and the Other Competitions, Article 5 (Law no: 7258, *TR Official Gazette*, 1959).
6. Law On Intellectual and Artistic Works, additional article 4 (Law no. 5846, *TR Official Gazette*, 1951).

7. Law on Organization and Duties of Regulatory Authority of Tobacco and Alcohol Market (Law no: 4733, *TR Official Gazette*, 2002).
8. Law on Turkish Commerce, some articles of the law (Law no. 6102, *TR Official Gazette*, 2011).
9. Law on Anti-Terror, Article 6 (Law no: 3713, *TR Official Gazette*, 1991).
10. The Turkish Civil Code, Articles 24 and 25 (Law no: 4721, *TR Official Gazette*, 2001).
11. Civil Procedure Code, Article 101 (Law no: 1086, *TR Official Gazette*, 1927).
12. By-Law on the Protection of Trademarks, Articles 9, 76 and 77, *TR Official Gazette*, 1995).

The Regulation of Publications on the Internet and Suppression of Crimes Committed by Means of Such Publication, which was enacted in May 2007 (Law no. 5651), is the first regulation/law on internet in Turkey. Until the enactment of this regulation, there was no clear legal regulation to control the internet content deemed illegal by Turkish law. The responsibilities of content providers, hosting companies, mass-use providers, ISP are delineated by the regulation. Some shares and contents on the internet can be controlled, and web sites can be blocked off within the context of the regulation. According to this regulation (Law no. 5651), the obligations of content providers are specified. Article 6 (1) of Law No 5651 states that “*The content providers are required to take down any illegal content published by any of their customers once made aware of the availability of the content in question through TIB, or subject to court order.*” The obligations of mass use providers are also regulated by Article 7 (2) of Law No 5651. According to Article 7 (2) of Law No 5651; “*Whether it is for commercial purposes or not all mass-use providers are obliged to take the measures of blocking access to the subject which has crime contents.* Measures of blocking access are remarked by the regulation. According to Article 8 (1) of Law No 5651; “*Access to websites are subject to blocking if there is sufficient suspicion that certain crimes are being committed on a particular web site.*” (*TR Official Gazette*, 2007).

According to Article 8 (1) of Law No 5651, there are 8 crimes for blocking off¹;

1. *Encouragement of and incitement to suicide (Article 84 of TPC),*
2. *Sexual exploitation and abuse of children (Article 103 of TPC),*
3. *Facilitation of the use of drugs (Article 190 of TPC)*
4. *Provision of substances dangerous to health (Article 194 of TPC),*
5. *Obscenity (Article 226 of TPC),*
6. *Prostitution (Article 227 of TPC),*
7. *Gambling (Article 228 of TPC),*
8. *Crimes committed against Atatürk (According to The Law on Crimes Against Atatürk, Law no: 5816).*

Another regulation/law on internet and technologies is entitled as Consumer Rights in Electronic Communication Sector, **and it was** enacted in 2010 (*TR Official Gazette*,

¹ Turkish Penal Code (TPC). Contents of these articles are detailed in the Turkish Penal Code.

2010). This regulation regulates the electronic communication and consumer rights. But according to Article 10 of this regulation, internet providers, content providers, and hosting companies are obligated to abide by order of Presidency of Telecommunication Communication (TIB). In the regulation, it is stated that (Article 10); *“In accordance with TIB’s requests, content providers/hosting companies are responsible to offer the usage of internet with some options against harmful contents without any additional charge.”*

The important point here is the “concept of option”. What it means by the “concept of option” was explained by Turkish Government one year later. BTK prepared a regulation entitled as Safe Internet Use, and publicized it in 2011. According to this regulation internet is served under 4 fixed packages in Turkey (Milliyet Newspaper, May 5, 2011).

According to Safe Internet Use;

- Filtering programmes are normally in use in Turkey, however according to this regulation, filtering processes are determined by government, and it is compulsory for everyone.
- Internet has to be used only under 4 fixed packages. These packages are also determined by government.
- Packages’ names are as follows: Children, Family, Domestic, and Fixed Package.
- Government determines these packages’ contents, limitations, and can change at will and informs content providers accordingly.
- All the internet providers are obligated to obey with this regulation.

