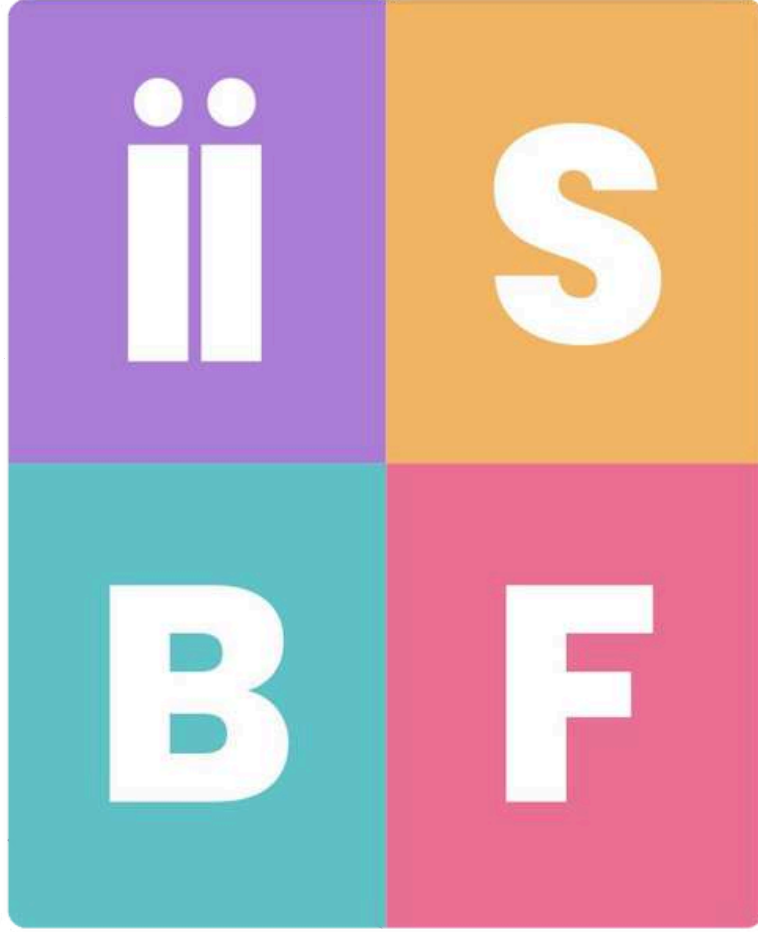


ISTANBUL GELISIM UNIVERSITY



SosyoCom

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Humanity in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Technological Miracle or Digital Captivity?

*Asst. Prof. Özlem Derin SAĞLAM
The Department of Sociology*

The rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) have transformed science fiction scenarios into our everyday reality. Especially when integrated with mobile technologies, AI has become like a miniature universe we carry in our pockets. Smartphones are no longer just communication devices — they serve as personal assistants, doctors, photographers, and even therapists. This integration has also led to revolutionary progress in fields such as space and aviation. For instance, NASA uses AI for route planning and data analysis in Mars missions, while private companies like SpaceX employ AI-powered automatic landing systems to make space travel safer.

Yet behind every brilliant technology lies a shadow. In the realm of virtual reality, people are drifting further away from physical reality. Many young individuals spend a significant portion of their day wearing VR headsets. Social media avatars are replacing real human connections. This digital addiction not only causes distraction and social isolation but also contributes to significant energy consumption. The recent warning by OpenAI CEO Sam Altman — “We risk turning AI into a garbage dump” — is especially crucial at this juncture. According to Altman, the unchecked, ever-present use of AI systems that constantly respond without discernment is blurring the lines between true information and misinformation. So much so that many young people today cannot decide what to eat, wear, or watch without consulting AI.

It's as if a generation born into the digital world is living under the guidance of a “digital mother.” Just as a child wouldn't take a step without their mother, many young users now turn to ChatGPT or similar assistants for even the smallest decisions. This trend replaces independent thinking with a copy-paste mentality dictated by algorithms. Undoubtedly, the benefits of AI are undeniable — it diagnoses diseases, pilots aircraft autonomously, and provides instant access to vast information. But perceiving these technologies not as guides but as leaders could lead humans to lose touch with their inner voice.

As we gaze into the mirror that technology holds up to us, we must be wary of the fading reflection of our own identity. Otherwise, we risk becoming nothing more than ghosts in a digital universe, hopelessly tethered to artificial intelligence.



A New Support Mechanism for Millennial Parents: An AI-Based Digital Assistant from Google



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In today's world, where technology is transforming not only individual behavior but also broader social patterns, Google Canada's new campaign—developed in collaboration with Cossette—opens a sociological window into how digital tools are reshaping family life. Focusing specifically on the parenting experiences of the millennial generation, the campaign explores how technology is increasingly embedded into the everyday practices of contemporary families.

Based on a survey of over 1,500 Canadian parents, the campaign reveals that individuals seek not only easy access to information but also reliable, personalized tools that help reduce their mental burden. This finding reflects a broader reality in contemporary societies: individuals are constantly faced with decision-making pressures, and managing cognitive load is becoming increasingly difficult without technological support.

The campaign centers on three key application areas of Google's AI model Gemini, highlighting how modern parenting involves not only physical but also significant cognitive labor:

- **Smart Meal Planning Tools:** Cooking is not merely a biological need—it also involves managing time, distributing domestic labor, and optimizing economic resources. Gemini simplifies this process by generating dynamic grocery lists and offering budget-friendly recipes. In doing so, digital technology becomes a tool for regaining control over time and easing the routines of daily life.
- **Family-Focused Travel Planning:** Contemporary parenting also entails meeting children's emotional and experiential needs. Gemini provides recommendations tailored to age groups and interests, helping families plan vacations more efficiently. Here, technology functions as an "advisory actor," expanding the cultural capital of parents.
- **Technical Guidance Support:** Instruction manuals for modern products often consume significant time and mental energy. Gemini streamlines these processes by providing clear, step-by-step explanations, effectively democratizing access to technical knowledge. This suggests the emergence of a new form of digital literacy—one based on navigating and interpreting life through smart interfaces.



Google positions technology in this campaign not merely as a tool, but as an emotional, cognitive, and cultural support system. In this light, AI emerges as an "auxiliary mind," designed to help individuals carry the cognitive burdens of neoliberal individualism. The campaign reflects a new symbiotic relationship between everyday life and technology within the parenting practices of the millennial generation.

Reference:

<https://www.pazarlamasyon.com/google-dan-y-kusagi-ebeveynlerine-yapay-zek-destekli-cozum>



ARE THE NEW U.S. TARIFFS EFFECTIVE?

Res. Asst. Ahmet Can Şenlik
The Department of Aviation Management
(ENG)

The recent surge in U.S. tariff policy has triggered debate about whether trade barriers truly meet their economic and strategic goals. Since 2025, tariffs have reached historic highs—U.S. levies on Chinese goods peaked at 145%, while China responded with retaliatory tariffs of up to 125%. This escalation created immediate market volatility, revealing the disruptive effects of aggressive trade actions.

Despite political assurances, tariffs have largely failed to reduce America's trade deficit. Research shows that higher tariffs are often associated with larger deficits in developing economies and have limited or no effect in advanced economies like the U.S. One key reason is currency appreciation: tariffs often strengthen the domestic currency, making exports more expensive and offsetting gains from reduced imports. Although imports dropped sharply in 2025, this was accompanied by supply chain disruptions and rising inflation, weakening overall economic stability.

Hopes of revitalizing U.S. manufacturing have also fallen short. According to Federal Reserve data, tariffs led to a net decline in manufacturing employment by 1.4%, as modest gains in protected industries were offset by rising input costs and foreign retaliation. In today's globally integrated manufacturing sector, tariffs often function as a tax on domestic production.

Consumers have borne the brunt of these policies. The Yale Budget Lab estimates that 2025 tariffs increased annual household costs by roughly \$3,800, hitting lower-income families the hardest. Price spikes in basic goods—especially apparel and footwear—have been particularly severe. International retaliation has compounded these challenges, damaging U.S. exports (particularly in agriculture) and contributing to a broader global slowdown. The World Bank recently downgraded its 2025 global growth forecast to 2.3%, citing trade tensions as a central factor.

