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Affection and the relationships of ‘others’

Hanife Aliyevdîoğlu

There are many evidences that the mainstream news making and journalism lead the growing gap between citizens, media and politics in terms of “voice”. There is no one common definition of alternative journalism; we might not identify what it is but we identify what is not. Advocacy journalism, community journalism, citizen journalism, guerilla journalism, beat reporting, cultural journalism, critical journalism, civic journalism… If there is one thing common among all those alternative options is that they do not work against trust to autonomy, neutrality, impartiality and balance. Alternative news making invites us to rethinking about the relationships between reporters and news sources; it opens cracks in corporate media or is adopted by independent media. Without corporate mainstream media we would not know many facts as without independent media and alternative journalism we would not know stories of everyday people and everyday life.

News is a story that makes sense. A news story makes sense in terms of its lead, approach, collecting technique or target group. Although we know for a long time that a list of facts does not make story; how to make meaning with facts has changed from traditional to new, mainstream to alternative. In fact journalism entails a larger and more diverse audience in comparison to academic research. Many special journalists are familiar with ethnography. Most journalists do not refer to in-depth feature reporting as “ethnographic”. For example their narrative and observational methods is close kin to participant observation and field notes collected over a period.

Ethnographic news making challenge the traditional relation between knower and the known; journalist relations with their news source and subject based on fair sharing, careful listening to others and solidarity with the marginal groups such as the poor, migrants, drug users. Ethnographic journalist uses her/his personal network; value the kind and generous desire of people to talk; aims social change for the common good and social justice for all by relying on ordinary people’s stories; cares a particular relation with the subject of the news. Ethnographic journalism is more time consuming since they rarely interview ones with the subjects. It contributes social integration; representation of the other’s voice, recognition, understanding and sense of belonging. Many journalistic and socio ethnographic studies show that exposing people to images and representation of ethnic, cultural or national “other” can already be enough to bring about a positive change in attitude. We need to hear the stories of us for media reform and democracy in this the Internet enabled world. The Hitchens Commission, for example, advocated the “projection of a representative picture of the constituent groups in the society”. One advantage of ethnographic reporting is how it portrays in a responsible manner the lives and cultures of groups that are typically marginalized through mainstream journalism practices. Inner truth is a key concept because an understanding of a group on its own terms is the very purpose of ethnography. In this regard, the ethnographic reporter values the authenticity of the group studied; a kind of immersion into the lives of marginalized groups.

Creating and sustaining a healthy media landscape is an option to move away from the media monoculture dealing with important people and hard news. It seems this option is picked mostly by independent journalists who have more freedom to explore with far less financial risk than those working within the corporate structure. As media literate people get more aware both with the manipulative aspects of mainstream journalism and community based coverage. Day by day audiences of media change their interest in news and transform from “informed citizens” to “monitorial citizens”.

Another way of news-making: ethnographic journalism

- Abtin Badie -

We are living in a world that is imagined and created by the mainstream or elite, influenced by religion, culture, tradition, political views and norms in our society. Every individual has the potential to develop unique behaviors and every one of us could adopt individual ideological principles or sexual orientations. When these principles and behaviorsism, however, do not fit in with the dominant views of the mainstream culture they are perceived of as odd or different and the group or individual will be either marginalized or not tolerated at all.

The result of this culminates in the existence of marginal groups within societies. In these marginal groups people often feel the need to keep that which people believe in private, afraid of rejection, since the society they live in is not supportive of the minority. The president answered: “We know that in Iran and how the government in Iran treated homosexuals because of some fanatic and homophobia was when the hard liner arrested, tortured, or even executed. In his country because of some fanatic and homophobia that denies the existence of homosexuals and the group or individual will be either marginalized or not tolerated at all.

In contrast to this, there are some democratic countries like Canada where they treat the subject with more openness. For example if your mother says to you: “I am your mother and religion by side and I always fought back because I know that what I believe and what I am isn’t a sin or wrong. Being discriminated against and being treated like a freak is wrong. For example if your mother says to you: “I am your mother and religion by side and I have the first problem with you that I want to see your own child, this is my wish as a mother.” How do you answer?

- Dilara: I left Turkey? Why did you leave Turkey?
- Dilara: I left Turkey to come live with my girlfriend here in Cyprus.

What is your reaction for somebody that you encounter and he or she is not tolerated about homosexuality and he or she says this to you?

