



## Faculty of Health Sciences



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*It is necessary to overcome pride in successes  
and to resist despair in disasters.*

**Mustafa Kemal ATATURK**



**6 FEBRUARY 2023**

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# February

“Knowing the path and walking the path are  
not the same thing.”

*The Matrix, 1999*

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**February 4: World Cancer Day**

**February 9: No Smoking Day**

**February 10: International Epilepsy Day**

**February 14: Valentine's Day**

**February 15: International Childhood Cancer Day**

**January 16: World Hygiene Day**

**February 28: Civil Defence Day**

**February 28: Rare Disease Day**

# *Istanbul Gelisim University*

## **FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

### **2025–2026 SPRING Semester**

### *Academic Opening Meeting Was Held*

The Academic Opening Meeting of the Istanbul Gelisim University Faculty of Health Sciences for the 2025–2026 Academic Year Spring Semester was held on February 17, 2026, with the participation of Rector Prof. Dr. Bahri ŞAHİN. The meeting, where the current status of the faculty, semester statistics, quality studies, and future goals were discussed, was concluded in a productive consultative environment with the participation of the academic staff.

## **OFFICIAL START OF THE ACADEMIC SPRING SEMESTER**

The Academic Opening Program of the Spring Semester of the 2025–2026 Academic Year of Istanbul Gelisim University, Faculty of Health Sciences, was held on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 12:00 in Meeting Room No. 026. The meeting was attended by our University Rector, Prof. Dr. Bahri ŞAHİN, and our Vice Rector, Prof. Dr. S. Arda ÖZTÜRKCAN. Drawing significant interest from the academic staff, the program provided an important platform for sharing goals for the new semester and strengthening the institutional vision.



The meeting began with a presentation by our Faculty Dean, Prof. Dr. Mustafa NİZAMLIOĞLU. Within the scope of the presentation, information was shared regarding the faculty's current academic and administrative structure, student numbers, department-based developments, and up-to-date statistics related to the Spring Semester of the 2025–2026 academic year. In addition, the faculty's strategic goals, accreditation processes, academic productivity indicators, and quality improvement efforts were discussed in detail. Evaluations based on data concerning student satisfaction, applied education processes, clinical collaborations, and research projects revealed the faculty's vision for sustainable development. During the presentation, particular emphasis was placed on planned structural improvements aimed at enhancing educational quality and on academic performance indicators.

## RECTORATE EVALUATIONS AND ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS



Following the presentation, our Rector, Prof. Dr. Bahri ŞAHİN, shared comprehensive information on the academic, administrative, and strategic activities carried out across the university. Important evaluations were shared regarding increasing the university's research capacity, internationalization goals, quality assurance processes, and a student-centered educational approach.

In his speech, our Rector emphasized the critical position of the Faculty of Health Sciences within the university and expressed expectations regarding the enhancement of interdisciplinary collaborations, strengthening scientific publication performance, and expanding community contribution projects. Following the speech, questions from faculty members were heard and a mutual exchange of views took place. This section offered a notable environment for dialogue in terms of strengthening academic participation and institutional transparency.

## QUALITY STUDIES AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROJECTS

In the continuation of the meeting, our Vice Dean, Asst. Prof. Funda PEHLEVAN KARABIYIK, took the floor and provided information about the quality studies conducted within the faculty. Practices carried out within the scope of process management, internal evaluation mechanisms, measurement and evaluation standards, and continuous improvement activities were shared.



In addition, information was provided on planned social responsibility projects, and activities aimed at increasing students' social awareness were presented. It was stated that community-based practices in the field of health, awareness activities, and volunteer projects would be carried out within a more systematic framework in the upcoming period.

## WISHES, REMARKS, AND CLOSING

The program concluded after receiving the wishes and remarks of the faculty members. In line with the data, goals, and recommendations shared throughout the meeting, it was emphasized that the Spring Semester of the 2025–2026 Academic Year has begun with strong academic motivation.

# IGU Department of Occupational Therapy Represented at the CoHE (Council of Higher Education) Process Management Meeting on the Restructuring of Underg

As part of the process led by the CoHE (Council of Higher Education) to restructure undergraduate programs into a 3-year, 9-semester format, an online meeting was held with relevant stakeholders. **Dr. Beyza Aslı Bilsel**, Vice Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy at Istanbul Gelisim University, participated in the meeting on behalf of the department. During the meeting, strategic topics including curriculum alignment, Framework Education Programs (FEP), accreditation, and process management were discussed.



As part of the strategic planning process led by the CoHE (Council of Higher Education) to restructure undergraduate programs into a 3-year, 9-semester format, an introductory and process management meeting was held with the participation of department chairs and relevant commission members. The online meeting, held on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, addressed the potential impacts of this planned structural transformation on academic programs within the higher education system. The main agenda items included maintaining unity in education and academic coherence, adapting undergraduate curricula to the new semester-based structure, ensuring full alignment with Framework Education Programs (FEP), and defining strategic approaches to be followed during the transition process. The meeting also emphasized the importance of the academic communication and coordination framework established within the Science, Education, Research, and Accreditation Commission (BEAAK) of the Turkish Occupational Therapy Association. This structure aims to advance national standards in occupational therapy education in Türkiye, enhance educational quality, and strengthen scientific foundations. It was highlighted that strengthening interdepartmental collaboration and making decisions through collective deliberation will play a key role in shaping the future of occupational therapy education. The meeting was attended on behalf of the Department of Occupational Therapy at Istanbul Gelisim University by Dr. Beyza Aslı BİLSEL, Vice Chair of the Department. Through Dr. BİLSEL's participation, the department's strong commitment to educational quality, alignment with national standards, and accreditation processes was once again underscored. It was also noted that Istanbul Gelisim University is taking an active and responsible role as a stakeholder in this transformation process. It was further stated that, as this restructuring initiative is expected to encompass all higher education institutions starting from the upcoming academic term, the Department of Occupational Therapy at Istanbul Gelisim University will continue to contribute academically and play an active role in collaborative efforts throughout the process.