In sum, the latest round of U.S. tariffs has imposed substantial economic costs without delivering on core goals like reducing the trade deficit or reviving manufacturing. A more effective approach to enhancing American competitiveness would likely focus on strategic investments in innovation, workforce development, and infrastructure—rather than on blunt trade restrictions.

THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF EMOTIONS

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Culture Art
and
Literature



For a long time, emotions were regarded as inner, private, and universal human experiences. However, over the past three decades, cultural studies, feminist theory, and critical sociology have shown that emotions are not only psychological but also culturally constructed and politically regulated. Questions like “when, where, what, and how we feel” are not merely personal choices but shaped by social norms, gender roles, class positions, and ideological structures.



Sara Ahmed, in her foundational work *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, defines emotions as “affective economies” forces that circulate between bodies and shape social relationships (Ahmed, 2004, p. 4). For instance, when a woman expresses anger, it is often dismissed as irrational or “hysterical,” whereas the same reaction from a man may be framed as justified or even authoritative. This reveals how emotional expressions are interpreted differently depending on identity. In this context, emotions function as ideological apparatuses, reinforcing existing power relations.

Likewise, collective mourning or national pride are not simply spontaneous feelings but orchestrated emotional performances. Media narratives that intensify fear or elevate patriotic sentiment do so by mobilizing affect for political ends. Ahmed notes that “emotions stick to objects,” shaping how we relate to people, places, and ideas (Ahmed, 2004, p. 11). Emotions, then, are not only felt, they are produced through social processes and discursive patterns.

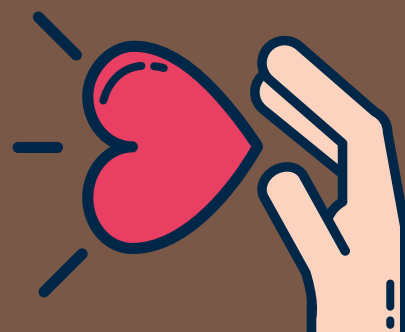
In neoliberal cultures, emotions like gratitude, optimism, and positivity are encouraged, while anger, grief, or discontent are stigmatized. As Lauren Berlant explains in *Cruel Optimism*, people are often emotionally attached to fantasies that actually obstruct their flourishing. These attachments are not innocent; they serve to sustain damaging systems of hope and aspiration (Berlant, 2011, pp. 1–2). Within this affective economy, failure to feel the “right way” is framed as a personal deficiency, rather than a symptom of structural violence.



Ultimately, emotions are not neutral experiences. They are culturally coded, politically useful, and socially policed. To feel or to fail to feel is not only a psychological act but also a social positioning. And the rules of that positioning are already inscribed in the hidden yet powerful map of society.

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A Call for Socio-Ecological Transformation in Turkish Cinema

Asst. Prof. Diler Ezgi TARHAN
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In the face of the climate crisis—one of the most pressing existential challenges of our time—the demand for ecological justice emerges not merely as an environmental concern but as an ethical, political, and socio-economic struggle. In this context, as is the case globally, public policies in Türkiye aim to develop solutions to the climate crisis through sustainable development projects, a process largely shaped by public awareness and support.

Addressing ecological issues solely from a scientific or technical perspective has proven insufficient; increasingly, the need to evaluate these problems through ethical, aesthetic, and political dimensions becomes more apparent. At this point, cinema stands out as one of the most powerful mediums capable of representing such multilayered realities. With its ability to evoke emotional responses and reach broad audiences, cinema serves as a vital tool for both raising awareness and transforming collective imagination.

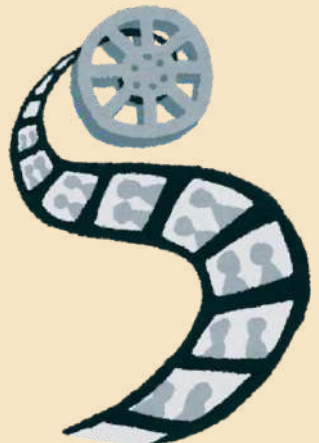
Indeed, throughout global cinema history, concepts and approaches such as the “risk society” (Ulrich Beck), the “Gaia hypothesis” (Bruno Latour), and the “Chthulucene” perspective (Donna Haraway) have inspired significant transformations in cinematic representations, particularly in regard to social and environmental justice. Films and documentaries addressing environmental destruction, ecological collapse, climate change, water scarcity, the aesthetics of catastrophe, and ecological injustice have increasingly come to the fore.

Looking specifically at Türkiye, since the 1960s, Turkish cinema has largely been shaped by social realism, especially through labor-themed films that tackled issues such as poverty, migration, urban sprawl, unemployment, class inequality, and workers' struggles. From the late 1990s onward, paralleling a growing awareness of environmental crises, environmentally themed narratives began to appear in Turkish cinema—films questioning the human–nature relationship, rural life, and environmental injustice started to be produced. However, films that represent local resistance, public memory, and political struggles related to ecological awareness are, unfortunately, few and far between.

During the Yeşilçam era (1950–1980), ecological themes were addressed in limited and indirect ways, with perhaps only one notable exception: “Dry Summer” (Susuz Yaz, 1963). While this film touches on the theme of ecological crisis, considering its broader narrative and thematic focus, it approaches issues such as water ownership from a social drama perspective rather than through an ecological lens. Therefore, it cannot be fully categorized as a film about environmental justice. Films dealing explicitly with climate and nature began to gain space in Turkish cinema during the 2000s, particularly within documentary filmmaking. *Ecumenopolis* (2011) examines the ecological consequences of unplanned urbanization in Istanbul; *Until the Earth Becomes the Face of Love* (Yeryüzü Aşkın Yüzü Oluncaya Dek, 2014) portrays the Cerattepe resistance and environmental activism; Emin Alper's *Burning Days* (Kurak Günler, 2022) touches on local politics and water scarcity; and *Commitment Hasan* (Bağlılık Hasan, 2021) reflects on agriculture, land, gardens, and the individual's connection to nature. Similarly, *The Blue Wave* (Mavi Dalga, 2013) addresses the disappearance of water resources due to urbanization, while *Once Upon a Time in Anatolia* (Bir Zamanlar Anadolu'da, 2011) offers a societal analysis through themes of aridity, the steppe, and environmental degradation.

Thus, ecological justice remains a largely overlooked topic in Turkish cinema, which is still dominated by narratives centered on love, drama, comedy, and class conflict. One can only hope that more filmmakers in Türkiye will begin to engage with environmental crises and ecological injustice—perhaps the most urgent global issues of our time—and that, in the coming years, themes such as drought, the right to water, urbanization, and the erosion of agriculture will be courageously portrayed in cinema.

May Turkish cinema, in the years ahead, not only continue its artistic production but also serve as a cultural mirror of socio-ecological transformation—amplifying nature's representation, illuminating the social inequalities shaped by environmental issues, and courageously voicing the demand for ecological justice. Let us hope to witness films that are sensitive to sociological realities—where the environmental crisis intersects with poverty, the struggles of Indigenous communities, gender equality, and an inclusive vision of ecological justice that safeguards future generations.



Lost Hopes

Ayşe Nehir FIRAT

A 3rd Year Student from the Department of Sociology



The hue of dawn fogs up within my eyes,
Your name's refrain in my heart softly sighs.
The breeze of morn hums my love's old tune,
My soul's lush garden's turned desert too soon.