Turkey Informatics Association asserted that regulation was anti-democratic. Association offered that all the regulations/laws on internet had to be completely updated. In Turkey, this regulation was generally stated as an excessive censorship on internet. Even some hackers (cyber) attacked government’s institutional web sites for protest. Because of objections, (cyberattacks, etc.), government postponed the date of enactment for three months and reconsidered regulation and changed it. After this process, domestic and fixed packages were removed out of the regulation, and only children and family packages were included. In addition, the use of package is optional for users. The users who don’t choose a package (children or family) continued to use their existing tariffs.

In terms of internet, an amazing case which had the list of the banned words became a current issue in 2011. TIB sent a letter to content providers/hosting companies and attached an appendix which included the list of the banned words (138 words). TIB ordered the content providers/hosting companies to block off the internet site considering the Law no. 5651 if a domain name included one of these words. A part of his appendix is as follow; *“(…) Word groups, which cannot be evaluated to comply with regulations (under Law no: 5651), are given in the appendix. It is necessary that contents of including these word groups are removed, and these web sites have to be blocked off, and the latest situation is reported to us (TIB) via mail. It is not forgotten that if these obligations are not performed, the liables are faced with penal sanctioning”* (NTVMSNBC, April 15, 2011).

The idea of censorship on internet in Turkey became a current issue again in 2012. In October, 2013, Binali Yıldırım, Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications revived that Facebook and Twitter had to be controlled through legal ways (Habertürk Newspaper, September 4, 2013). News stated: *“Ministry asserted that social media like Facebook and Twitter had to be controlled where it is necessary and compulsory for public safety.”* In the same news, Minister Binali Yıldırım’s words are as follows *“Revolution of Tunis, Libya and Egypt were come true by social media. These are all communication revolutions. So social media may cause good affairs in those countries, but sometimes social media can embolden and mislead big community. This is a threat. Precautions are necessary. It is difficult, I don’t know how it is possible.”*

The Punishment of Internet/Social Media Users in Turkey

As mentioned previously, internet can be controlled by regulations/laws. One of them is generally Turkish Penal Code (TPC). Internet users can be taken in custody or sentenced under the Article 214 and 216 of TPC. According to these articles; *“Any person who openly provokes commission of an offense is punished with imprisonment from six months to five year (Article 214 of TPC) and “Any person who openly provokes a group of people belonging to different social class, religion, race, sect, or coming from another origin, to be rancorous or hostile against another group, is punished (...).Any person who openly humiliates another person just because he belongs to different social class, religion, race, sect, or comes from another origin, is punished (...) (Article 216 of TPC) (TR Official Gazette, 2004).*

In Turkey, efforts to control the electronic communication, infrastructure of internet and usage of internet through legal channels were increased after 2007. In this connection, report of “Freedom on the Net 2013” prepared by Freedom House remarked significant points about the usage of internet in Turkey. As stated by the report, Turkey was in the group of partly free countries in terms of internet usage in the world. In the report, countries were analysed under the 10 different titles (Kelly, S. at al., 2013: pp. 3-13):

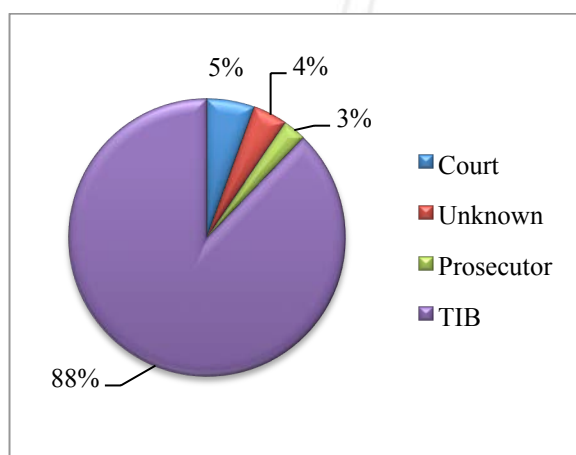
1. Blocking and filtering
2. Cyber attacks against regime critics
3. **New laws and arrests for political, religious, or social speech online**
4. Paid pro-government commentators manipulating online discussions
5. Physical attacks and murder
6. Surveillance
7. Takedown requests and forced deletion of content
8. Blanket blocking of social media and the other ICT platforms
9. Holding intermediaries liable
10. Throttling or shutting down internet and mobile service