- Dilara: Homosexuality is not a sickness, it is not a phase someone goes through. So it is not up for a discussion. However being straight isn’t a subject matter, for us being a homosexual isn’t a subject matter either. We just do not argue about it with someone especially with someone who is a homophobe.

If somebody in your family for example father, mother, brother, etc. with some traditional ideas against homosexuality says: Do not be lesbian because of our sake or our morality, how do you answer or react?

- Meriyam: I come from a religious family so I actually grew up listening to these sentences especially from my mother. I always fought back because I know that what I believe and what I am isn’t a sin or wrong. Being discriminated against and being treated like a freak is wrong.

For example if your mother says to you: “I am your mother and religion by side and I have the first problem with you that I want to see your own child, this is my wish as a mother.” How do you answer?

- Dilara: I am not out to my mother, I wasn’t out to my grandparents. I mean I didn’t say “I am lesbian” to their faces, but my mother feels it after so many years. I had to come out to my family when I was 16. It was very hard for me. I had to leave my home, my family, my school and my country.

Are you planning to have your own children (sperm bank) or do you want to adopt children or neither?

- Dilara: We have experienced this kind of situation in the past with couple of friends, it’s a lovely feeling. So the answer is yes, we do.

- Dilara: Yes we absolutely would choose being born a lesbian. Do you think that your presentation in society as a lesbian would help another lesbian who do not dare to say that they are lesbian?

Dilara: We have experienced this kind of situation in the past with couple of friends, it’s a lovely feeling. So the answer is yes, we do.

- Meriyam: Yes we absolutely would choose being born a lesbian.

Are you planning to have your own children (sperm bank) or do you want to adopt children or neither?

- Meriyam: I realized it when I was around 7-8 years old but back then of course I didn’t know that people had to label themselves and be labeled according to who they love. Being a child is an amazing thing because everything comes so natural to you, so you can be your real pure self. You live in a beautiful world where you don’t label anyone and you are not labelled. I always liked girls and had crashes on them and it came so natural to me from the beginning.

Dilara: I realized it when I was 13.

- Meriyam: I come from a religious family so I actually grew up listening to these sentences especially from my mother. I always fought back because I know that what I believe and what I am isn’t a sin or wrong. Being discriminated against and being treated like a freak is wrong.

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Are you planning to have your own children (sperm bank) or do you want to adopt children or neither?

- Meriyam: We want both of them. We first want to have a child by an artificial insemination and then absolutely adopt.
Homs: The city that does not sleep

Since the outbreak of the Syrian uprising in mid-March the city of Homs has been restless in defense of its protesters. Constantly vigilant both night and day, the city never sleeps.

According to local coordinating committees in Syria the death toll has passed 3000. Although the Syrian security forces tighten or drop their grip according to the movement of demonstrations in towns and cities, the city of Homs is still experiencing the same tension since the protests began. Syrian blockades have tightened security, the tension has escalated within the last few days. According to local coordinating committees, "the city is witnessing a significant escalation in gangs, military, and the Hithib security system in order to eliminate the burning flame of revolution.

The campaign against the city of Rustan, which was concluded in October, resulted in the deaths of more than a hundred people, two thousand captured detainees, the destruction of an unprecedented amount of private property, and the displacement of more than half the population. While the city lived it was under a state of siege: lack of medical aid, food, water and the basic necessities of life.

Palestine as a new member of the UN?

Israel declared its independence in 1948 after a long lasting war between its armed forces and the Palestinians. The Arab-Israeli conflict has been going on for more than 60 years during which the Palestinians suffered from two major disasters. The first was in 1948 when the Jewish forces managed to occupy all the Palestinian territories apart from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The second was in 1967 when the Jewish forces occupied the rest of the Palestinian land including Jerusalem.

During 63 years of conflict both Palestinians and Israelis have suffered. But in the case of the Palestinians, tens of thousands have died and hundreds of thousands of injured men, women and children. Almost a million Palestinians have been at risk of being captured and detained by the Israeli armed forces. Hundreds of political leaders have been executed in many countries across the world. Hundreds of thousands of schools, mosques, headquarters, offices, and houses have been demolished. Tens of thousands of children have become orphans and hundreds of international laws have been broken.

Almost four years ago, Barack Obama was elected to become the first African-American president of the United States. Palestinians were happy with the results of the elections both because republicans were out of office and because we thought he might be the one that could bring us some form of independence.