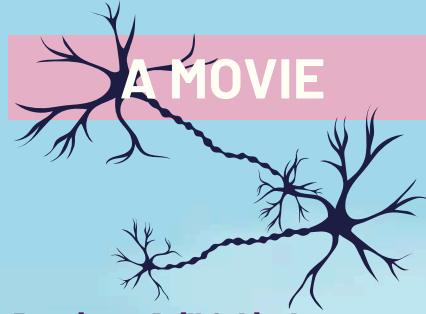
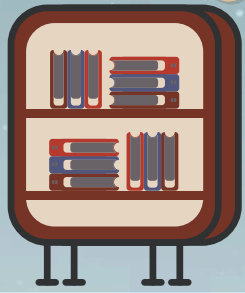
My steps resound in a misty street's embrace,
Time has worn down each stone wall's face.
Words lie silent, orphaned on my tongue,
The wind's cold breath clings close and strong.

"Once upon a time," they said of love's tale,
I believed, you deceived—we set sail.
Now no greeting comes, no parting word,
Just silence falling where dusk is heard.

Though winds may blow, they warm me no more,
Though moonlight shines, it dims what's before.
The stars are fading, one by one they fall,
And gently, slowly, I lose it all.

In shadowed streets, I seek your trace,
The walls still whisper your name with grace.
On every corner I wait, still and brave,
Hoping you'll return—just once— my love...





From Tabula Rasa to Bella Baxter: The Experience-Built Subject in Yorgos Lanthimos's *Poor Things*

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The Department of Sociology

Yorgos Lanthimos's film *Poor Things*, adapted from Alasdair Gray's novel of the same name, was released in 2023. The film incorporates elements of both dark comedy and science fiction. Additionally, it offers a sharp yet creative perspective on human nature, social norms, and the female body. The film stars notable actors such as Emma Stone, Willem Dafoe, Mark Ruffalo, and Ramy Youssef.

Set in the 19th century, the film revolves around the extraordinary resurrection of a young woman named Bella Baxter. Before detailing the film further, it is useful to briefly introduce Dr. Godwin Baxter, the character who gives Bella the chance to be reborn. Dr. Baxter is an extraordinary and brilliant scientist whose face was disfigured during surgery in his childhood. This physical difference reflects both his obsessive relationship with science and his partial isolation from society. In the film, Dr. Baxter experimentally brings back to life a young woman named Bella Baxter after she commits suicide. This process is not a classic "resurrection" but rather a striking and controversial scientific experiment: he implants the brain of a newborn baby into Bella's deceased body. Thus, while Bella's body is that of an adult woman, her mental and emotional development remains at a childlike level. Consequently, Bella begins to learn life, language, society, emotions, and her own body from scratch.

Bella's "rebirth" represents not only a scientific advancement for Dr. Baxter but also a realm of creativity that transcends and surpasses moral boundaries. In a sense, Bella—directly referencing Frankenstein themes—is a new being created by him. However, contrary to what might be expected, the relationship between creator and creation does not become a matter of hierarchy in the film. Throughout the story, Dr. Baxter is portrayed not as an oppressive or exploitative figure but as someone who observes Bella and respects her development. As Bella gains her own identity and freedom, she encounters Dr. Baxter's compassionate support.

Dr. Baxter also embodies many philosophical questions through the concepts of science, God, and creation. For instance, philosophically, he represents the figure of "man playing God." His act of reviving Bella's body and implanting a baby's brain signifies that he assumes the act of creation himself. This constitutes an ontological intervention from the perspective of classical metaphysics, raising questions such as: What is a human? How is a human formed? How is a mental being shaped?

The connection that can be established between John Locke's concept of tabula rasa (blank slate) and Bella offers a thought-provoking ground for reflecting on the formation of the human mind, the process of becoming an individual, and the attainment of freedom. Bella's story serves as a cinematic representation of Locke's empiricist epistemology. According to Locke, the human mind is not endowed with innate knowledge; on the contrary, the mind begins as a blank slate. Through sensory experiences acquired throughout life, a person gains knowledge, which in turn shapes their personality and intellectual world. Knowledge is not instinctive but acquired—allowing the individual to be understood through their interactions with their environment. Bella is brought back to life in an adult body, but with the mind of an infant. This condition makes her, in a very real sense, a tabula rasa. Bella learns language, emotions, social norms, moral values, and sexuality gradually, through experience. From the beginning to the end of the film, the audience witnesses how Bella's mental and moral world is shaped step by step. Her character development is not a process of conformity imposed by external authorities, but the result of entirely individual experiences. In this respect, Bella closely aligns with Locke's conception of the human being: a thinking, questioning entity who becomes a subject through experience.

In conclusion, *Poor Things* is a work that deserves to be examined not only through its feminist or science fiction themes but also on a philosophical level. Bella's mental development and pursuit of freedom directly align with Locke's notion of tabula rasa. The film powerfully illustrates how a human being can shape their own destiny from a blank slate, and how experience transforms into knowledge and identity. In doing so, it offers the audience not just a story, but a philosophical inquiry into what it means to be human.

THE POLITICS OF BARE LIFE: A Study on Giorgio Agamben's Homo Sacer

Asst. Prof. Fikriye Gözde Mocan

The Department of Sociology

Giorgio Agamben's *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1995) is a work that occupies a central place in political philosophy and biopolitics, developing key concepts to understand the structure and limits of modern political power. In this book, Agamben argues that the most fundamental form of political power is the authority to decide over life itself. In this context, he constructs a theoretical framework around concepts such as "bare life" (*nuda vita*), the "state of exception," and *homo sacer* to grasp the essence of the modern state. The central concept of the book, *homo sacer*, is drawn from ancient Roman law. This figure refers to a person who may not be sacrificed, yet may be killed without legal consequence. In other words, *homo sacer* is subjected to a form of legal exclusion: they are neither protected by the law nor entirely outside of it. This threshold condition is, for Agamben, the key to understanding the logic of political power. In modern societies, the figure of *homo sacer* continues to exist: refugees, stateless individuals, those whose rights are suspended under suspicion of terrorism, or communities living under states of emergency can all be seen as contemporary forms of *homo sacer*.

At this point, Agamben's concept of "bare life" comes into play. Bare life refers to a form of existence in which human beings are reduced solely to their biological being. Stripped of political rights, social identities, and legal protections, this mode of life is defined only by the fact of living. According to Agamben, the structure of modern sovereignty possesses the capacity to reduce individuals to this level at will. This renders the state not only a body that enacts laws but also one that has the power to suspend them. The concept of the "state of exception," which Agamben develops by drawing on Carl Schmitt, plays a central role in explaining this process. Sovereignty reveals itself most clearly in extraordinary circumstances, where the normal legal order is no longer valid. The sovereign is the one who holds the authority to decide on the exception. This results in individuals being removed from legal protection and placed within a zone of exception. In this process, the law does not simply exclude the individual; rather, it defines its own boundaries by placing the individual outside itself. In doing so, the excluded life paradoxically serves as the foundation for sovereignty.

For Agamben, the clearest manifestation of this structure of power is the "camp." Whether it be Nazi concentration camps or contemporary refugee camps, the camp is a space in which the law is suspended and individuals are reduced from political subjects to bare life. The camp exposes the naked form of modern sovereignty and violence. In such spaces, people are not only left unprotected but are also rendered politically invisible. Agamben's analysis is especially timely and compelling in the context of 21st-century developments: the rise of security-focused politics, refugee crises, states of emergency, and debates over the right to citizenship. Building on Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics, Agamben shows that it is not only individuals but life itself that has become a central concern of political power. In conclusion, *Homo Sacer* offers a radical perspective that places life itself at the center of the modern political system and interprets the workings of sovereignty not through the limits of law but through the lives that have been excluded by it. The book invites us to think not only about lives protected by law, but also about those that have been cast outside of it—and thus rendered invisible. In this sense, *Homo Sacer* is not only a key text for political philosophy but also an essential reference for anyone seeking to understand the contemporary world.



The Man in the High Castle

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The Department of Political Science and Public Administration

The Man in the High Castle is a dystopian alternative history television series based on the novel of the same name by Philip K. Dick. The series depicts a world where World War II ended differently. 1960s America is divided into two parts: the Greater Nazi Reich, ruled by Nazi Germany, and the Japanese Pacific States, controlled by the Japanese Empire. This division not only represents a geographical separation but also highlights the clash between two distinct totalitarian ideologies.