## Clinical Experience Sharing in the Course Evidence-Based Practices in Hand Rehabilitation

Within the scope of the Evidence-Based Occupational Therapy course conducted by Asst. Prof. Beyza Aslı BİLSEL, an important guest lecture was held during Week 2, aiming to enhance students' clinical and professional competencies. An occupational therapist actively working in the field of hand rehabilitation at Başakşehir Çam and Sakura City Hospital, Sümeyra ATEŞ, attended the course as a guest speaker.



As an alumna of the department, the guest occupational therapist shared her professional journey following graduation, providing students with in-depth insights into the transition from academic education to clinical practice within a public hospital setting. In this respect, the session served not only as a course activity but also as valuable career guidance for students preparing for professional practice. During the lecture, evidence-based approaches in post-surgical hand rehabilitation were discussed in detail, with a particular focus on how scientific evidence is integrated into daily clinical decision-making. The guest speaker presented common clinical conditions encountered after hand surgery, emphasizing assessment procedures, goal setting, intervention planning, and outcome monitoring through real-life case examples.

Through these case discussions, students were able to observe how theoretical knowledge is translated into practical application. A holistic perspective was adopted to demonstrate patient-centered evaluation processes and individualized intervention planning based on current evidence. A significant component of the session addressed working conditions in public hospitals. Topics such as the role of occupational therapists within multidisciplinary teams, patient caseloads, institutional workflows, time management, and professional responsibilities were discussed in detail. This provided students with a realistic and comprehensive understanding of occupational therapy practice in the public healthcare system. Overall, the session contributed significantly to students' understanding of evidence-based occupational therapy by linking academic knowledge with real-world clinical experience. Furthermore, it strengthened alumni-student interaction and supported the development of professional identity and career awareness among occupational therapy students.

# ACADEMIC STUDIES



Faculty of Health Sciences



## PAPER PRESENTATION



Social Work Department Research Assistant Aslihan Kübra SAKARYA presented a paper entitled “Multispecies Justice in Environmental Decision-Making Processes: An Inclusive and Transformative Conceptual Framework” at the 3rd International Multidisciplinary Ecology and Environmental Studies Congress.

## PAPER PRESENTATION



The paper entitled “Workforce Strategies from a Health Management Perspective: ‘Emotional Salary’ Promises in Healthcare Job Advertisements,” co-authored by Assistant Professor Dr. Aslı KAYA and Research Assistant Semanur OKTAY ALKAN, faculty members of the Department of Health Management within the Faculty of Health Sciences, was presented as an oral paper at the 6th International Ibn Sina Medicine and Health Sciences Congress.



# PAPER PRESENTATION

## Oral Presentation on Professional Quality of Life at the 13th International ACHARAKA Congress

Research Assistant Esra EROL from the Department of Speech and Language Therapy, Faculty of Health Sciences, together with Dkt. Emre Bilgiç, presented their oral paper entitled “Investigating Professional Quality of Life in Speech and Language Therapists Based on Education Level and Type of Institution” at the 13th International ACHARAKA Congress on Medicine, Nursing, Midwifery, and Health Sciences.



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Derleme Makale/Review Article

### Dijital Leviathan'ın Gölgesinde Sosyal Bilimler: Hayalet Emek ve Hak Temelli Dönüşüm

Emrah TÜNÇER\*  
İsmet Galip YOLCUOĞLU\*\*

Öz

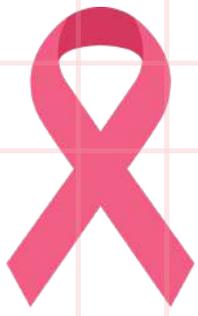
Dijitalleşme, modern toplumların iletişim pratiklerini değiştiren teknik bir süreç olmanın ötesine geçerek, toplumsal gerçekliğin ontolojik ve epistemolojik temellerini sarsan yapısal bir dönüşüm yaratmıştır. Sosyal bilimler, verinin kutsandığı ancak insan öznesinin “dijital kapitalizm” çarkları arasında giderek sifikleştiği bu yeni çağda, metodolojik ve kuramsal araçlarını yeniden tanımlama kriziyle karşı karşıyadır. Bu çalışma, dijitalleşmenin sosyal bilimler üzerindeki dönüştürücü etkisini yapıyı zekâ metnin arkasına gizlenen “hayalet emek” sömürütü ve derinleşen hak ihalleri ekseninde eleştirel bir perspektifle incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada, yapıyı zekâ sistemlerini besleyen ve literatürde “hayalet çalışma” (ghost work) olarak adlandırılan görünmez emek olgusu, küresel bir prekarya oluşumu bağlamında tartışılmaktadır. Silikon Vadisi'nin sunduğu “otomasyon” anlatısının aksine, sistemin kusursuz işleyişinin aslında Küresel Güney'deki güvencesiz işçilerin bilşisel emeğine dayandığı paradoksu ortaya konulmaktadır. Bu “dijital montaj hattı”ndaki emek sömürütü, algoritmik gözetim mekanizmaları ve çalışanlar üzerinde yarattığı “teknolojik stres” ile ele alındığında, insanın sistem karşısındaki savunmasızlığı modern bir kölelik biçimini andırmaktadır. Makale, sosyal bilimlerin bu distopik tablo karşısında salt betimleyici bir konumda kalamayacağına aksine algoritmik tahakkümü görünür kılan ve dijital yurttaşlığı savunun normatif bir kalkan olması gerektiğini ileri sürmektedir. Bu bağlamda, dijital kamusal alanın ticari tckellere bırakılmayacak kadar hayati olduğu vurgulanarak, bireyin dijital özerkliğini ve onurunu garanti altına alan “hak temelli” yeni bir sosyal bilim paradigmasının inşası önerilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Dijital Kapitalizm, Hayalet Emek, Hak Temelli Yaklaşım, Dijital Sosyoloji, Tekno-Stres.