I remember Mr. Obama saying that the establishment of a Palestinian state would be the one and only solution to the conflict. However, his belief in this has changed for some reason.

Over the last month the president of the Palestinian National Authority, Mahmoud Abbas was able to promote the option of going to the United Nations Council in order to ask for a free Palestinian state over the borders of the 1967 war.

Israel and the United States were the first to condemn this action and warned the Palestinian Authority of "major consequences" if Palestinians went to the UN to ask for independence.

On September the 23rd president Abbas made a powerful speech at the United Nations where he made the case for full membership of a Palestinian state. President Abbas clearly described the Palestinians' suffering.

President Abbas clearly pointed out five major issues during his speech. The first one was the goal of the Palestinian people for establishing a free independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital over the lands which were occupied in 1967 which would eventually achieve peace, justice and freedom for all, as well as the release of all the Palestinian political prisoners from the Israeli prisons. The second point was that the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Palestinian people renounce violence and reject and condemn all forms of terrorism and adhere to all agreements signed between the PLO and Israel. Third, the PLO is still seeking for a final lasting solution for the conflict according to international legitimacy resolutions.

Fourth, the Palestinian people will continue with their non-violent peaceful resistance against the Israeli occupation and the settlement policies and the building of the apartheid wall. Fifth, that the PLO decision of seeking freedom and independence through the United Nations is a confirmation of its diplomatic and political choice.

What does it mean for Palestine to become a full member in the UN?

Joining the United Nations will not solve everything, but it will be the starting point for negotiations between two states in order to establish peace in the region. The Israeli occupation of Palestine will no longer be legislated and Israel will become a force of occupation that is occupying another independent country and breaking international laws.

Palestine might become the 194th member of the UN. Many countries are going to vote for it but there are many voices that say the US is not going to allow it and that their use of the veto is a certainty. Using the American veto against the Palestinians is going to promote an anti-American atmosphere within the Arab and Muslim world. It is no longer possible to address the blocking of peace talks with the same means as before, the crises of the Palestinian people are real and should not be neglected. It is critical and dangerous and the world should not postpone a solution or it will explode.

“It is the moment of truth, and my people have been waiting for 63 years to hear an answer, will the world continue to allow Israel to proceed with its occupation as the last occupation force in the world? Or will it give Palestinians freedom and independence,” Mahmoud Abbas stated at the UN.

Sino-Turkish Cypriot Media Conference continued

The last two presentations of the first day were given by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Melek Atabay on broadcast media in Northern Cyprus and Dr. Ma Xiangyang on television in China. Dr. Atabay began with a historical overview of media in Cyprus. She traced various medium under various regimes and governments, from British military broadcasting to Greek/Turkish shared broadcasting services. During the conflict in Cyprus she noted that BAYRAK and CyBC were in operation and after the 74 division looked at state owned radio and television organizations. After introducing Biz/Emes on CyBC and CCMC the NGO organization she called for an increase in bi-communal projects and programs.

Dr. Ma Xiangyang talked on the subject of funding in Chinese media. He described the direction towards online videos rather than traditional television as a reaction to venture capitalism and the free market which opened up competitive, flexible and innovative new enterprises. He concluded with his thought that the time of traditional television is coming to an end, online video offering more opportunities for advertising and a more interactive and open atmosphere.

On the second day Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tuğrul Hler introduced “Parallel Trips” (2004) by directors Derviş Zaim and Panicos Chrysantheou. He also described how the direction of Turkish Cypriot documentaries was turning away from reunification and on to gender issues and subjects apart from the Cyprus issue. Dr. Lei Jianjun talked about the history of documentary in China, including those concerning the Japanese occupation of China, Chinese civil war and how more recently TV stations in China were focusing more on entertainment making funding for documentary making difficult. This was followed by a screening of and “Beijing 2008” (2009) by director Lei Jianjun.
Students & the Activities Center

Babak Rahnama in Cyprus

Babak Rahnama is the first songwriter and vocalist of Persian trance music and the owner of one of the best music studios in Cyprus. His first work was the Gladiator soundtrack remix which was released in 2004 on MTV. He then went on to compose a song for Bryan Adams although this was never released. He is one of the best set players and has his own media channel: www.bi2u.com. His concert tour started in 2009. His last concert was in North Cyprus on 7 Oct 2011.