At the political centre of the series are the oppressive regimes' control over individuals, the reality constructed through propaganda, and the moral cost of resistance. Nazi Germany's structure, combined with technological advancement, aims for racial purity and absolute control, while the Japanese regime establishes authoritarian control through traditional concepts of honour. The characters caught between these two regimes struggle to survive while clinging to universal values such as freedom, truth, and resistance.

One of the series' main characters, John Smith, a high-ranking agent of the Nazi Reich, experiences the totalitarian regime's impact on the individual in the deepest way. Smith's story, in which he is forced to question his own family and beliefs, reveals the conflict between ideology and humanity. The internal conflict he experiences while enforcing the regime's harsh rules exposes the moral dilemmas created by fascism as an extraordinary form of capitalist production relations and how compulsory obedience leads to a rupture in the individual. John Smith's rise and fall are presented to the viewer as a vivid demonstration of the destructive effect of a totalitarian system on the individual and how personal freedoms are systematically eliminated.

The series is presented through mysterious films containing alternative reality videos. These films show that different possibilities are possible, prompting the viewer to question the concept of 'reality.' The Man in the High Castle is not merely a science fiction series but can also be read as a political allegory that powerfully depicts the process of authoritarianism becoming normalised.

INTERMEZZO

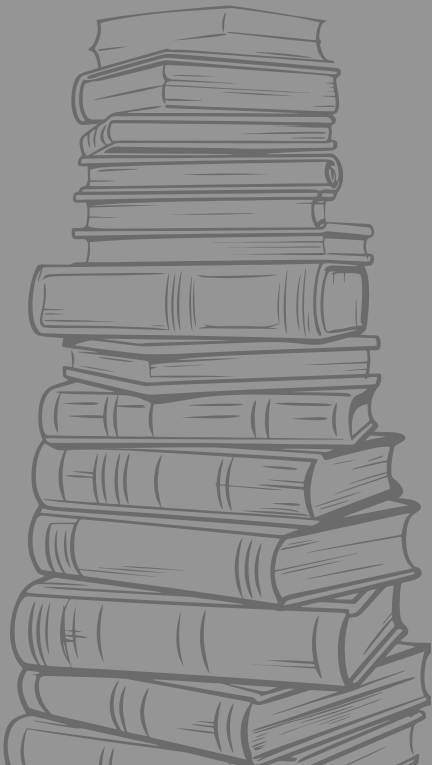
Sally Rooney's fourth novel, *Intermezzo*, traces the quiet bond between two brothers as they navigate grief, masculinity, and unspoken emotions. Peter and Ivan Koubek, reeling from the death of their father, take different paths through loss. Peter is a law student in Dublin, leaning on intellect and restraint, while Ivan immerses himself in the visceral world of horse racing. As in Rooney's previous works, conversations often reveal less than they conceal.

But *Intermezzo* is not merely a story about mourning. It offers a subtle critique of modern masculinity. Peter suppresses emotion through rational distance, whereas Ivan translates feeling into physical movement. Their differing approaches embody two sides of the same gendered coin: men shaped by social codes that limit vulnerability, yet quietly tethered to each other. Rooney illustrates how these emotional patterns are not innate, but structured, echoing Pierre Bourdieu's notion of *habitus*, where one's social and cultural background shapes their affective responses.

Throughout the novel, silence is not a lack but a form of meaning. What goes unsaid travels instead through gesture, posture, and avoidance. Rooney doesn't just romanticize these silences; she uses them to expose the limits placed on emotional intimacy between men. The novel illuminates how brotherhood is framed by social expectations, and how emotional labor is still unevenly gendered.

Intermezzo is perhaps Rooney's most restrained and introspective work to date. It is not a story about love, but about loyalty, not about emotional expression, but about what remains buried. In that sense, it offers a quietly powerful sociological reading of how contemporary relationships are shaped as much by absence as by connection.

Res. Asst. Meryem Sarıköse
The Department of Sociology



ACADEMIC PLAYLIST









A SELECTION FOR JULY

Res. Asst. Mustafa Nurkan BİTLİSLİ
The Department of Political Science and Public Administration

During the hot days of summer, academic productivity calls for a touch of coolness and mental clarity. This month's selection is composed of pieces that both enhance focus during research and stimulate the imagination. At times clearing the mind with minimal electronic touches, at others guiding inward reflection through contemporary classical melodies, these tracks accompany both the slow rhythm of summer and the seriousness of scholarly work. We wish you an enjoyable listening experience.

Please click [here](#) to access the playlist.

91		Says Nils Frahm	Spaces
92		Near Light Ólafur Arnalds	Living Room Songs
93		On the Nature of Daylight Max Richter, Louisa Fuller, Natalia Bonner, John Metcalfe, Ph...	The Blue Notebooks (15 Years)
94		Opening Philip Glass, Bruce Brubaker	Hope Street Tunnel Blues: Music for Piano By
95		Esja Hania Rani	Esja
96		andata Ryuichi Sakamoto	async
97		Flight from the City Jóhann Jóhannsson, Yuki Numata Resnick, Tarn Travers, Ben ...	Orphée
98		Your Hand in Mine Explosions In The Sky	The Earth Is Not a Cold Dead Place
99		An Ending (Ascent) - Remastered 2005 Brian Eno	Apollo
100		Inspirit Julianna Barwick	Healing Is A Miracle





The Farmer's Anxiety in the Face of the New Climate Law

Asst. Prof. Diler Ezgi Tarhan
The Department of Sociology



Climate change is one of the most significant environmental threats to agriculture and livestock globally. In Türkiye, as part of efforts to combat climate change, the Climate Law approved by the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye on July 3, 2025, includes goals such as reducing carbon emissions and ensuring sustainable development. However, these regulations have raised various concerns among farmers and livestock producers who live in close contact with nature.

This law, which aims to establish a legal basis for Türkiye's 2053 "net zero emissions" target, introduces measures such as carbon trading, emission reduction plans, and increased environmental inspections. Within this framework, agriculture and livestock sectors are directly impacted by regulations on practices such as fertilizer use, methane emissions, and land management. New restrictions related to methane gas emissions in livestock production and limitations on the use of fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture are among the initial implementations.

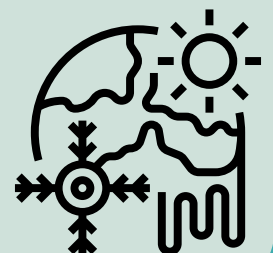
Although these regulations serve positive environmental and climate goals, they carry the potential to impose economic pressure on rural producers. Therefore, this legal framework, while aimed at solving ecological problems, also bears the risk of triggering a range of socio-economic issues. Producers are calling on the state for education, financial support, and guidance to facilitate a smooth transition into this new era.



Modern production methods used in agriculture and livestock—particularly intensive (industrial) farming and large-scale livestock production—have over time created negative environmental impacts. The new climate policies aim to mitigate these effects by limiting the use of chemical fertilizers to reduce nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions, lowering methane emissions linked to livestock, preventing soil and water pollution, and implementing tax or penalty systems based on carbon emissions.

For this reason, agriculture and livestock are now included in environmental regulations as sectors contributing to climate change. However, producers express serious concerns due to the costs, uncertainties, and lack of sufficient support mechanisms during this transition. The shift to new technologies, the use of organic fertilizers, the risk of reduced productivity, lack of information, and orientation difficulties are key factors that may cause livelihood problems in rural areas. In this context, concerns are growing that the law may impoverish farmers, increase dependence on imports as domestic production declines, lead to rising food prices, and ultimately contribute to inflation. The displacement of rural populations from production also raises the risks of social disintegration and migration.

For all these reasons, a key consideration in implementing climate policies should be to avoid abrupt and rigid regulations without supporting producers. A gradual adaptation process should be established by providing small-scale producers with support in technology, knowledge, infrastructure, and finance. Domestic production should be encouraged, ecological agriculture should be state-supported, producer cooperatives should be strengthened through education-based incentives, and a genuine balance should be established between ecological sustainability and social justice.