**Başvuru / Kabul:** 28 Aralık 2025 / 28 Ocak 2026

**Atf:** Tüncer, E., Yolcuoğlu, I. G. (2026). Dijital Leviathan'ın Gölgesinde Sosyal Bilimler: Hayalet Emek ve Hak Temelli Dönüşüm. *İmgelem*, 18, 425-446.

The article entitled “Social Sciences in the Shadow of the Digital Leviathan: Ghost Labor and Rights-Based Transformation” co-authored by Asst. Prof. Emrah TÜNÇER (Assistant Professor) and Prof. Dr. İsmet Galip YOLCUOĞLU, faculty members of the Department of Social Work at our Faculty, has been published in the journal *İmgelem*.



# BETWEEN 30% AND 50% OF CANCERS ARE PREVENTABLE

Cancer, which is among the most common causes of death along with cardiovascular diseases, is still perceived in society as a “feared but unspoken” illness, said Public Health Specialist Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurten ELKİN, emphasizing the vital importance of early diagnosis and prevention.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurten ELKİN, a faculty member at the Faculty of Health Sciences at Istanbul Gelişim University, made a statement on the occasion of “World Cancer Day,” highlighting that cancer is one of the leading causes of death both worldwide and in Turkey. She noted that the disease is still a topic people tend to avoid discussing.

“Today, cancer is among the most common causes of death together with cardiovascular diseases. However, a significant proportion of cancers are preventable, and when diagnosed early, they are treatable. Cancer is a group of diseases that occur due to the uncontrolled growth of cells in the body. The main reasons for the increase in cancer cases today include longer life expectancy, environmental factors, smoking, unhealthy nutrition, and a sedentary lifestyle,” she said.

## Early Diagnosis Is the Key to Cancer Treatment

Emphasizing the decisive role of early diagnosis in the fight against cancer, Elkin stated that timely screenings directly affect life expectancy and treatment success.

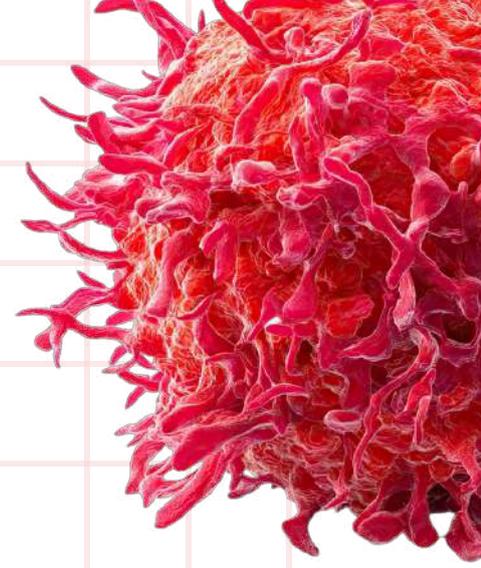
“The most critical concept in the fight against cancer is early diagnosis. While many types of cancer can be completely treated when detected at an early stage, late diagnosis makes treatment more difficult and shortens life expectancy,” she said. Drawing attention to the importance of not postponing screening programs, Elkin listed early detection methods as follows:

“Regular mammography for breast cancer, smear and HPV tests for cervical cancer, fecal occult blood tests and colonoscopy for colon cancer, and PSA monitoring in appropriate age groups for prostate cancer are life-saving screening methods. The idea of ‘I have no symptoms’ should not be a reason to delay screening programs.”

## The Fight Against Cancer Begins Before Treatment

Elkin pointed out that when people think of cancer, they usually think of treatment methods, but modern medicine has changed this perspective.

“When cancer is mentioned, people generally think of chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and large hospitals. However, modern medicine clearly shows us that the fight against cancer begins before the disease occurs. Family health centers are among the most important healthcare units, as they know individuals’ lifestyles, closely monitor risk factors, and continuously provide preventive healthcare services,” she said.



## It Is Possible to Prevent Cancer

Stating that scientific data clearly shows cancer can be prevented, Elkin highlighted the rate of preventable cancers: “Scientific evidence indicates that approximately 30–50 percent of cancers are preventable. The way to achieve this is through lifestyle changes. Avoiding smoking and tobacco products, limiting alcohol consumption, maintaining a balanced and healthy diet, engaging in regular physical activity, maintaining an ideal weight, protecting oneself from harmful sun exposure, and not neglecting vaccinations for preventable cancers (such as HPV and Hepatitis B) can significantly reduce the risk of cancer.”