As emphasised, Turkey is especially under the title of *“New laws and arrests for political, religious, or social speech online.”* The remarkable points for Turkey are listed as such (Kelly, S. at al., 2013: pp. 720-730):

- Freedom of internet usage in Turkey dwindles down.

- There are over 30 thousands blocked web sites in Turkey. But according to Engelliweb.com² (Graphic 1), the number of blocked web sites was 33.099 between 2008 and 2013.
- Composer and pianist Fazıl Say was sentenced to 10 months for insulting religion, and Sevan Nişanyan was sentenced to 13months for insulting Prophet Muhammad in a blog post.
- Because of some videos, You Tube were blocked off several times in the past years.
- Social media were tried to be controlled by the help of laws.
- During Gezi Park Resistance, Prime Minister Erdoğan described Twitter as the worst menace.
- Some words on the internet or in domain names were banned in Turkey.
- Although European Court of Human Rights has abrogated blocking, some web sites still have been blocked off.
- Arrests for internet usage have been increasing year by year.
- BTK doesn't publicize the list of the blocked web sites.

Graphic 1: According to Engelliweb.com, there have been 33.095 blocking judgments from 2008 to 2013.



Another report related with internet in Turkey, which is entitled as *Report of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media on Turkey and Internet Censorship* and was prepared by Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Dr. Yaman Akdeniz, was published in 2009. In the report, there are some main points about the usage of internet. Some of them are specified as;

- *Websites are blocked by courts for reasons outside the scope of Law No. 5651; the detailed breakdown behind these orders were not provided by TIB in its published statistics.*
- *Some web sites were/are blocked off. Some of them are as follows: YouTube, Geocities, WordPress, Blogger, Blogspot, Google Groups, Google Sites,*

² Engelliweb.com is a web site that provides information about blocked websites from Turkey. Site accessed November 12, 2013.

Myspace, Last.fm, Hadigayri, and Gabile. Access to YouTube, Geocities, Last.fm, and Google Sites (ect.).

- *The use of the blocking orders to silence speech amounts to censorship and a violation of Article 10 of ECHR. The Turkish public should have “the right to be informed of different perspectives on the situation in southeast Turkey, however unpalatable it might be to the authorities.”¹⁴⁶*
- *While political and social news “might be the most important information protected by Article 10, the freedom to receive information does not extend only to the reports of events of public concern, but covers in principle also cultural expressions as well as pure entertainment.*

Gezi Park Demonstrations and Social Media

In the late May 2013 what started as a relatively small and peaceful protest at Gezi Park in the Taksim district of central Istanbul rapidly snowballed to the largest anti-government protest that Turkey has seen in years. Demonstrations spread from İstanbul to Ankara, İzmir, Adana, and other cities across the country. While the original protest called for the halt of a plan to transform Gezi Park into a shopping mall, public outrage grew over the disproportionate police response in which water cannons and tear gas were used in an excessive display of force. The dramatic events exposed the complicity of mainstream Turkish media, which largely failed to report the massive anti-government protests that ensued. Instead, sites such as You Tube, Facebook, and Twitter arose as some of the few outlets for reliable coverage on the protests, leading Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to describe social media as “the worst menace to society.” Dozens of people were arrested for their social media posts, and criminal investigations are expected under the use of Article 214 and 217 Turkish Penal Code concerning incitement to commit a crime and disobey the law. (Kelly, S. at al., 2013: p. 720).