The Department of Sociology Hosts Its First International Conference: “Current Debates from the Perspective of Sociology and Philosophy



Asst. Prof. Ayşe AYDIN
The Department of Sociology

The Department of Sociology at Istanbul Gelişim University organized its first international conference on May 15–16, 2025, at the university’s Firnas Auditorium. Titled “Current Debates from the Perspective of Sociology and Philosophy,” the conference was held in a hybrid format and provided a dynamic academic environment for two days of intensive, multidimensional discussions.

A total of 29 scholars from ten countries—including Türkiye, Germany, France, the United States, Bulgaria, Vietnam, Lebanon, Greece, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and Azerbaijan—contributed with oral presentations.

The conference featured seven sessions structured around an interdisciplinary approach. The main topics addressed during these sessions included:

- The social impacts of artificial intelligence and digitalization
- The role of emotions in everyday life
- Debates on nationhood, identity, and political society
- Resistance, critique, and alternative perspectives
- Ecology, capitalism, and reflections on the future
- Intersections of identity, gender, and migration
- The quest for meaning, life, and death

These themes offered participants the opportunity to analyze contemporary issues through the critical lenses of both sociology and philosophy. Each session was guided by the shared intellectual foundations of these disciplines, allowing for in-depth discussions of current societal challenges. The scope ranged from the societal consequences of digital technologies and emotional life to explorations of political identity, ecological crises, gendered experiences of migration, and existential questions surrounding life and death. All sessions were moderated by faculty members from our department.

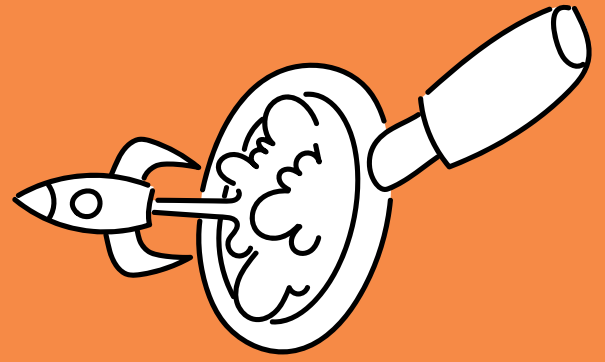
Throughout the conference, our students not only followed the presentations with keen interest but also played an active role in ensuring the smooth operation of the event by assisting with technical coordination and organizational logistics. The event was hosted and presented by Saadet Gül, a student from the Department of Sociology.

As the first international academic event organized by our department, “Current Debates from the Perspective of Sociology and Philosophy” holds particular significance for us. With its emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration and critical inquiry, the conference contributed meaningfully to the visibility of our academic work—both within the university and in broader international academic circles.

Moreover, the diversity of content, the range of participants, and strong student engagement transformed the conference into a platform where scientific thought meaningfully engaged with social reality. In this regard, it marked a strong beginning for our department’s future efforts to lead similar international events and further enhance the visibility of our scholarly contributions.



Entrepreneurship and Innovation



The New Spirit of Entrepreneurship: Beyond Profit, Toward Planet and Purpose

Asst. Prof. Özlem Derin Sağlam
The Department of Sociology

Entrepreneurship once followed a single compass: profit. But the times have changed. Today's entrepreneurs are not just chasing earnings — they're building a more livable, sustainable future. The modern pioneers are steering away from the classic commercial vessel and setting sail on an "innovation schooner" that's wind-powered by impact and guided by purpose.

EY's "Entrepreneur of the Year" finalists exemplify this shift. They're not just creating technological tools; they're designing AI, cybersecurity, and digital health solutions that act more like digital doctors, prescribing remedies for the ailments of the modern world. At the heart of this movement is a rising concept: sustainopreneurship — entrepreneurship with a mission. It sees environmental and social crises not merely as obstacles but as hidden opportunities. From carbon tracking to waste management and sustainable packaging, each innovation is like a silent pact with nature — business partnering with the planet. Türkiye, too, is riding this wave of transformation. At Bilkent Cyberpark, the country's first dedicated entrepreneurship office now offers not just space, but also strategic support and global connectivity for forward-thinking startups. In 2024 alone, Turkish startups secured \$1.1 billion across 469 investment deals, heavily focused on biotechnology, health, and artificial intelligence — marking a shift from "commerce" to "courageous science." Digital sustainability is also on the rise. From e-commerce and fashion to the energy sector, startups are developing low-impact, eco-conscious solutions that attract both investors and informed consumers. Today's entrepreneurs don't just sell products; they sell lifestyles — ethical, innovative, and carbon-conscious. But innovation can only thrive if regulation evolves at the same pace. Entrepreneurs highlight the urgent need for updated legal frameworks — digital signatures, SAFE agreements, and streamlined bureaucratic processes. Without them, the train of progress risks derailing in a legal labyrinth.

Consequently, today's entrepreneurs are not just launching apps — they're drafting blueprints for a better world. Each venture is more than a business plan; it's a letter of hope addressed to the future.



THE IRAN-ISRAEL WAR AND TURKIYE'S POSITION

Asst. Prof. Raheb MOHAMMADI GHANBARLOU
The Department of Sociology

The Israeli attack on Iran on June 13, 2025, did not come as a surprise. It marks the most extreme point in a conflict that has continued for 47 years and gained an ideological dimension following the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The weak diplomatic ties between the two countries, the negotiations between Iran and the United States over Iran's nuclear program, and Israel's successful strikes on the Iran-led Axis of Resistance, which shifted the strategic balance in Israel's favor, led to this situation. On June 13, 2025, Israel launched sudden airstrikes on several locations within Iranian territory, aiming to neutralize Iran's nuclear capacity. At least 30 senior military commanders were killed in these attacks, and both direct and indirect military targets were hit.

From Türkiye's perspective, the issue raises understandable concerns. Türkiye has maintained a cautious stance regarding the Iran–Israel war, avoiding direct involvement while expressing concern over the potential consequences for its own security, migration dynamics, and political repercussions. The issue has sparked diverse opinions within Türkiye. Some view the war as a threat to regional stability and the beginning of a new wave of unrest, while others see it as an opportunity for the Islamic world to awaken and exert pressure on Israel. However, the dominant stance holds that the continuation of the Iran–Israel war would be highly costly for Türkiye, and that Ankara should play a more active role in de-escalation and mediation.

As in Syria and other parts of the Middle East, Türkiye has emphasized discourses supporting Iran's legitimate rights and the preservation of territorial integrity. A possible regime change, fragmentation, migration, or domestic unrest in its eastern neighbor would directly affect Türkiye. From Ankara's perspective, if Israel were to eliminate or significantly weaken the Iranian regime, one more bastion resisting Israeli dominance in the region would collapse, potentially turning Israel into a more hegemonic power in the Middle East. This scenario could have serious consequences for Türkiye. Consequently, after Iran, Türkiye could become the next target.

Nevertheless, I believe that Türkiye's dynamics are quite different from those of Iran. Türkiye is not an easy target for Israel. As a NATO member and with recent advancements in air defense capabilities, the Turkish military holds undeniable superiority compared to Iran. Moreover, unlike Iran, which was clearly isolated during the recent conflict, Türkiye has allies such as Pakistan—a nuclear power—and the Republic of Azerbaijan. For this reason, a direct war between Türkiye and Israel remains a highly unlikely scenario. Even so, Israel may challenge Türkiye in the context of regional rivalry, though this can be addressed through diplomatic means. Should American and Israeli plans for Iran become a reality, Türkiye will inevitably stand against Israel in the region. Iran, in any case, is not a country that Türkiye can remain indifferent to.

In conclusion, during the recent Iran–Israel war, Türkiye has fully supported Iran. However, this does not represent the entire picture. Depending on future developments and emerging scenarios, Türkiye will undoubtedly reconsider and reshape its foreign policy. Any new geostrategic or geopolitical situation arising in Iran will directly concern Türkiye.

