"Packaged Consciousness" Manufactured by Media: Critical Discourse Analysis of April 22nd 2019 Turkish Newspapers' Headlines for the Funeral Incident

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Abstract

In the 21st of April 2019; a significant event occurred which unfolds a comprehensive understanding about the political climate in Turkey. The assault on the opposition leader of Turkey in a martyr funeral was the eventual outcome of a vast set of political scheme exists because of the ongoing social conflict in the country. This study consisted of an analysis of the front page articles published about the study on 24 newspapers of the 22nd of April in the terms of Herbert Schiller's theory of the packaged consciousness produced and marketed by vast media entities. According to the study's results; Turkish newspapers create an illusion of the incident and present a partial idea about what truly happened. This permanent situation as perceived in this particular case- acts like a social conflict and lead people to think partially about contemporary issues.

Keywords: Packaged Consciousness, Critical Discourse Analysis, Turkish Newspapers, Turkish Politics, Martyr Funeral Incident.

Medya Tarafından Üretilen "Paketlenmiş Bilinç": 22 Nisan 2019 Tarihli Türk Gazetelerinin "Cenaze Olayı" Hakkındaki İlk Sayfa Başlıkları Üzerine Eleştirel Söylem Analizi

Özet

21 Nisan 2019 tarihinde Türkiye'deki politik iklimi gözler önüne seren bir olay yaşanmıştır. Muhalefet liderinin bir şehit cenazesinde maruz kaldığı saldırı ülkedeki toplumsal çekişmeden beslenen geniş bir politik olaylar ağının ürünlerinden biridir. Bu çalışmada 22 Nisan günü basılan 24 gazetenin ilk sayfasında yer alan olayla alakalı yazılar Herbert Schiller'in büyük medya kuruluşları tarafından üretilen paketlenmiş bilinç teorisine göre incelenmektedir. Çalışmanın sonucu göstermiştir ki, Türkiye'de yayınlanan gazeteler bu olayı gerçekçi olmayan bir biçimde aktararak okurlarına gerçekte ne yaşandığı hakkında kısıtlı bir fikir vermektedir. Türk medyasının -bu olayda gözlemlenebilen- bu kalıcı hali bir toplumsal çekişme görevi görerek insanların güncel konular hakkında kapsamlı fikirler oluşturmasını engellemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Paketlenmiş Bilinç, Kritik Söylem Analizi, Türk Gazeteleri, Türk Siyaseti, Şehit Cenazesi Olayı.

Introduction

Human kind receives and acts upon a measure of knowledge about the world around since the very beginning. Knowledge about the environment or other people guides almost all of our actions throughout life; so it is a powerful notion to say the least. It is created by repeated observations which are subjective to any singular observer; although the knowledge created by the process, or facts are considered as objective by most. Is there a way to guide observations in a desired manner; to the point that all the reality we perceive serves as a functional tool for someone else?

Herbert Schiller (1973) answers that question by stating that perception gathered from the mass media entities -especially from news media- is engineered or produced in a way that affects our judgement about distant figures and events in a desired way. The Knowledge Industry as he calls them produces content in order to create passivity amongst masses, in other words they presents us a packaged consciousness. Contents they create are affected, and therefore produced according to five myths about society.

In this study; an incident occurred in the 21st April 2019 in Turkey; the assault on the opposition leader in a funeral is on cross hairs. 24 newspapers published in the 22nd of April includes or at least supposed to include, the event to their daily window; but in different shapes and perspectives. In light of the Schiller's "Packaged Consciousness" thesis and discourse analysis methods; news articles on the front pages of those newspapers are analyzed extensively in order to point out inner mechanisms and power relationships inside Turkish media world. Findings gathered from the newspaper articles are discussed in a larger perspective which yielded an understanding not just about Turkish media, but how this vast industry of media production works in general.

Packaged Consciousness

In his remarkable book "The Mind Managers" (1973) Schiller argues that the media corporations of the moderns times, or the knowledge industry who creates content in order to manipulate masses. Those few international corporations create, process, refine and preside over the media circulation; therefore they determine the beliefs, attitudes, and behavior patterns of the masses. To accomplish such a task; they use a methodology of creating content which Schiller named packaged consciousness that comprised of five myths that shape content and techniques of conveying information.