### KETEM Centers Form the Backbone of Early Diagnosis

Referring to cancer screening programs carried out in Turkey, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurten ELKİN emphasized the role of KETEM (Cancer Early Diagnosis, Screening, and Training Centers):

“In our country, KETEM centers form the backbone of cancer screening services. These centers provide free and regular screening services conducted by the Ministry of Health. Mammography is offered every two years for women aged 40–69 for breast cancer screening. For cervical cancer, HPV testing is provided every five years for women aged 30–65. For colon cancer, fecal occult blood testing is carried out every two years for women and men aged 50–70.”

### “Awareness Truly Saves Lives”

Highlighting the importance of public awareness, Elkin summarized the main message of the fight against cancer:

“The fight against cancer begins not after the disease appears, but before it develops.

Regular check-ups, participation in screening programs, and access to accurate information are the cornerstones of this fight. Awareness truly saves lives through early diagnosis and prevention.”

# 4 February World Cancer Day: The Importance of Nutrition in Cancer Prevention

**Research Assistant Öykü AYDIN from the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Health Sciences, Istanbul Gelişim University, made statements on nutrition- and lifestyle-related risk factors in cancer prevention within the scope of 4 February, World Cancer Day, drawing attention to the importance of healthy nutrition from a preventive public health perspective.**

World Cancer Day was first organized in 2005 by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC). In this context, various campaigns are carried out at the global level every year on 4 February in collaboration with UICC and its partner organizations. World Cancer Day aims to strengthen awareness and education on cancer, while also mobilizing governments and individuals worldwide to take action against the disease, with the ultimate goal of preventing millions of avoidable deaths each year.

Cancer is one of the leading causes of death worldwide and in our country, with a substantial proportion of cases arising from lifestyle- and nutrition-related risk factors.

Tobacco use, excess body weight, inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption, physical inactivity, and alcohol use are among the major risk factors; the largely preventable nature of the disease further underscores the importance of preventive public health approaches based on healthy nutrition and lifestyle habits.

## **Which Dietary Factors Contribute to Cancer Development?**

Exceeding the recommended levels of dietary fat intake may lead to an increase in body fat percentage and disruption of hormonal balance, thereby increasing the risk of hormone-sensitive cancers.

Excessive consumption of animal protein sources—particularly processed meats and foods high in saturated fat—is also among the factors associated with an increased risk of cancer.

High intake of carbohydrates rich in refined sugars and with a high glycemic index and glycemic load may facilitate cancer development by disrupting insulin regulation, increasing the risk of obesity, and stimulating cell proliferation.

Carcinogenic compounds may form during high-temperature cooking methods such as deep-frying, barbecuing, and intensive grilling. These compounds arise when foods are directly exposed to flames or smoke, when fats are burned, or when starchy foods are cooked at high temperatures.

Pesticides widely used in agriculture may persist in the environment and reach humans through the food chain, thereby increasing cancer risk. Although food additives are used within legal limits, long-term consumption of processed products containing nitrate-derived compounds has been associated with cancer.

Aflatoxins are toxins produced by molds growing on certain grains, nuts, and spices and are known to increase cancer risk. Heavy metals may accumulate in the body through food, water, and air, leading to serious health problems. Alcohol consumption is also an important factor that increases cancer risk in a dose-dependent manner.

### **What Should a Healthy Dietary Pattern for Cancer Prevention Be?**

The foundation of a healthy dietary pattern for cancer prevention is the Mediterranean diet model, which is also supported by strong evidence in the prevention of chronic diseases. This model is based on a dietary pattern that emphasizes unprocessed foods, fruits and vegetables, olive oil, legumes, whole grains, and nuts.

Limiting added sugars, choosing whole grains instead of refined grains, and ensuring that a substantial proportion of meals consist of non-starchy vegetables and fruits of various colors are recommended.

Fruits and vegetables contribute to a reduced risk of cancer due to their rich content of dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and bioactive compounds.

With regard to fat intake, preferring olive oil and foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids instead of saturated fats, and limiting red meat—particularly processed meat—while shifting toward fish, poultry, and plant-based protein sources is considered a healthy approach.

In addition, using cooking methods such as boiling or baking instead of frying and grilling is among the dietary strategies for cancer prevention.



# Pulses Protect Both Health and the Planet

Research Assistant Güldane YILDIRIM from the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Health Sciences at Istanbul Gelisim University, emphasized in her statement for International World Pulses Day on February 10 that chickpeas, lentils, dry beans, and other pulses are not only staples of traditional cuisine but also essential components of healthy individuals and a sustainable future.

Pulses are among the core elements of a balanced diet due to their rich content of plant-based protein, dietary fiber, folate, iron, and potassium. Naturally low in fat and highly satiating, they help support blood glucose regulation and contribute to overall metabolic health by positively influencing gut function.

Scientific evidence indicates that regular pulse consumption can be an effective and economical strategy in combating obesity and may help reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer. Their high fiber content enhances satiety, while their central role in plant-based and Mediterranean dietary patterns further highlights their importance for public health.

Data from the Turkey Nutrition and Health Survey (TBSA 2017) reveal that pulse consumption in Türkiye remains below recommended levels. Average daily per capita intake was reported as 16.8 grams, and dietary fiber intake was also found to be insufficient. The same data show high rates of overweight and obesity among adults. These findings underscore that increasing the intake of fiber-rich, high-quality plant protein sources such as pulses represents a significant opportunity to support healthy body weight and prevent chronic diseases.