Turkey has some problems in terms of internet usage. Turkish political power would rather try to control by making new laws from day to day instead of solving the problems and removing blockage. Anti-government demonstrations in the country are silenced by new regulations/laws in an anti-legal way. Gezi Park Demonstrations scared Turkish political power, and this is why the government reconsidered on social media/internet. Government directly or indirectly use violence rather than finding a peaceful settlement in the demonstrations. Because of expanding demonstrations on the social media like an avalanche, government focused on the social media and tried to punish social media users illegally. The most remarkable sentences about Twitter were stated by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. During Gezi Park Resistance Erdoğan described Twitter as the worst menace. Erdoğan’s words were; *“There is now a menace which is called Twitter, The best examples of lies can be found there. To me, social media is the worst menace to society.”* (The Guardian, June 3, 2013).

On the date of June 5, 2013, the supporters of Gezi Park and the users of Twitter the ages of whom were between 19 and 25 were taken into custody as a consequence of ‘sedition’ and ‘propaganda’. The reasons of custodies were based on Articles 214, 216 and 217 of Turkish Penal Code. Tweets, which were qualified as ‘sedition’ and ‘propaganda’, are as follows (Hürriyet Newspaper, June 5, 2013):

- *Available passwords of using Wi-Fi for resistance*
- *We are meeting in the Gündoğdu Square at 07.30 pm*
- *There are polices in the Lozan Square and Kıbrıs Şehitleri Street, dont’t go there*
- *Tear gas are being thrown to Gündoğdu Square, don’t come here*
- *Water cannons are going, they are throwing tear gas and they bash with sticks.*

In addition, social media users sharing any voluntary doctors’ and lawyers’ addresses were taken into custody. The users of sharing this photo on which a police officer was using violence to a girl in the process of Gezi Park Resistance (Photograph is on the right side) were taken into custody. According to *Hürriyet* news, some families whose children taken into custody explained that their children did not have any accounts of social media like Twitter or Facebook. A few foreign national persons were also taken into custody during the demonstrations.



Later on, the Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications Binali Yıldırım stated that they offered Facebook and Twitter to give users’ data over the Gezi Park Demonstrations. But the response of Twitter was ‘negative’ while the response of Facebook was ‘positive’. Facebook was currently is in cooperation with Turkish authorities. According to Minister Yıldırım; *“Facebook has been working in coordination with the Turkish authorities for a long time. They have a unit in Turkey. We don’t have any problem with them. Twitter could also establish a similar structure. Otherwise, this is not sustainable.”* (Hürriyet DailyNews, June 26, 2013). However Facebook doesn’t have any units in Turkey.

After Minister Binali Yıldırım’s statement, Facebook made a statement on its main page. According to Facebook’s statment;

“Facebook has not provided user data to Turkish authorities in response to government requests relating to the protests. More generally, we reject all government data requests from Turkish authorities and push them to formal legal channels unless it appears that there is an immediate threat to life or a

child, which has been the case in only a small fraction of the requests we have received (Facebook, June 26, 2013).

According to Turkish Constitution (*TR Official Gazette*, November 7, 1982) everyone has freedom of expression. Article 26 of Turkish Constitution states that “*Everyone has the right to express and disseminate his thought and opinion by speech, in writing or in pictures or through other media, individually or collectively.*” Article 34 of Turkish Constitution also emphasises that “*Everyone has the right to hold unarmed and peaceful meetings and demonstrations without prior permission.*” In spite of Turkish Constitution, the opposing processes were experienced during Gezi Park Demonstrations. Both demonstrators in the streets and internet users on the social media were subjected to judicial processes. In other words, “a witch-hunt” was started to find so-called offenders everywhere in Turkey. The president of the Republic of Turkey, Abdullah Gül, made a statement about this *witch-hunt*. Abdullah Gül stated that “*Everybody has to behave responsibly and seriously in this process. I don’t let anybody to start a witch hunt on Twitter.*” (*Hürriyet Newspaper*, June 7, 2013). However, President Gül didn’t prevent the witch hunt in any way. Another witch hunt took place in Beyaz TV, a TV channel owned by Ankara Mayor Melih Gökçek who is also a member of AKP. Kenan Erçetingöz, an announcer in Beyaz TV, was sacked from his job for his tweet about Gezi Park (*Sözcü Newspaper*, August 14, 2013).