Psychological Impacts of the 2025 Wildfires: Youth, Spatial Grief, and Solastalgia



Asst. Prof. Nazar BAL

The Department of Sociology

The wildfires in İzmir and Hatay during the summer of 2025 left deep marks in Türkiye's collective memory of the climate crisis. The burning of hundreds of thousands of trees represents not only ecological devastation but also the disruption of places to which young people feel a sense of belonging, along with their childhood memories, collective memory, and future imaginaries.

Glenn Albrecht's (2005) concept of solastalgia describes the distress, anxiety, and alienation individuals experience in response to ecological or cultural damage occurring in the environment they still inhabit. Solastalgia is not merely a nostalgic longing for nature; it also entails a fracturing of collective identity, social memory, and class belonging (Galway et al., 2019). The disruption of the personal bond with place triggers a psychosocial process known as spatial grief. In this context, the wildfires represent not only a physical loss but also a social and cultural rupture, with losses affecting identity and emotions deeply. The concept of ecological grief, introduced by Cunsolo and Ellis (2018), similarly explains the emotional distress caused by loss of place, belonging, and related environmental displacement.

Social media has become a powerful platform where young people express their feelings about environmental losses. During the İzmir wildfires, posts under hashtags such as #climatecrisis and #weareburning demonstrated how individual pain can transform into a shared language of solidarity. These online expressions also reveal how collective mourning is woven into digital spaces.

According to a study by Hickman et al. (2021) conducted across 10 countries, 59% of young people aged 16–25 reported feeling “very worried” about climate change, and 45% stated that this anxiety affects their daily functioning. Sudden environmental traumas, such as the wildfires in Türkiye, intensify these climate-related anxieties. Moreover, social inequalities exacerbate these effects. For young people living in direct contact with nature in rural or coastal regions, such disasters represent ecological, economic, and cultural devastation.

From a health psychology perspective, psychosocial support is crucial for young individuals to process these emotional experiences in a healthy way. In this regard, psychoeducation, nature-based healing practices (such as tree planting and environmental volunteering), and participation in climate justice movements can play transformative roles in helping young people cope with trauma. Therefore, listening to the voices of youth in post-disaster interventions is vital for both individual and collective well-being.

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Mental Health at the Intersection of Class, Culture, and Stigma

Asst. Prof. Ayşe AYDIN

The Department of Sociology

Sociological theories define mental health not merely as an individual trait, but as a social experience shaped by living conditions, social roles, cultural norms, and structural inequalities (Horwitz & Scheid, 1999). From this perspective, access to mental health services is an integral part of contemporary understandings of health. However, the distribution and availability of psychological support services vary depending on class, cultural background, and structural circumstances. Thus, although benefiting from healthcare services is defined as a fundamental right, the inequalities in access to psychological support make it debatable whether this right can be practically realized.

Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) concept of cultural capital offers a crucial key to understanding these inequalities. Recognizing psychological support services, knowing how to access them, and legitimizing their use are closely related to the cultural capital individuals possess. A study conducted in Türkiye found that the mental health literacy level of 317 university students was moderate; nonetheless, 75.1% of the participants had sought psychological support at some point in their lives. Moreover, structural factors such as the mother's level of education and the region where the student resided significantly influenced mental health knowledge (Kılınç, 2025). These findings, in line with Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, highlight the need to reconsider access to psychological services within the context of social inequalities.

In a cross-sectional study conducted by Pehlivan et al. (2020), it was found that more than half of the 417 university students experienced mental distress to a degree that might warrant a diagnosis, yet their mental health literacy levels were low. The study showed that this low literacy hindered early diagnosis and help-seeking behavior, thereby underlining the relationship between lack of cultural capital and limited access to mental health services (Pehlivan et al., 2020).

At this point, symbolic violence emerges as an invisible form of power that suppresses individuals' pursuit of psychological support. According to Bourdieu (1991), symbolic violence is a form of domination that leads individuals to perceive the inequalities inherent in their social positions as legitimate and natural. An individual who cannot access psychological support may interpret this deficiency not as a systemic injustice, but as a personal inadequacy or lack of necessity.

Erving Goffman's (1963) stigma theory also helps explain the barriers to accessing mental health services. Individuals experiencing psychological problems may refrain from seeking help in order to avoid being labeled as "abnormal" by society.

In conclusion, transforming access to psychological support from a privilege into a genuinely exercisable right requires health policies that also address the cultural and cognitive frameworks through which society perceives mental health. Such a reckoning would not only reframe the individual experience but also pave the way for a broader reconsideration of collective mental well-being.

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Development Promises, Power Structures, and Structural Reform: A Sociological Reading of the FfD4 Outcome

Asst. Prof. Ayşe Aydın
The Department of Sociology



From 30 June to 3 July 2025, the United Nations Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4), held in Seville, Spain, aimed to reinforce global cooperation in combating poverty and responding to the climate emergency. The outcome document, known as the Seville Commitment, sets forth reform-oriented proposals concerning global development finance. Among the central recommendations were tripling the lending capacity of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), creating more effective debt restructuring mechanisms, and expanding domestic tax bases, particularly in developing countries (Reuters, 2025a). Notably, calls for more equitable taxation of ultra-high-net-worth individuals and luxury goods marked a shift toward redistributive fiscal strategies.

Spain, as the host country, garnered international attention by pledging a substantial financial commitment. The Spanish government announced it would reallocate approximately \$1.9 billion worth of its Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) held at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to support low- and middle-income countries. This amount accounts for 50% of Spain's total SDR reserves, placing the country among the leading contributors to SDR rechanneling initiatives (Reuters, 2025b).

While these initiatives suggest a move beyond rhetorical commitments toward structural reform, a sociological lens reveals deeper complexities. Structural reform discourses, when evaluated solely through economic metrics, risk overlooking the social reproduction of inequality. Poverty and inequality are not merely economic deficiencies; they are deeply rooted social phenomena sustained through historical, cultural, and institutional dynamics. Unequal income distribution is, therefore, not a cause but an outcome of these multi-layered systemic processes. World-systems analysis, as proposed by Wallerstein (2004), illustrates how the core-periphery dynamic entrenches structural dependencies, enabling core countries to shape global economic governance while peripheral states remain structurally constrained.

Moreover, durable social transformation cannot rely solely on technocratic, top-down solutions. As Jürgen Habermas (1996) underscores through his theory of communicative action, legitimacy and justice emerge only when all social actors participate equally in deliberative processes. The absence of inclusive mechanisms weakens not only the social sustainability of such reforms but also their democratic grounding.

In short, although the Seville Commitment outlines promising directions, sustainable development outcomes depend on coupling financial reform with inclusive, community-anchored policies that reflect local needs and agency.

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Sociology Club

President of the IGU Sociology Club

Şeyma Ataş



Hello, I am Şeyma Ataş. As the President of the Sociology Club at Istanbul Gelişim University, I would like to briefly introduce the work we have been carrying out and the main purpose of our club.

As the Sociology Club, our aim is to approach social phenomena not only from an academic perspective but also through a critical and transformative lens. We go beyond theoretical knowledge and organize events that connect this knowledge with daily life—encouraging thought, questioning, and awareness. Every activity we carry out under the umbrella of our club serves as a process of raising social consciousness and awareness.

Throughout the past semester, we organized numerous events on current and significant issues such as migration, gender, poverty, consumption, and artificial intelligence. Through film screenings, panels, seminars, discussion workshops, and fieldwork, we adopted an approach that prioritizes active student participation.

During this period, we also actively participated in the Sociology Congress organized by our department, contributing to academic knowledge sharing. Our visit to the Jewish Community Nursing Home strengthened intergenerational bonds and reminded us once again of the importance of social sensitivity. Our regular book reading events enabled us to think together, discover different perspectives, and deepen our sociological thinking. The iftar dinner we held during Ramadan became a beautiful example of sharing, solidarity, and multicultural unity.

Our “Sociologists Speak” program, organized within the club, expanded from its 3rd to 4th edition, enriching each session with different formats. In every session, we hosted distinguished sociologists, which allowed us to enhance our academic perspective, relate theoretical knowledge to current issues, and gain professional vision. Thanks to this program, we not only listened but also actively participated—thus strengthening our practice of sociological thinking.