Beyond individual health, pulses strongly contribute to environmental sustainability. Their nitrogen-fixing capacity improves soil fertility, while their lower water requirements compared with many other crops and their resilience under challenging climate conditions make them a cornerstone of sustainable food systems. Moreover, their substantially lower greenhouse gas emissions relative to animal-based protein sources place pulses among foods with a low carbon footprint. Expanding the share of plant-based protein helps reduce pressures on land use, water consumption, and the climate, while supporting dietary approaches centered on planetary health.

It is recommended that pulses be included in main meals several times a week. They can easily be incorporated into daily diets by adding them to salads, cooking them with vegetables, or consuming them in soups and purées. Alternatives such as hummus, lentil patties, and bean spreads offer practical and nutritious options. Consuming pulses together with cereals (such as lentils with bulgur or beans with rice) enhances the overall protein quality of meals.

To support digestive comfort, soaking pulses overnight before cooking, discarding the cooking water, and using spices such as cumin or fennel are recommended. Starting with small portions and gradually increasing intake can also help facilitate intestinal adaptation.

It is emphasized that these small changes on the plate can lead to meaningful gains in both individual health and environmental sustainability over the long term. Pulses stand out as one of the key drivers of transformation, extending from healthy individuals toward more resilient and sustainable food systems.

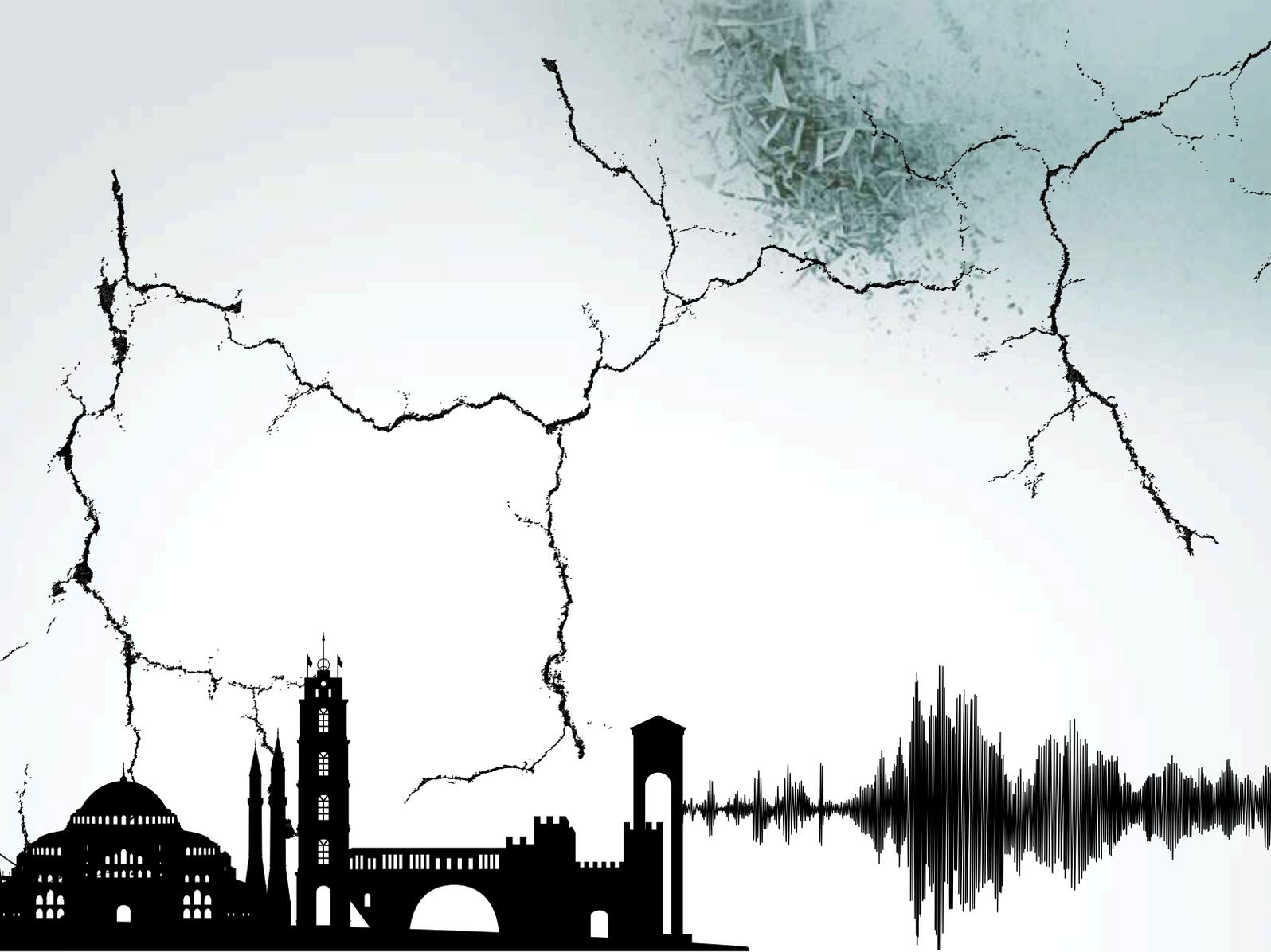


# SOCIAL SERVICE IN EARTHQUAKE AND DISASTERS

Prof. Dr. İsmet Galip YOLCUOĞLU

Disasters are events that destroy the normal life of society by disrupting the ecological balance and loss of life and property. Disasters are natural and technological events that cause physical, economic and social losses for people, and affect communities by interrupting normal life and human activities. The normal flow of human life is damaged. It is necessary to consider natural or man-made disasters that affect settlements and cause significant material and moral losses, not as an event itself, but as a result. This perspective is also extremely important in terms of social work, and the results of the event should be seen as the starting point in all processes of planning, implementing and evaluating social work intervention in disaster situations. The magnitude of disasters, the measures to be taken before the disaster on the basis of scientific knowledge, and effective and systematic interventions after the disaster are important in terms of quickly eliminating or mitigating the effects of these disasters.