The Myth of Individuality and Personal Choice

Individualism is often defined as a philosophy that renders the individual worthy in the social and political domains. While it seemingly embedded into many societies' way of living in an extensive scale; the concept itself is more contemporary, taking its roots from the French Revolution (Lukes, 2016). Selective acts of the individual are defined as the personal choice, so two notions can said to be aligned closely.

According to Schiller (1973: 8-11) though; emphasis on the individualism and personal choice within the mass media content is not coincidental at all. Since the culture -and therefore society- established from communication and cooperation between its attendees, the individual simply cannot be separated from the society; yet that separation itself is branded as the aspect of freedom especially in the Western countries. Schiller states that the emphasis is created solely for production purposes; since the messages containing the importance of individuality result in an efficient and productive society; and the individuality is made to look desirable and easily attainable.

Individuality in media messages serves two main purposes. On one hand it protects the ownership of productive private property, since everyone surely knows by now that it gathered by being a hard working individual within the society; and on the other hand, it elevates media's worth to the point that media becomes a champion of the common people, protecting and maintaining their particular way of existence, whatever that may be.

The Myth of Neutrality

For manipulation to be effective in the desired amount, people should not be aware of the fact that they are being manipulated. That is to say that there should be a reference point for neutrality for starters. Key institutions such as government, media, education, and science all perceived, or must be perceived as neutral; they should not seem to be guided by any ideologies (Schiller; 1973: 11-13). This can seem exceptionally paradoxical within the case of media because any form of media are limited to their own material, so the perspective they produce is expected to be limited one way or another. Those limits create an end product that cannot cover all the aspects of the story.

So; the mass media entities are in a continuous state of denial about their biased nature in order to sustain their manipulative nature, to the point that the notion of neutrality itself has become a vacant and empty campaign promise (Mitchell, 2003). That denial consequently shapes the contents they create. Hints of the governing ideology are there and can be traced, but they are buried deep within the message.

The Myth of Unchanging Human Nature

Expectations generated from negative situations one way or another -no matter how small- can lead up to social change. To prevent expectations from the start, representations of violence -or villainy- in any shape or size are branded as a natural aspect of human beings. They do not commit those events because they must or they want to, but because they are expected to. Any error in the society that would lead to some form of social action is justified by this process because it is only natural, and therefore there is not much to be done about it. Every story centered on the aggressive side of the human beings underlines the "proper" way of living, by showing how the others could, and will yield. Among other benefits; underlining unchanging nature and therefore the proper way to live provides an explanation to private ownership and individual acquisition (Schiller; 1973: 13-16).

Surely there are many aspects of human nature which this study is not concerned in a deeper way, but considering they will not ever change is simply false when the rate of change and the ability to adapt that people has can be perceived within a multidisciplinary perspective. Every change in the way we live creates problems which require more change to solve; so in a way, people are in a constant stage of change in nature and everything else (Lancaster, 1990). Repressing the hopes for change has become one of the key features of the media though, as seen in this myth more clearly. The effort creates passive audiences.

The Myth of the Absence of Social Conflict

The mind managers of the media tend to overlook, or simply deny the existence of any social conflict within a nation or a global scale. At the first sight, this can said to be in conflict with the previous myth; and almost impossible to achieve given the size and impact of social issues. They manage these dilemmas by presenting conflicts as an individual matter, not underlining any social roots it has. In this sense; a connection to other myths is constructed. The stories in this manner have singular "good" and "bad" characters that further underline the personal choices, and nature of those good and bad surfaces as an inevitable conflict. Neutral media then presents the story in its natural state, while illuminating little to none about actual causes of the event (Schiller; 1973: 16-18). The social conflicts are generated from the exploitation of the minorities, and not underlining them creates a suitable environment for more.

Stuart Hall (2003: 223-277) offers a detailed analysis around how the exploitation of the minorities casts its shadow on media content in theoretical, historical, and actual perspectives. The analysis underlines that the existence of difference is both necessary and dangerous; consequently media's sinister creations around the notion such as stereotypes and rejection of exploitation develops the danger even more.

The Myth of Media Plurality

For people's choices to be important there must be a variety of options to choose from. The monopolization of the media entities renders personal choice of any individual meaningless, since they become somewhat similar parts of whole. Manipulation effort around this paradox assumes the purpose of creating a contradictory belief. Gatekeepers; which are in control of the selective representation processes, are tangled with the commercial web that the giant, multifaceted media corporation requires to survive (Schiller; 1973: 19-24). The end result is numerous media entities which are not exactly identical, even though do not and could not offer a variety of options with significant differences. They only can and will offer their own version of reality, nothing more.