Lastly, in our event, titled “Today’s Sociological Map Through the Mirror of the Past,” graduate students represented major sociologists (such as Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Foucault, etc.) and evaluated contemporary issues through their perspectives. This event provided an intellectual discussion platform and offered a unique experience for our participants.

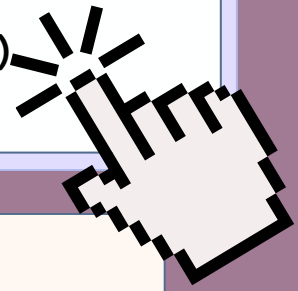
We see sociology not just as a course, but as a way of life. We will continue to work for a youth that questions, produces, and contributes to society.

With love and respect,

Time to Socialize

Res. Asst. Zehra Makar

The Department of Business Administration (English)



Sociology

Club

Sociology Club

The Sociology Club organizes events on current issues such as migration, gender, and artificial intelligence, aiming to engage students interested in sociological thinking. Through panels, film screenings, and workshops, it seeks to connect theory with everyday life. You can follow this highly active club on its social media account for updates and events:

Instagram: [igu.sosyoloji](#)



Agenda at IGU

Caps in the Air!

Caps were thrown, paths diverged, but memories remain... As the Sosyocom family, we wish our graduates success on their new journey! So, what will you miss the most from university life?

Instagram: [iguiisbf](#)

Twitter: [iguiisbf](#)



Let's Socialize!

It's Open-Air Cinema Time!

Free open-air movie screenings have started at Zorlu Center! A perfect way to enjoy summer evenings in the city. Grab your blanket and join the magical movie nights under the stars. You can register at zorlupsm.com! 😊

Instagram: [iguiisbf](#)

Twitter: [iguiisbf](#)





The Department of Business Administration (English)
Res. Asst. Asel Ataoğlu

We have compiled some of the prominent events in Istanbul in August for you.

Type of Event	Name of Event	Location	Date
Concert	Jennifer Lopez	Festival Park Yenikapı	05 August Tuesday
Concert	Mustafa Sandal	Harbiye Cemil Topuzlu Tiyatrosu	06 August Wednesday
Concert	Sertap Erener	Festival Park Yenikapı	13 August Wednesday
Stand Up	Aşkım Kapışmak	BtcTurk Açık hava	16 August Saturday
Theatre	Bir Baba Hamlet	Kemal Sunal Amfi Tiyatro	29 August Friday
Theatre	Mahşeri Cümbüş	Trump Sahne	30 August Saturday



The Crisis of Invisibility and Unemployment Among Generation Z: A Sociological Perspective

At the Department of Sociology, Istanbul Gelişim University, our recent research project aimed to analyze the experience of unemployment among Generation Z in Türkiye from a sociological perspective. Under the title “Youth and Unemployment,” this study went beyond economic indicators to illuminate the emotional, cultural, and identity-based dimensions of young people’s experiences. Today, for many youth, unemployment is not merely a loss of income; it also signifies a loss of future, disintegration of self, and a profound sense of social invisibility.

Our study involved in-depth interviews with young individuals from various socioeconomic backgrounds, including public sector employees, entrepreneurs, student-workers, freelancers, and private sector workers. These interviews revealed that young people are not only looking for jobs but also seeking recognition, belonging, and identity formation. One of the key findings was that systemic failures are often internalized and presented as personal shortcomings. Neoliberal discourses—such as “be your own boss” or “succeed through entrepreneurship”—deepen feelings of inadequacy among unemployed youth.

The theoretical framework of the study draws on Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital, Ulrich Beck’s risk society, Zygmunt Bauman’s liquid modernity, and Richard Sennett’s concept of character corrosion. Despite being highly educated, many young people struggle to find stable employment, which reflects structural inequalities. In this context, unemployment emerges not from a lack of individual effort, but as a direct consequence of systemic stagnation.

Another striking theme in the interviews was how young people use humor, irony, and digital platforms as survival strategies. Statements like “I graduated and now I just stare at myself unemployed” are not merely jokes—they are expressions of disillusionment with a system that promised merit-based success. Although often labeled as passive, this generation is actively resisting through loud, digital forms of expression.

We see this research not just as a student project, but as a form of sociological witnessing. Generation Z is a generation born into the system, yet increasingly marginalized by it. As students at Istanbul Gelişim University, we wanted to give voice to this invisibility. With the critical perspective sociology has equipped us with, we aim to understand and articulate the multilayered crisis facing today’s youth.

This text is not merely a summary of findings—it is the heartfelt voice of a generation searching for its future. Because we believe: rebuilding the future begins with recognizing what youth have already lost.



Hanife Azra KEKEÇ

A 3rd Year Student
from the Department
of Sociology

What will you be?



Note:

This text was written as part of an assignment for the Cultural Sociology course taught by Assistant Professor Nazar BAL.



Nisan AYDENİZ

A Graduate Student from
the Department of Sociology

Is Youth a Crisis? Societal Expectations, Individual Burdens

As a recent sociology graduate, I ground my reflections on youth not only in personal experiences but also in academic knowledge. Through my sociology education, I have developed the ability to analyze the structural inequalities, cultural codes, and social dynamics that lie beneath what often appear to be individual problems. From this perspective, I can more clearly see that the anxieties young people experience are not merely personal shortcomings, but outcomes shaped by systemic pressures and expectations.

Youth is a fragile transitional period in which individuals construct their identities, seek direction, and try to find their place within society. Yet, during this phase, young people are expected to make significant life decisions—such as choosing a profession, defining a lifestyle, or taking an ideological stance—before they have fully come to know themselves. These decisions are made under intense pressure, as if time is running out. This creates a deep sense of anxiety, inadequacy, and often regret.

In addition to these internal struggles, young people face structural challenges. In Türkiye, rising unemployment, economic instability, and housing crises are tangible obstacles to planning a sustainable future. Simultaneously, exposure to global crises and threat-laden narratives in the media further erode hope for what lies ahead.

What young people need is not only financial security, but also the opportunity to build meaningful relationships, express themselves freely, rest their minds, and exist in spaces where they can fully be themselves. From a sociological perspective, the challenges youth faces are not the burden of individuals, but the weight of systemic issues. Thus, understanding youth requires not judgment, but listening, support, and a recognition of the broader social conditions shaping their experiences.

Note: To read the full version of this article and explore other writings by Nisan AYDENİZ, please visit: <https://evrenselhaklari.wordpress.com/2024/10/04/genclerin-gelecek-kaygisi-ve-nedenleri/>



Zeynep Tuğçe TUĞCU

A 3rd Year Double Major Student from the Department of Psychology & Sociology

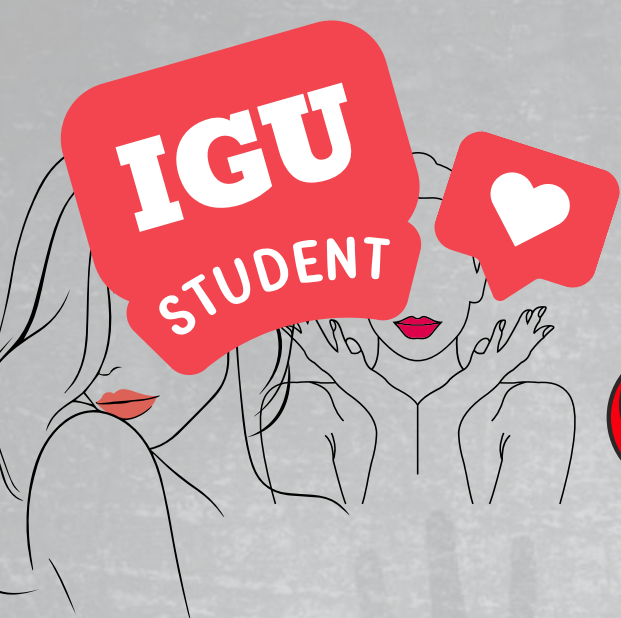
My decision to pursue a double major in the sociology department during my undergraduate studies in psychology began with the realization that an individual is not only defined by their inner world, but also shaped by the society they live in, cultural structures, and social environment. This awareness introduced me to sociology and enabled me to evaluate human behavior not only on an individual level but also within a social context.