In our Anatolia, which has a lot of risky areas, it is necessary to create social awareness against disasters, in other words, a "disaster culture" in the society. Disaster management is a broad concept that requires the organization of all institutions, organizations and resources of the society to direct, coordinate and implement the work to be done by following the steps to be addressed to prevent natural or human-made disasters and reduce their damage. Activities related to disaster events; mitigation, pre-preparation, recovery and first aid, recovery and reconstruction. The pre-preparation phase is essentially the most vital and scientific process, and it includes efforts to eliminate the consequences of disaster hazards that may have negative effects on people, by taking countermeasures, on time, in the most appropriate way, with the most effective organization and methods. In the post-disaster days, it is of vital importance to meet the basic needs of the people living in that region and to restore their physical, mental and social health. After disaster response; The main purpose of the work carried out during the recovery phase is to ensure that individuals, families and communities; have communication, transportation, water, electricity, education, long-term temporary residence, economic and social activities, etc. It is the realization of all interventions in order to meet their extremely important needs as the main purpose of the "reconstruction" phase is the reconstruction of all destroyed or damaged structures; It includes activities that spread to areas such as restoring the economic, social and spiritual integrity of the society that has been disrupted due to the disaster



The distress of the people who are exposed to it is at the highest level at the stage when the disaster occurs and the negativity and destruction are experienced with all their intensity. Shock, fear and bewilderment are common at this stage. The post-disaster phase begins when the affected people find time to reconsider the situation they face and think about what happened to them. The person feels lucky to have survived. Many people and organizations in the community are helping. He/She is also eager to rebuild his life. As time progresses, the inability to meet the needs adequately leads to emotional reactions such as anger, fear, loss of confidence, addiction or anxiety. The last stage of the process after the disaster is the "return to new normal life stage". People who have lost their jobs, homes, and loved ones, and have suffered emotional changes after the disaster may experience problems in family communication and marriage, not being able to accept their changing situation, mental problems, turning to crime, drug and alcohol use habits and similar problems. Psycho-social effects of disasters, which create significant changes in people's physical environment, on individuals and families are loss of income, loss of home, breaking of social ties, insecurity about the future, anxiety and stress, difficulties in coping with multiple systems and socio-psychological effects caused by losses. While all members of a family who lost their relatives experience psychological problems after the disaster, the family as a whole may remain in economic deprivation, the education of the children is disrupted, and the family may be deprived of their relatives, relatives, neighbours, in other words, social support systems because they have to leave the place where they live and settle in another place. The family-oriented social work intervention will only be effective and beneficial with a holistic and multi-level assessment of problems and emerging needs.



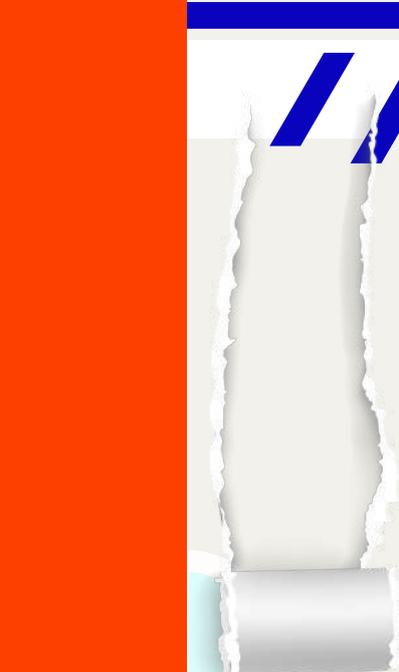
# CULTURE-ART-LITERATURE

# WAS THIS A MIGRATION?



**Tuğçe KONMAZ**  
Master's Student in  
Child Development

I never became detached from my country, my people, my language, or my essence. I do not know whether I can look at life through the eyes of someone who has been severed from all of these, or truly understand their feelings. When I was just ten years old, I encountered the 1999 earthquake. Our home was in Kocaeli, right at the epicenter. Our building was no longer safe to live in, and many people we knew had lost their lives beneath the rubble. I felt the phrase “it was like doomsday” in my very bones. A turning point had begun for my family and me—one from which we would never return to our old days. Then the voices rose: “Tüpraş is going to explode—everyone must leave the city!” Even though the sight in front of our building was terrifying, even though we could hear the cries of “Save us!” coming from beneath the debris, being in a familiar place did not sound as frightening to me as the idea of leaving the city. But my mother and father had to think of us. For them, there had to be a way to reach higher ground in case of an explosion. Would you believe it? In that atmosphere, everyone was trying to heal someone else’s wounds. Some shared their water; others gave the blankets they had found for their own children to other children left out in the open. My father found a vehicle to take us uphill—a shared minibus belonging to a man we had never met, a fellow earthquake survivor like us. We all squeezed inside. We headed toward higher ground. We had only slippers on our feet; we did not even have our ID cards in our pockets. Along the way, we saw collapsed buildings and bodies wrapped in shrouds. That is how we reached the hill. Everywhere was lush green. Yet in the heat of August, we spent an icy cold night. What came next, though it seemed the safest part, was for me the most painful. Morning broke; everything was illuminated. Those who wanted to help were distributing bread and water from trucks loaded with supplies. For us, sharing bread was normal. But I will never forget the look of embarrassment on my mother’s face as she took the bread. Having to ask—being the one who receives—turns out to be harder than being the one who gives. Then my grandmother and relatives came to take us back to our hometown. From the land where we had lived since the day I was born, we were forced to leave. Can we really call this migration? Is it comparable in difficulty to being forced to leave one’s country, language, and identity behind? Maybe it was not migration. But after that night, I had lost my childhood friends, the neighborhood where we played games, and the road that led to my school.