Considering change in news media in both technological and economical levels, policy changes for different countries, global media entities, and any other notions that impact media work in any manner possible (Allen, Connolly & Hargreaves Heap, 2017), the world simply just became too vast and too complicated to achieve media pluralism as desired. Just like in the case of neutrality, plurality in media has been more empty promises than reality for some time.

Techniques of Shaping Consciousness

At this point; manipulation is constructed in a very effective manner, but the media corporations add another layer to the effort. Having manufactured the content with the given myths, they also determine how that content is transmitted. Two significant ways of conveying the information is underlined by Schiller (1973: 24-29) which are fragmentation, and immediacy of the information.

Fragmentation; also known as focalization, in its general form refers to the action of dividing information given into many pieces to the point that it cripples audiences' capacity to comprehend the story as a whole. Usually done with advertisement breaks; this practice reduces the already decreased attention of the viewers, so they think they followed the story; but they have meaningless pieces of the story and no clue or intention to piece them together. It is argued that fragmentation efforts are raised within the commercialization era of the journalism and media work; and it may even disturb -or already has disturbed- democratic processes (Mancini, 2012).

Information overload that the new media especially adds another dimension to the fragmentation; as Schiller (1973: 27) underlines. This topic is also studied in the domains such as Marketing, Accounting, Organization Science (Eppler & Mengis, 2004); adding to the commercialization argument since there are significant overlaps in theoretical studies such as this instance. The overload, as much as fragments, contains little to none valuable information

about the case at hand. The process of rendering information trivial by breaking concentration and flooding meaningless messages creates incomprehension, ignorance, and therefore indifference within the minds of audiences eventually.

Immediacy of the information is closely associated with the first technique in its main aspects. Since media is commercialized to this point, the message it conveys to people becomes a commodity good. Not unlike any other commodity good that is manufactured in order to profit, this one has an asset that determines its value amongst similar ones; speed (Schiller; 1973: 27-29). Surely the so called "here and now" quality that the informative articles assume decreases the quality of the content and even usually risk being severely one-sided, in other words immediate information will be incomplete and therefore undermine understanding. A wide range of information sharing activities from news media and especially online news (Karlsson, 2011) to academic articles (Tomer, 1986) shows signs of valuing speed above all else.

Schiller (1973: 29-31) finalizes his chapter about the packaged consciousness by stating that all of the notions stated above has a singular goal; passivity amongst audiences. In both physical, and intellectual dimensions; the masses are directed to be as passive as possible in order to maintain status quo. Not understanding the big picture but only having a superficial idea about it lessens the concerns about the reality, since they only have to make the correct choices in order to rise in the society. Things are bad since there are "bad" people but for a limited time; but there are also "good" people opposing them so the bad days are only temporary. There is no need for action or despair.

News and Discourse

Since critical discourse analysis is a multidisciplinary event covering psychology, sociology, political science, and many other related fields; there are many definitions of it regarding its relations with notions such as ideology, cognition, and others. Van Dijk (2000: 193-194) defines it as an analysis of linguistic, cognitive, social, and cultural expressions of a text that is written and should be read within a context. It can be considered as a form of language use that is understood within a group of people which can be people gathered around a dinner table or customers of a specific newspaper, sharing more or less the same ideology.

Fairclough (2001: 121-124) defines critical discourse analysis method as a theoretical perspective on language and semiosis. Paralleling with the former definition; in this line of logic analyzes language as a fundamental element of material and social processes. Semiosis includes all forms of meaning in an observable discourse; meaning that visual images, and body language are as important as the language itself. Semiosis can be seen in three forms in any

social situations; as a part of a social activity, in representations, and in performances of a particular position. With those links on social interactions; semiosis constitutes genres, style, and discourse. Discourse surfaces as a semiosis feature especially in representation.

Getting into more specific side of the critical discourse analysis debate for this study; Van Dijk (1988: 140-148) argues that news comprehension for any reader involves six distinct steps which should be considered in order to analyze any representation of a story.

- *Perception and attention* can be considered as a precondition of reading, as in the reader decides what to read at this stage. Categorization of headlines (printing layout) is important here since reader only directs a fraction of his/her attention to the product. Headlines and images are detected; so one measure of importance is size, the other is positioning which decreases importance from left to right, and from top to bottom.