Location: Famagusta, Club: Park D’luna

New Gündem office opens

Joy Ogüçmi

On the 11th of October Gündem officially opened its new office at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies. Lecturers, students, and volunteers gathered to celebrate a new space for a new year of reporting and writing. English and Turkish editors Benjamin Bailie and Ayça Kulter gave brief statements on Gündem’s mission statement: a paper for the students, by the students. The editor of Gündem, Ayça Demet Atay gave a brief statement in Turkish for DAU TV defining her goals and the goals of the newspaper.

Gündem was established at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies not only as a medium through which students could have their voices heard, share ideas and advertise events, but also as a resource for young journalists or aspiring media professionals to learn their craft and hone their skills.

Although Gündem is run by research assistants and interns, it welcomes any and all volunteers from the untrained to the just interested. You can find us on the top floor of the FCMS building or on our facebook page: Voice of E.M.U Gündem Student Newspaper.

EMU welcomes new post-graduate students

Joy Ogüçmi

On the 29th of September the new post-graduate students of EMU were welcomed at the Social and Cultural Activities Center. Organized by the Institute of Graduate Studies and Research the event’s aim was to inform students of the procedures, rules, and regulations and to make them aware of the many opportunities available to them at EMU. It was a closed 3-hour session—interrupted only by a coffee break—organized to prepare students for the journey ahead in starting a graduate study program and finishing it successfully too.

Eastern Mediterranean University is the oldest university in North Cyprus and has internationally recognized and accredited English language programs for graduate level studies. It has been the Institute’s goal to set and maintain the highest academic standards.

Director of the Institute Prof. Dr. Elvan Yılmaz said that EMU provided students with contemporary post graduate studies academic programs that are carefully designed to prepare students for greater opportunities to compete for future careers in both the public and private sectors.

Students were given step by step information on the course requirements for graduates in Masters and PhD programs (thesis and non-thesis), the duration of the programs, tuition fees and other educational support plans. Also addressed was the publications needed for PhD students to complete their requirements.

Prof. Yılmaz informed students that EMU, aside from its official website, has newly uploaded a twitter account that can provide more information for students.

“Eastern Mediterranean University is an English medium university”, John Edrid told graduate students, and as such has designed an English support system for foreign students. It integrates English learning into the main programs in order to save time and save the students money, as opposed to EMU’s previous requirement of pre-entry English classes before the start of the main program.

While urging all students to participate in the English proficiency programs, John Edrid said the university has plans to introduce other foreign language courses at the graduate levels too.

Two assistant directors of the institute, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sonuc Zorlu and Assist. Prof. Dr. Ekrem Varoglu, as well as the team of EMU English instructors spoke at the session and answered questions at the end.

Students got involved in club activities at the beginning of the year and they expect more members to join throughout the year. Each club is made up of 7 board members who handle the club issues throughout the academic year. Those 7 members are elected by students at the beginning of every academic year. The staff of the cultural and activities center organizes those elections in the activity center for about one week. Throughout the week all of the members of that club elect whoever they think is most suited to be the new board member. Miss Erda, one of the staff members at the activity center says that the elections this year were quite exciting because a lot of new members applied. Up to 2500 students got involved in club activities at the beginning of the year and they expect more members to join throughout the year.
THE ARTISTIC MANIFESTO

CREATIVITY UNDER PRESSURE

The avant-garde movements of the 20th century were defined by publications of artistic manifestos that described artist’s new concepts to society. For the “Concepts in Modern Art and Design” course midterm, I asked my students to write their own manifestos, to express their own ideas on art. A risky proposal maybe? The students began by saying that they were not able to do it, but I kept up the pressure. On submission day, when I saw the smiles on their faces, I realized that the experiment had been a success. I received an amazing collection of personal manifestos. Getting this sharing with you an exclusive view of some of these wonderful works. Enjoy them! Albert VanDellus

AZADISM MANIFESTO

By Azadeh Kazemi

AZADI means freedom, and freedom is not just a word. It is a style of life, it is a way of thinking, it is the manner in which we talk, and it is a type of seeing and even breathing. 

AZADI is the aim that everyone is trying to achieve, every corner is a test to contain, every teacher tries to teach, every student tries to learn–but every dictator tries to stop.