A new page was beginning for us in Zonguldak. Our home had changed, our school had changed; even what we called “home” had multiplied. My maternal grandmother’s house, my paternal grandmother’s house, my aunt’s house—all had become shelters for us. We were crowded, we were safe; yet for the first time, I began to feel this: a person could feel like a stranger even in a place they called home.

Our elders were trying to protect us; everyone was doing their best. There was no shortage of food, clothing, or a place to sleep. But none of it felt like it truly belonged to me. We were earthquake survivors—everyone knew it. And that awareness revealed itself in every glance, in every sentence. For my family, this solidarity was a way of surviving; for me, it was a quiet sense of being trapped. It wasn’t that we were unwanted—but no one’s life had been rebuilt around us either. In those days, without realizing it, I learned something: seeking refuge somewhere is one thing; belonging somewhere is something entirely different.

School in Zonguldak was new as well. I remember my first day walking into the classroom; everyone was in their place—except me. Our teachers and classmates had prepared things for my brother and me. Colored pencils, tracksuits, notebooks... Everything had been thoughtfully arranged. In an environment where goodwill was so visible, I realized I felt even more invisible. Everything given to me felt like part of a life that was not mine. No one was unkind—on the contrary, everyone was very kind. Yet within that kindness, I could not find a place to hold on to.

I couldn’t get used to the sounds in the classroom. I heard what was being said, but I couldn’t find myself within those conversations. Everyone knew me; I knew no one. It was known that I was an “earthquake survivor,” but I did not know what I was. I went back and forth to school, stayed at my aunt’s house; my parents were back in our hometown. As the days passed, school stopped being a place to learn and became a place to endure. I constantly felt something missing inside me, as if I were standing in the wrong place.

After a while, I wanted to quit school. Now I understand better that this desire was not rebellion, but exhaustion. When my father came to see me, he spoke with me at length. I don’t remember what he said; I remember how he said it. The calmness in his voice, his lack of urgency, the way he spoke not to make me give up, but to help me stay... That day, I decided to remain in school. But that decision was not because I felt I belonged; it was because I had nowhere else to go yet.

Without realizing it at the time, I learned this: sometimes a person is supported, protected, held—yet still cannot hold on anywhere.



When we arrived in Istanbul, I thought everything would begin again. My family enrolled me in a school; but I attended only one class there. Even in that single lesson, I realized that what had happened to me was known by everyone. The teacher gave me one of her own books and turned to the class, saying that anyone who wished could bring me notebooks and pens the next day. They wanted to help—I know that. But from the very first class, I felt that I did not belong there. It was as if I had come not to learn, but to be reminded of what I lacked.

My father quickly understood the situation at the school. He told us not to go back. He went to the Ministry of Education himself and tried to have us transferred to a better school. Later, I started at another school close to our home. On paper, everything was more orderly now. But inside me, nothing was settling into place. I couldn't adapt to that school either. Days passed, then months—even years. Still, I never felt that I belonged. I longed for my classroom in Kocaeli, for my friends, for my teacher. I kept calling back the life I had left behind.

That longing showed itself in my body. My stomach hurt often. Sometimes it truly hurt; sometimes I only thought it did. I wasn't looking for excuses to avoid school; I was simply struggling to endure it. Without realizing it at the time, I learned this: when a person cannot adapt to a place, the body begins to speak.

Perhaps I had a place in Istanbul; but I did not have a place where I belonged. Homes had changed, schools had changed, streets had changed. The only thing that had not changed was the feeling of estrangement inside me.

During the February 6, 2023 Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, this time I was not the one living through it, but the one witnessing it. I was no longer a child; yet a familiar feeling lingered in the air. Displaced people, temporary tents, eyes waiting in uncertainty... Once, I had been the one receiving help; now I was on the side bringing help. My children were with me; I walked through tent cities with my one-and-a-half-year-old son. I did not want to define myself as someone delivering aid. I wanted more to listen, to see, to remember. The people we met in the tents, seeing my son in my arms, assumed I too was an earthquake survivor; they wanted to host us, offering coffee with their limited means. In that moment, I understood: the line between the one who helps and the one in need is not as clear as we think. Sometimes a person encounters, in another place, a feeling they first learned years ago. As I reflect on all of this, I realize that migration is not merely a change of place. As Svetlana Boym suggests in her reflections on nostalgia, the issue is less about returning home and more about knowing that there is a place to which one can no longer return. In my childhood, that place was a house, a school, a neighborhood; in adulthood, it reappeared as I witnessed the losses of others. As in Milan Kundera's *The Joke*, a person sometimes finds themselves in a position they did not choose: the one receiving help, the one forced to adapt, or the one who waits silently. Perhaps what I experienced was not migration in the classical sense. Yet at different stages of my life, I encountered again and again the same feeling of displacement. Now I know that sometimes a person can remain in their own country and still lose their place within their own life.