- *Reading* starts when reader divides attention to the details. In most basic definition, this stage is a decoding and interpreting process of a given text. Headlines and layout still have the important role of sustaining interest, since the reader can stop reading at any time.

- *Understanding* comes after a sufficient amount of interpretation. Activation of the relevant concepts, knowledge frames or scripts, and previous models are important for decoding individually, and new opinions may be formed according to the text. Reading is not a linear, but a hierarchical process; so the layout has an important role here also.

- *Representations in episodic memory* are created after processing, as textual structures. Data such as which page the information was on, where on the page, under what kind of headline are important as they are storage classifications; in other words the influence of layout is apparent. These textual representations are created within a structure, and become relevant for further processing. They do not contain opinions or subjectivity.

- *The formation, uses, and updating of situation models* comes next; and establishment of those models are the ultimate goal of corporate news production. Modifiers such as time, location, circumstances, participants, actions, and events are dominant here so what is given gains dominance from how it is given at this point. Textual representations created earlier are inserted, and essentially form situation models. Individual perspectives or subjectivity can exist within this domain.

- *The uses and changes of the general social knowledge and beliefs* are the final step of the process. From a wide standpoint; general social knowledge shared by a group or several is a much bigger cluster than situation models. Those affect entire belief systems and therefore attitudes of a large sum of people towards any situation. Changes done to them by altering situation models related are slow, difficult, and usually partial.

In other words; this model based on a connection between cognition, discourse, and society; which becomes exploitable by controlling the entire process towards a singular goal. Although the actions taken in this account by the news media are mostly strategical -meaning that they are a reaction to actual reality at any given time- and there are no fixed rules about how they operate; the ability to construct ideologies of masses and even the society in this regard cannot be overlooked (Van Dijk; 1997: 19-23) Power relations within a society can be altered and reproduced in this way much like Schiller have underlined in the previous title.

Methodology

The study is conducted upon the newspapers published in the day of 22 April 2019; especially on their front pages. This day is chosen because an important incident occurred in the previous day, and the articles written about the incident can be found on the chosen newspapers. In the 21st of April 2019, the main opposition leader of the Turkish parliament Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, who had campaigned for the local elections held in March 31 was assaulted in a martyr funeral he attended. Front pages of the 24 newspapers published in the day covers the incident one way or another; yet what was actually happened does not really change.

This creates a remarkable opportunity of analysis around the ideas that Schiller (1973) and Van Dijk (1988) have argued because of the fact that the changes applied on the story, or not applied since some of the newspapers published incredibly similar stories in every other newspaper were not coincidental at all. According to their ideological affiliations, every newspaper designed how the story should be covered in their daily issue and especially how the front page headlines should be; which is further analyzed in the case study section.

The front page stories about the incident are analyzed in three main dimensions; which are the position and the size the particular story covers on the page, the images used, and the headlines. Van Dijk's analysis around news consumption points out that those three are the most important aspects of a news article, influencing almost all of the process.

Critical discourse analysis methods are used on the chosen sample in order to show differences and similarities between them regarding their ideological affiliations or the side they promote in the political spectrum. After the discourse analysis is conducted, the bigger picture that it creates is further examined in order to point out the traces of the five myths of Schiller and therefore understand the power relations that the Turkish knowledge industry is tangled in.

Analysis of the Newspapers

The analysis effort should start at the incident itself; what has happened should be underlined in an unbiased manner in order to point out how biased looks like. In 21st of April,

main opposition leader of Turkey was assaulted at a martyr funeral. After the incident, the assailants pursued the leader to the near housing he took refuge and threw rocks at the windows. Then, main opposition leader is extracted from the place via armored vehicles. He was not injured and nine people participated in the assault were taken in for questioning. The soldier -martyr- was killed in action against the Kurdish rebels; and the interior minister seemingly tried to justify the incident by the alleged support that the pro-Kurdish party has given to main opposition in the recent elections. CHP (main opposition) have won the local elections mentioned in two major cities of Turkey, Ankara and İstanbul which was governed by the ruling party for a while. Leader of the ruling party conducted a divisive campaign to say the least; in which he repeatedly compared the opposition parties with terrorists (Associated Press News; 2019a). Combined with the violent campaign and the alleged rigs on the İstanbul election voiced by the ruling party (Associated Press News; 2019b) the tension between both sides of the aisle and therefore between their supporters, can said to be on concerning levels at the time the incident occurred.