Being at the intersection of these two fields has deepened my ability to understand people from both individual and societal perspectives. By learning to frame my psychological knowledge within a sociological perspective, I began to think through concepts such as culture, norms, roles, and social interaction from different angles. Over time, my ability to analyze situations with a multidimensional approach developed significantly.

Through my sociology education, I gained a broader understanding of social structures, institutions, and the relationship between individuals and society. Combining the individual processes I learned in psychology with the societal dynamics offered by Sociology gave me the opportunity to conduct more comprehensive analyses.

This process has contributed not only to my academic journey but also to my personal development. I became more capable of interpreting the underlying reasons behind social behaviors I encounter in daily life. My skills in critical thinking, empathy, and social awareness have improved noticeably.

Studying psychology and sociology together has provided me with a strong foundation for understanding human nature. Thanks to the opportunities provided by my university, I developed an interdisciplinary mindset and had the chance to prepare for the future as a more well-equipped individual.



Women's Representation on Digital Platforms: Visibility and Discrimination on Social Media



İrem Nisa TERLEÇ

A 3rd Year Student from the Department of Sociology

Social media platforms have become one of the most significant products of the digital age. Instagram, being one of the most widely used platforms globally, functions as a virtual “socialization” tool embedded within daily life, where individuals perform their self-presentations.

Individuals now construct their self-presentations in everyday life according to algorithms created by the platform itself. This dependency results in uniformity, standardization, and homogenization, ultimately giving rise to a new form of discrimination.

Particularly on Instagram, representations of “women” are more exposed to this standardized understanding of beauty and aesthetics. With labels such as “working woman,” “mother,” or “single woman,” women strive to stand out by aligning their identities with those most frequently highlighted and made trendy by the algorithm. Consequently, they are increasingly pressured into uniformity. This digital performance can be explained through Goffman’s concept of the “front stage,” where the woman does not present herself as she truly is but rather as she is expected to be.

The standard aesthetic and beauty norms have recently become so dominant that they dictate everything from women’s clothing styles to the vitamin supplements they use. At this point, Bourdieu’s concepts of capital provide a framework to explain how women are classified by labels, how visible they are, and how their engagement on the platform determines the social class to which they are perceived to belong. That is, even a minor deficiency in a woman’s symbolic capital (in terms of engagement, likes, visibility) can result in a decline in perceived class or status.

The critical point to highlight here is that this uniformity is not limited merely to aesthetics and beauty. It also represents a new form of discrimination in which women’s bodies, lifestyles, and identities are compressed into narrowly defined norms. The figures made visible by the algorithm—such as the perfect mother who has just given birth but never compromises her appearance even at home, or the married working woman with children who flawlessly fulfills all roles and still never skips her skincare routine—are examples of this pressure. The labor women perform at home, which we refer to as “invisible labor,” has now been simplified and made visible on social media in a performative way.

As can be seen, while the algorithm’s standardization affects all individuals, it simplifies and homogenizes the already-invisible figure of the “woman,” turning her into a standardized and flattened representation. In short, social media has become not just a personal platform but a space that reproduces gender-based inequalities. Therefore, while making the invisible visible, it is of utmost importance to question the aesthetic pressures placed on women, the competition for class-based visibility, and the expectations tied to multiple roles—and to cultivate awareness against these new forms of digital discrimination.

Note: This text was written as part of an assignment for the Cultural Sociology course taught by Assistant Professor Nazar BAL.



Tantuni: A Flavor That Gains Meaning in Small Pieces

The Department of Sociology
Res. Asst. Meryem Sarıköse

Tantuni is not merely a combination of meat, spices, and bread. It is a cultural marker that carries local identity, memory, and everyday life. Although its content appears simple, the meanings and associations it holds are layered and complex. As a dish that has spread through migration yet remained loyal to its origin, tantuni is closely tied to the identity of the region it comes from. In this sense, food is not only an object of consumption but also a form of belonging.

Food sociology shows us that taste preferences are shaped as much by class position as by cultural capital. Tantuni appeals to a wide range of people, making it one of the rare dishes that crosses social divisions. It belongs neither exclusively to working-class kitchens nor to any single economic bracket. This flexibility suggests that its locality is not only spatial but also emotional. People often choose it not just to satisfy hunger, but to remember a place, to keep a cultural rhythm alive.

At the same time, tantuni can be seen as a form of resistance within modern food practices. Unlike standardized fast-food systems, it is still prepared with human labor and craft. In a world of industrialized food production, the appeal of something made by hand reflects a desire for trust, familiarity, and presence. In this way, food becomes more than just flavor; it produces a sense of connection and care.

Although many cities now offer their own interpretations of tantuni, its authentic form is still preserved within certain cultural boundaries. These boundaries are not only geographical but also shaped by collective memory. Some flavors leave their mark not only on the palate but also in the memory. Tantuni is one of those enduring tastes.





ABOUT ACADEMIC LIFE

PUBLICATIONS

- Assoc. Prof. Festus Victor Bekun's article titled "Determining the Mediating Role of Energy Conservation on the Effect of Social Marketing on Green Organizational Behavior" was published in International Review of Management and Marketing.
- Assoc. Prof. Festus Victor Bekun's article titled "Assessment into the nexus between load capacity factor, population, government policy in form of environmental tax: accessing evidence from Turkey" was published in International Journal of Energy Sector Management.
- Assoc. Prof. Ayşe Meriç Yazıcı's article titled "Governing the Green Transition: The Role of Artificial Intelligence, Green Finance, and Institutional Governance in Achieving the SDGs Through Renewable Energy" was published in Sustainability (Switzerland).
- Asst. Prof. Ifedolapo Olabisi Olanipekun's article titled "Human Capital Flight in ECOWAS Subregion: The Heterogeneous Influences of Macroeconomic and Institutional Factors" was published in Journal of Public Affairs.
- Asst. Prof. Murat Topçu's article titled "Analysis of Price Bubbles in Borsa Istanbul (BIST) Liquid Banking Sector Stock Market" was published in ECONOMICS - Innovative and Economics Research Journal.
- Asst. Prof. Bülent Tansel's article titled "Equipping Police officers with resources: perceived control of internal states and suicide tendencies among Turkish Police officers, unraveling the serial mediating roles of resilience and depression" was published in Current Psychology.

STAFF AGENDA



ACADEMIC STAFF APPOINTMENTS

- Asst. Prof. Ece Zeybek Yılmaz has been reappointed to the Department of Customs Management.
- Asst. Prof. Seda Mumlu Karanfil has been reappointed to the Department of Aviation Management.

ACADEMIC-ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Prof. Dr. Kenan Aydın has been reappointed as Dean.
- Assoc. Prof. Emrah Doğan has been reappointed as Vice Dean.
- Asst. Prof. Özlem Tuğçe Keleş has been reappointed as Vice Dean.
- Assoc. Prof. Gülgün Çiğdem has been appointed as the Head of Department of International Trade and Business Administration (TR-EN).

ACADEMIC STAFF DEPARTEES

- Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kayhan Bahalı has departed from the Department of Psychology.
- Prof. Dr. Mustafa Köksal has departed from the Department of International Trade and Business Administration.
- Assoc. Prof. Alişan Burak Yaşar has departed from the Department of Psychology.
- Asst. Prof. Hanife Yılmaz Çengel has departed from the Department of Psychology.
- Asst. Prof. Müjen İlmen has departed from the Department of Psychology.
- Prof. Dr. Canan Tanıdır has departed from the Department of Psychology (English).
- Prof. Dr. Nurhan Fıstıkcı has departed from the Department of Psychology (English).
- Assoc. Prof. Hatice Güneş has departed from the Department of Psychology (English).
- Asst. Prof. İbrahim Karakaya has departed from the Department of Psychology (English).



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