After the Gezi Park events, various steps were taken to control probable similar demonstrations. Under secretariat of Public Order and Security of Republic of Turkey held a meeting to evaluate Gezi Park demonstrations. The office decided on the surveillance of social media that organised Gezi Park demonstrations by the help of so-called intelligence agencies. In the meeting, General Directorate of Police concluded that Gezi Park demonstrations were to be regarded as ‘strategic intelligence’. In some situations like these, it was decided that 3G connection would be blocked by the government (*Radikal Newspaper*, October 7, 2013).

Conclusion

It is seen that new regulations/laws on internet and social media in Turkey have been made each consecutive year. Turkish political power has completely taken the traditional media under control both economically and politically. Except for a few media organizations, alternative or opposing discourses has already lost their representation chance in the traditional media. Gezi Park Demonstrations proved this idea. Alternative or opposing discourses was been represented on social media. Twitter and Facebook having been an alternative media showed their force over the society during Gezi Park Demonstrations.

Social media is generally controlled by governments/political powers. Controlling has been provided by legal procedures. Because of monopolization and commercialization of media, which are among the most important problems of Turkey as in many parts of the world, media organizations have depended on political power in another way as well. Public discourses in Turkey are announced by a few big media monopolies the

numbers of which are not more than 10. The owners of the media do not also want to make a loss in the other fields including tourism, banking, commerce, building trade, service sector, printing, petroleum. Likewise, they do not want to face with tax penalties. For that reason, they prefer to follow the policy of getting on well with political power. Therefore, the owners of the traditional media chose to be silent in Gezi Park Demonstrations.

It was not difficult to control traditional media during Gezi Park for Turkish political power. However, because of international structure/ international capital structure of Facebook and Twitter, Turkish political power could not become successful at controlling them by means of legal channels. So, it tried to find inland ways for blocking off social media by means of anti-legal channels. In other words, government took social media users in charge illegally.

The limitations of Turkish traditional media are determined by regulations/laws. On the other hand, Turkish political powers have succeeded in controlling Turkish traditional media by means of political, commercial, and legal processes. A similar process has not started in the social media. Either social media will be controlled by regulations/laws or all the web sites in the social media will be blocked off in the future in Turkey. The process shows this.

Bibliography

Publications, Newspapers, and Websites

Kelly, S. at al. 2013. Report of Freedom on the Net 2013, A Global Assessment of Internet and Digital Media, Available at: <http://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/resources/FOTN%202013_Full%20Report_0.pdf>, [Accessed 22 October 2013].

Akdeniz, Y., 2009. Report of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media on Turkey and Internet Censorship (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe The Representative on Freedom of the Media), Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/speak_up/osce_freedom_of_the_media_on_turkey_and_internet_censorship.pdf>, [Accessed 03 September 2013].

Engelliweb.com, Available at: <<http://engelliweb.com/istatistikler/>>, [Accessed 02 November 2013].

Facebook, June 26, 2013, Diren Gezi Park (Resist Gezi Park), Available at: <<https://www.facebook.com/geziparkdirenisi/posts/404743649644049>>, [Accessed 01 September 2013].

Habertürk Newspaper, September 4, 2012, Devletten Twitter ve Face'e müdahale! (Twitter and Face were responded by government), Available at: <<http://www.haberturk.com/polemik/haber/773481-devletten-twitter-ve-face-mudahale>> [Accessed 21 October 2005].

Hurriyet DailyNews, June 26, 2013, Facebook denies providing data to Turkish government, Available at: <www.hurriyetdailynews.com/facebook-denies-providing-data-for-turkish-government.aspx?pageID=238&nID=49554&NewsCatID=374>, [Accessed 21 October 2005].

Hürriyet Newspaper, June 5, 2013, “Tweet atanlara 'isyana teşvik' gözaltısı” (People who tweet were taken into custody for ‘sedition’) Available at: <<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/23438875.asp>> [Accessed 18 September 2005].