After examining the incident; determining the newspapers' chosen side within the political spectrum should be cleared. Kejanlıoğlu (2004: 454) argues that when analyzing any form of media in Turkey, political processes and the state of the government need to be considered. The most recognizable political change that the country have suffered is the change from parliamentary system to presidential system; which was planned to take motion in the November 2019 at first, but put in action much earlier (Kurubas, 2018). The system is known to give extensive power to the higher seat in political game; the President. In other words, the political spectrum is divided into two major factions -or electoral alliances- regarding recent events; "Cumhur İttifakı" (People's Alliance) or the ruling party, and "Millet İttifakı" (Nation Alliance) or the opposition party. The newspapers are divided in the study considering that spectrum as follows;

Promoting Opposition Party or Neutral; Bir Gün, Cumhuriyet, Dünya, Karar, Sözcü, Yeni Asya, Yeniçağ, Yeni Mesaj.

Promoting Ruling Party; Akşam, Anayurt, Aydınlık, Diriliş Postası, Doğruhaber, Dokuz Sütun, Günboyu, Güneş, Milat, Ortadoğu, Sonsöz, Star, Türkiye, Yeni Akit, Yenisöz, Yeni Şafak.

Since private sector started to penetrate news media in the 80s especially in the print media domain (Kejanlıoğlu; 2004: 82). Rising control of capital on the media entities turned media work from an artisanal process to a much more "professional" tool of something else (Koloğlu; 2003: 31), so it could be said that the influence of capital and its purposes surely

affect what is presented and how within the gears of the knowledge industry. In other words; the capital movement on the sector (Köktürk, 2019) have influenced how the newspapers divided into those given two groups.

After considering which side they favor across the aisle; those two groups divided into subgroups regarding how they have presented the incident and other news following previous literature work (Korap Özel & Deniz, 2015). Since the economy political approach was not sufficient alone to reach such a verdict, the newspapers are analyzed regarding how they represented the funeral incident -especially in the extreme ends- and other news of the day - considering central perspectives have similar approaches regarding the incident-, and they are divided into subgroups by that approach. Two specific ways of representation in the opposition, and four in the ruling side are pointed out and thoroughly analyzed regarding their particular way to reach a more generalized point about the Turkish news.

Promoting Opposition Party or Neutral

Newspapers that are not promoting the ruling party can be divided into two groups regarding how they represent the story; which are named in this study as extreme opposition and center opposition.

In the extreme opposition group (Figure 1) we have four newspapers (Cumhuriyet, Bir Gün, Karar, Sözcü) and all of them are representing the story as an act of crime while not specifically blaming any perpetrators. They use the same image, one person punching the opposition leader while others behind him have hateful looks fixed on him. The sizes of the stories are bigger than anything else on the paper since they cover nearly 59 percent of the front page on average (36% for Bir Gün, 70% for Cumhuriyet, 41% for Karar, and 88% for Sözcü), suggesting that this story is at most importance for them. Headlines are given as follows;

Figure 1. Extreme Opposition Group

- "Fail Ortada" (Perpetrator is in Sight) (Bir Gün, 22 April 2019)

- "Demokrasiye Linç" (Lynching Democracy) (Cumhuriyet, 22 April 2019)
- "Utanç Günü" (The Day of Shame) (Karar, 22 April 2019)
- "Alçak Saldırı" (Vile Attack) (Sözcü, 22 April 2019)

Harsh language used in the headlines involves an exaggeration of the event by giving words such as vile, shame, and lynch. Although they all point out the injustice in this situation; all the headlines are deficient about the actions that are taken towards justice; namely detaining of nine individuals participated in the assault.

Center opposition group (Figure 2) is also consisted of four newspapers (Dünya, Yeni Asya, Yeniçağ, Yeni Mesaj) and in this group we see much more diversity. While the extreme group mostly have a center-left point of view, this group has a neutral economy newspaper and even Islamic-right presence. Group has one thing in common though; they remain more impersonal with the story since they have reserved a very small amount of space and coverage to it, 13% of the front page on average to be exact (5% for Dünya, 12% for Yeni Asya, 23% for Yeniçağ, and 12% for Yeni Mesaj). They practiced a softer approach on their headlines compared to the previous group. Variety of images are used within the group though; besides the punching moment, there is an image of bodyguards leading the leader away from the danger, and other opposition congressman trying to calm the attacking mass down. Dünya; which considered as a neutral economy newspaper, put no images of the incident on their front page.