This manifesto is for introducing AZADI, the best movement in art that can change your life. It is not just in art, not only for painting, not for only music, not just in your life. It is not just in art, not only for the best movement in art that can change our lives. It is a style of life, it is a term, I asked my students to write their own manifestos for their century were defined by publications of new meanings. I created this style of art because when we go to a museum or exhibition we always see little notes on the picture or object that say “DON’T TOUCH”, we see this and we look at it and can not do anything, we can’t touch it.

I created this art because I wondered: What do the people think? What do they feel? When they see an object of art, I would like people to express their thoughts through words, paintings, interpretation, through their creativity. I created a new movement for the inclusion of new meanings. I announce it to teenagers, adults, children and old people, because they will give new meanings to art, in this way we can learn lots of new things about the people their ideal world.

You can imagine this: when you go to a museum you see one object, which is an uncompleted chair. You can touch it, you can create a new chair with your ability. You can use everything to design a new chair or you can write something about it, What do you feel when you see it? Another example; when we go to “Salahs Harabebili” in Cyprus. We can see the broken sculpture with its head broken, we can complete it with a lion’s head and this gives it power so it may symbolizes empowerment and other people can find different meanings for it. In other words: revealing people’s creativity and learning something from people is my underlying reason in this movement.

After the museum I can better understand your feelings and I can see your new chair. Many people can go to the museum every day and each one can give new meaning to it. Because we all have different thoughts and feelings. Hearing AZADISM makes you full of life and love. It gives you influence to help the others and to only the artist’s opinion. People should reflect their true identity. That is the idea behind the creation of this art.

(…) If we would like to give an example: a boy loves a girl and suddenly needs to move to another city. But he has to say to her that he loves her. The boy writes “I love you” on a piece of paper which is made up of his fingerprints and he leaves it behind for the girl to see. Well, obviously, some people do not design with a perfect combination of shapes and colors. But in our modern era our behavior towards it has been distracted, the modern life has possessed our minds in a way that has made us lose our identity as a part of nature. FRAGMENTS POST-MODERN NATURAL ART

POST-MODERN NATURAL ART

By Pooneh Afaghzadeh

Nature herself is an artistic master piece beautifully designed with a perfect combination of shapes and colors. But in our modern era our behavior towards it has been distracted, the modern life has possessed our minds in a way that has made us lose our identity as a part of nature.

(…) Let’s adopt realism as soon as we toss up next to the “pro” abstract artist’s pieces. This was to see if these educated artists having studied art for so long could tell the difference, and amazingly these educated guys described how expressive those 4-year old’s paintings were, until the host told them they were done by children and then these “educated” men say: “well, then, they are geniuses” (…) Let’s adopt realism as soon as we toss abstract art in the trash-can, because realism is the only accurate and apparently objective description of the ordinary world.

TOUCHISM MANIFESTO

By Sule Çiçek

Touchism means to touch an object which is not complete, one side of this object is complete and the other side is not complete. This is a new style of art. My desire is to complete the uncompleted objects with your ability and creativity. For example: we have one photograph with the left side completed and the right side is uncompleted.

I would like you to complete it with your ability and creativity. For example; like love, loneliness, divorce, absence, etc… a hand. This hand can symbolize everything in an ideal world.

Everything depends on us or our idea of an ideal world. You can imagine this: when you go to a museum you see one object, which is an uncompleted chair. You can touch it, you can create a new chair with your ability. You can use everything to design a new chair or you can write something about it, What do you feel when you see it? Another example; when we go to “Salahs Harabebeli” in Cyprus. We can see the broken sculpture with its head broken, we can complete it with a lion’s head and this gives it power so it may symbolizes empowerment and other people can find different meanings for it. In other words: revealing people’s creativity and learning something from people is my underlying reason in this movement.

After the museum I can better understand your feelings and I can see your new chair. Many people can go to the museum every day and each one can give new meaning to it. Because we all have different thoughts and feelings.

FIPRISM (FINGER PRINTISM)

By Volkan Tekin

Sometimes people don’t want to express themselves by speaking or through facial expressions and they use fingerprints which reflect their true identity. That is the idea behind the creation of this art.

(…) If we would like to give an example: a boy loves a girl and suddenly needs to move to another city. But he has to say to her that he loves her. The boy writes “I love you” on a piece of paper which is made up of his fingerprints and he leaves it behind for the girl to see. Well, obviously, some people do not design with a perfect combination of shapes and colors. But in our modern era our behavior towards it has been distracted, the modern life has possessed our minds in a way that has made us lose our identity as a part of nature.