# THE FOUR THIEVES OF MARSEILLE AND THE MEMORY OF HEALING

*Ancient alchemists explained the universe through four elements; physicians explained the human soul through four humors. "Four" was the number of direction, balance, and earthly order.*

*Yet when that order collapsed and death descended upon the city like an invisible mist, restoring the ancient balance fell not to the masters of the elements, but to the masters of the shadows.*

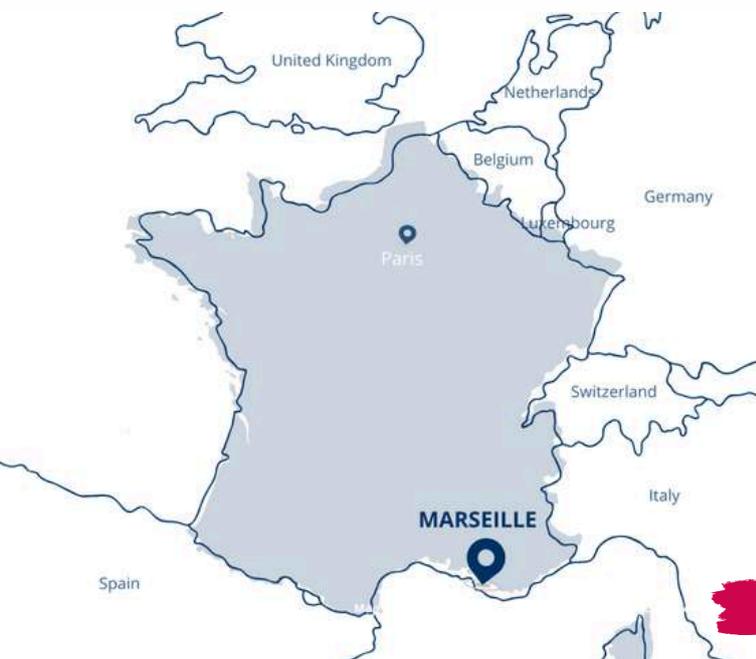
**Asst. Prof. Emrah TÜNCER**

In an old city, when death halts not only breath but the rhythm of time itself, what remains are scents and secrets.

Seventeenth-century Marseille stood in just such a vast darkness—where the sky seemed to close over the city like a shroud, and every doorstep turned into a quiet scene of farewell. As the Black Death slipped through the gilded doors of wealthy mansions, it respected neither rank nor fortune. And yet, in the city's most desperate hour, four thieves moved freely through houses the living feared to enter and the dead had already abandoned. In an age when medicine and authority had both fallen to their knees, these men held in their hands the sharp, aromatic key to survival.

They entered plague-ridden homes from which everyone else fled, gathering the jewels of the dead, touching the bodies—yet, mysteriously, they were never struck by the disease. When they were finally captured, the bargain offered to them was in truth a confession of an entire era's helplessness: "If you wish to escape execution, give us your secret of survival." It was not the gold they had stolen that led them to the gallows, but their uncanny defiance of death.

In the shadow of the scaffold, the secret for which they traded their lives was neither an expensive elixir nor a complex medical procedure. The thieves had been washing their hands and gargling with a pungent vinegar infused with wormwood, rosemary, sage, and lavender. They had stopped death at the threshold with this sharp mixture. In other words, they had armed themselves with the scents and gifts of nature, wearing them like a shield.



That sharp taste and scent were, in truth, an answer born of the street and of ancient knowledge. They stood as one of the most tangible expressions of what the modern world has yet to fully grasp: autonomous health. In contrast to the mindset that severs human beings from their own capacity to heal and reduces them to passive objects in the hands of vast systems, this vinegar formula proclaimed something radical—that healing is sometimes found far from institutions, hidden in the soil and in one’s own inner strength.

The mysterious knowledge that echoed through the streets of Marseille gradually became legend. Crossing the waves of the Mediterranean, it reached the humid neighborhoods of Istanbul and the desk of Mustafa Behçet Efendi. In the 19th century, as cholera pressed against the city’s gates, Mustafa Behçet Efendi—mindful of the poor—wrote his Cholera Treatise and advised the public, especially those living in narrow streets where houses leaned upon one another and sunlight barely entered, to protect themselves with this “Vinegar of the Four Thieves.” For he knew that although epidemics may be caused by microscopic organisms, their impact is always shaped by the depth of social and economic fractures. Pandemics strike the weakest links of society hardest—those already burdened by poverty and inadequate infrastructure.

History moves in a jarring cycle of repetition. The stage may change, but the face of the victim rarely does. From the Black Death to today’s modern crises, the bill has always been left at the same cold threshold: the door of the most vulnerable. Every structure that rises to the sky with promises of healing, if not built upon justice, risks becoming a cold fortress that feeds despair—a labyrinth with no exit.

In the end, Ivan Illich’s warning points to a truth that feels more familiar than ever: by confining health within glittering technologies and vast institutional corridors, the modern world has quietly estranged human beings from their own capacity to confront suffering and draw healing from nature. The more complex and professionalized a system becomes, the more it may paradoxically distance its true subject—the human being—sending them into a kind of exile, alienated from their own healing power.



# DISASTERS, SOCIETY, AND HEALTH SERVICES: SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES AND PRACTICES

**EDITORS**  
**ASLI METİN**  
**İZZET ERDEM**

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