Size and positioning of the story varies from newspaper to newspaper but the area they cover is considerably smaller from the extreme opposition examples. Headlines are less definitive from the former group either, they merely versions of the phrase "Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu got attacked" (Dünya, 22 April 2019) only two of them added the word "Ugly" (Yeni Asya, 22 April 2019; Yeniçağ, 22 April 2019) and one taken Kılıçdaroğlu's name out and added "Martyr Funeral" (Yeni Mesaj, 22 April 2019).

Figure 2. Center Opposition Group

Lesser size and the soft approach on the headlines are the dividing factors of these newspapers to other opposition side, while especially Yeniçağ nears the extreme limit with size (23% of the front page) and image similarities. Detaining part is again missing from the headlines; and the story in this group seems less important in the bigger picture.

Promoting Ruling Party

Newspapers favoring the ruling party are much more plenty in number; and they are divided into four groups according to their interpretation of the story. Starting from the most extreme ends; the groups are named victim blamers, social conflict deniers, mild ruling side, and near-neutrals.

Victim-blamers group (Figure 3) consisted of four (Milat, Yeni Akit, Yenisöz, Yeni Şafak) and all four of them seemingly considers the incident as Kılıçdaroğlu's fault. Images used are dominantly the ones bodyguards trying to take Kılıçdaroğlu to safety, yet there is one incident which the punching moment is used. Sizes differ from one another (23% for Milat, 7% for Yeni Akit, 44% for Yenisöz, and 46% for Yeni Şafak) but there are two key features consistent between all four; the headlines and the nearing stories. Headlines are given as follows;

- "Provokasyon" (Provocation) (Milat, 22 April 2019)
- "Şehit Cenazesinde Protesto Edildi" (Protested in Martyr Funeral) (Yeni Akit, 22 April 2019)
- "Kılıçdaroğlu'ndan Provokasyon" (Provocation from Kılıçdaroğlu) (Yenisöz, 22 April 2019)
- "Kılıçdaroğlu'na Saldırı: Provokasyona Dikkat" (Attack on Kılıçdaroğlu: Mind the Provokation) (Yeni Şafak, 22 April 2019)

Figure 3. Victim-Blamers Group

All of the headlines contain the word "provocation", and that is how they convey the story. Given the fact that one of the ruling party's campaign slogans strongly indicated that the opposition made a pact of sorts with the Kurdish rebels, therefore they are terrorists by association; the leader himself provoked the assault. In that line of logic, the leader had this attack coming. All of the newspapers in that group put stories about alleged vote rigs, terrorist attack in Sri Lanka, and respecting martyrs near the story about the incident; drawing an obvious conclusion about how the leader "provoked" it.

Social conflict deniers (Figure 4) are not as concerned about the roots of the incident as the previous group. 4 newspapers in this group (Akşam, Anayurt, Diriliş Postası, Türkiye) are all acknowledging that assaulting someone -let alone the opposition party leader- is not an act to be praised; so they are shifting the blame to conserve their positions in a grand scale. Images vary in two contexts; the punching moment and the opposition leader trying to get to safety. The area that story covers is nearly one-third of the front page on average (37% for Akşam, 24% on Anayurt, 37% for Diriliş Postası, and 29% for Türkiye), and seemingly dominant on the page. Headlines of this group are given as follows;

- "Şehide Saygı Bu Olamaz" (This cannot be Respect to a Martyr) (Akşam, 22 April 2019)

- "Saldırı Şehitlere Saygısızlıktır" (Assault is a Disrespect on Martyrs) (Anayurt, 22 April 2019)

- "Huzurumuzu Bozamayacaklar" (They cannot Spoil Our Peace) (Diriliş Postası, 22 April 2019)

- "Bu Olmadı" (This is not Right) (Türkiye, 22 April 2019)

Figure 4: Social Conflict Deniers Group

Those headlines serve two main purposes; acknowledging that the act was not "right" and at the same time devaluing how wrong it was exactly. In this exact way; they try to appear as neutral and use a confusing way of storytelling, in which the incident seems as a separate event from the political environment. Yet there are stories nearing the alleged vote rigs and terrorist attacks; but respecting martyrs are merged into the story itself.