Hürriyet Newspaper, June 7, 2013, Gül: Cadı avı olmaz (Gül: Witch hunt is impossible), Available at: <<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/23451152.asp>>, [Accessed 02 October 2013].

Ntvmsnbc, April 27, 2011, Şok eden 'sansür' listesi! (List of ‘censorship’ was shocked), Available at: <<http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25207341/>>, [Accessed 15 August 2013].

Radikal Newspaper, October 7, 2013, Twitter'a 'Gezi' kontrolü geliyor! (Because of Gezi, control is being come to Twitter), Available at: <http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/twittera_gezi_kontrolu_geliyor-1154422>, [Accessed 28 October 2013].

Sözcü Newspaper, August 14, 2013, Gezi Parkı tweeti işinden etti (He was sacked from his job for his tweet about Gezi Park), Available at: <<http://sozcu.com.tr/2013/magazin/gezi-parki-tweeti-isinden-etti-354244/>>, [Accessed 26 September 2013].

The Guardian, June 3, 2013, Social media and opposition to blame for protests, says Turkish PM, Available at: <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/02/turkish-protesters-control-istanbul-square>>, [Accessed 16 August 2005].

UNDP, Turkey, March 15, 2013, Turkey ranks 90th in Human Development Index, Available at: <<http://www.undp.org/content/turkey/en/home/presscenter/news-from-new-horizons/2013/03/15/turkey-ranks-90th-in-hdi/>>, [Accessed 15 August 2013].

Laws, By-Laws, and Regulations

Civil Procedure Code, Law No1086. (1927). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 622, 623, 624, 2,3,4, July 1927.

Law on Anti-Terror, Law No 3713. (1991). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 20843, 12 April 1991.

Law on Consumer Rights in Electronic Communication Sector. (2010). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 27655, 28 July 2010.

Law on Crimes Against Atatürk, Law No 5816. (1951). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 7872, 31 July 1951.

Law on Electronics Communication, Law No 5809. (2008). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 27050, 10 October 2008.

Law On Intellectual and Artistic Works, Law No 5846. (1951). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 7981, 13 December 1951.

Law on Organization and Duties of Regulatory Authority of Tobacco and Alcohol Market, Law No 473. (2002). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 24635, 9 January 2002.

Law on Protection of Minors from Obscene Publications, Law No 1117. (1927). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 627, 7 July 1927.

Law on Publications on the Internet and Suppression of Crimes Committed by Means of Such Publication, Law No 5651. (2007). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 26530, 23 May 2007.

Law on Relations between Employees and Employers in Press, Law No 5953. (1952). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 8140, 13 June 1952.

Law on the Establishment of Radio and Television Enterprises and Their Media Services, Law No 6112. (2011). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 27863, 3 March 2011.

Law on the Foundation and Duties of Ministry of Religious Affairs, Law No 633. (1965). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 12038, 2 July 1965.

Law on the Protection of Trademarks, Law No 556. (1995). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 22326, 27 June 1995.

Law on the Regulation on Betting and Gaming on Football and Other Competitions, Law No 7258. (1959). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 10201, 9 May 1959.

Law on Turkish Commerce, Law No 6102. (2011). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 27846, 14 February 2011.

Law on Turkish Criminal Court, Law No 5271. (2004). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 25673, 17 December 2004.

Press Code, Law No 5187. (2004). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 25504, 20 June 2004.

Regulation on Procedures and Principles Regarding the Safe Use of the Internet. (2011). 24/08/2011/2011/DK-14/46. Available at: http://www.tib.gov.tr/tr/tr-menu-36-guvenli_internet_hizmeti.html, [Accessed 3 October 2013].

Regulation on The Procedures and Principles For Granting Operating Certificate to Access Providers and Hosting Providers by The Telecommunication Authority, (2007). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 26680, 27 October 2007.

The Turkish Civil Code, Law No 4721. (2001). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 24607, 8 December 2001.

Turkish Constitution, Law No 2709. (1982). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 17863, 7 November 1982.

Turkish Penal Code, Law No 5237. (2004). *TR Official Gazette*, No: 25611, 12 October 2004.