Mild ruling side group (Figure 5) has given somewhat less importance to the incident that the first two groups of the ruling side; and it shows in how much space they gave to the story. Consisted of 3 newspapers (Aydınlık, Ortadoğu, Star) this group have used more or less the same image; the one with the punching moment. The headlines they used are variations of the phrase "Kılıçdaroğlu is assaulted at the martyr funeral" (Aydınlık, 22 April 2019; Ortadoğu, 22 April 2019; Star, 22 April 2019), but the details around representation may yield something more about their intentions. Size that each article covers seemingly dropped from the previous group with 20 percent average (16% for Aydınlık, 28% for Ortadoğu, and 15% percent for Star) underlining lessening attention again.

Terror news from afar and respecting the martyrs amongst other stories are more dominant than the incident in those pages. Aydınlık has an interesting take on the image department not just within the group but in all of the newspapers analyzed; they cropped out the assailant. In short; this group appears to be more neutral to the incident, yet the details invented or brought from harsher approaches suggest otherwise.

Figure 5. Mild Ruling Side Group

Near-Neutrals (Figure 6) have given even less attention to the incident, to the point that spotting it on the page is almost or exactly impossible. 5 newspapers categorized in this line (Doğruhaber, Dokuz Sütun, Günboyu, Güneş, Sonsöz), and 4 of them have reserved seemingly the smallest place possible for the story, four percent average for the four of them (3% for

Doğruhaber, 3% for Dokuz Sütun, 3% for Günboyu, and 8% for Güneş). In Sonsöz, the story is not published.

Figure 6. Near-Neutrals Group

Four stories published uses images of Kılıçdaroğlu trying to get to safety and since the story is so small; other people on the images such as bodyguards are mostly cropped out. The headlines are generic in this instance again; just like the previous example they are combinations of the words Kılıçdaroğlu, assault, and martyr funeral. The space reserved for the story governs the combination. Positioning is also unfavorable, hence the stories are hard to find on the page.

Conclusion

Having analyzed all of the newspapers in Van Dijk's (1988) terms; the findings are to be examined within the context provided by Schiller (1973). The discussion revolves around the following points;

• Individual choices and their results are underlined especially in the victim-blaming group in a negative way. Given that none of the newspapers highlighted detained people for the assault can be considered as this unfavorable incident has no significant counter balance. Victim's name is affiliated with almost all of the headlines, but perpetrator's name is only given in small fonts, in a small number of newspapers; which creates another imbalance on the subject.

• The fact that newspapers can be divided into 6 groups 2 opposition and 4 ruling side alone is a statement to the level of their neutrality. Whether cropping images, differentiating sizes, conveying less information, or writing emotional headlines; almost all of the newspapers have taken sides. Those sides are nothing to do about what is right or wrong; they are in line with their formerly picked political affiliations.

• Unchanging human nature is the paradigm of representing violence and therefore anger and this story is a fine example of it. Especially the image that captures the punching

moment; which was dominantly used regardless of affiliations, can be seen in almost every given representation. Usage of that image in opposite sides of the aisle proves Hall's (2003: 254) point about different audiences reading a text differently.

- Denying social conflict can said to be the dominant aspect of those news articles; to the point that one of the groups entire purpose is to achieve just that. Other examples around the ruling side are also failing to address the social roots of the incident. On the opposition side; address can said to be there on the first look, but the blame they have produced is entirely targeted to ruling party, and especially their leader. In other words; it is safe to say that the social conflicts resulted in this incident amongst many others that have and will happen is not addressed in those newspapers at all.

- Not unlike the neutrality situation, the ability to divide newspapers by their ideological orientation itself is a convincing evidence about media plurality in Turkish news media environment. Adding to that fact; 5 of the ruling side newspapers with the highest daily circulations are owned by 3 multifaceted corporations (Köktürk, 2019) which are bound to government by contracts in other business fields and other benefits. All of the articles especially in the extreme ends contain some measure of partisanship since they are not neutral; rendering the personal choice to read a newspaper to gather knowledge about some distant event pointless.

- Segmentation and immediacy techniques are not examined within this study since they require in depth analysis of a singular, or a small number of media subjects; which can be done in further researches around this incident or others.

To sum up; Turkish newspapers can said to have produced an illusion of knowledge around the incident at hand, which surely resulted into a partial idea about what really happened and why it is a significant event to understand political environment. Since consumers of any newspaper procured a comprehensive reasoning around what led us to the point that people are actually assaulting someone in a funeral of all places; the status quo which is an ongoing social conflict and a status quo nourished by that will continue to exist without any actual resistance. People are not allowed the knowledge which could lead them to react for the better.

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