

Emergence by Proxy: The Horizontal and Vertical Politics of Internet Policy in Turkey

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Often within transnational discourse, the Turkish government's suspension of approximately 3,700 websites to date is understood as a problematic form of state assertion in the face of global telecommunications. For example, in the European Union's *Turkey Progress Report* (2008) – part of an annually published edition outlining the remaining stipulations for Turkish accession to the E.U. – Turkey's Internet laws, which grant local judges and prosecutors the authority to indefinitely suspend websites, are described as a violation of the freedom of expression. Also notable in these reports is that the promotion of human rights is typically embedded within a liberal capitalist framework.ⁱ Likewise, civil society groups within and outside of Turkey argue that state website suspensions contribute to a repressive regime of information exchange.ⁱⁱ What is problematic here is not that these organizations make ethical claims for the right to speak and be heard online, but instead that they approach information and communication technologies (ICTs) as primordial, expansive and self-organizing attributes that contribute to an imaginary of the Internet as a uniform, neutral, global cyberspace, freely accessible if only left alone.ⁱⁱⁱ Nevertheless, despite recycled pronouncements that Kemalism is dead, long ago dissolved by powerful transnational alliances and global cyberspace, this national category endures through domestic Internet policies that target and silence alternative nationalisms deemed threatening to state power.

In this article, I will consider Eugene Thacker's description of the Internet as a global "digital commons," as well as Achille Mbembe's theorization of power hierarchies within an occupied territory, in order to critique the horizontal metaphors dominating Turkey's Internet

debates. While the phenomena discussed here are historically and culturally specific to the Turkish context, this article is primarily an exploration of the understandings we might gain when using critical theory to analyze ICT metaphors frequenting geopolitical and civil society discourse. I first draw upon Thacker's description of the Internet as a horizontal network of "digital transfection"^{iv} to consider how Turkish Internet practices both reinforce sovereign power - through state-mandated website suspensions implemented through a telecom monopoly - as well as resist it, for example, in the online social networking of Kurdish and LGBTQ communities for whom the Internet is a means of political mobilization. Then, I utilize Mbembe's discussion of infrastructural warfare to consider how a hierarchical understanding of power relations within society connects with the vertical model used within Internet Protocol. Both forms of verticality are extremely relevant to contemporary Internet policy debates. Third, I situate the proxy server as a point of intersection between these vertical and horizontal relationships. The proxy simultaneously operates as a node of social convergence, through its circumvention of online barriers (such as website filters targeting Turkish IP addressed request signals within a given network), as well as a node of divergence, differentiating the experiences of Internet users along a vertical axis of power, for instance along class lines that delimit Internet practices within a particular place. By foregrounding the proxy's dual functions in sustaining and resisting sovereign power, I seek alternatives to the "either-or" framework of current censorship debates assuming Turkey's teleological progress towards a European modernity.

In 2007, videos depicting Kemal Mustafa Atatürk (the founding father of the Turkish Republic) as a homosexual were posted on YouTube.^v In response, the Turkish government passed laws authorizing the courts to suspend websites displaying "insults" to the Turkish Republic, to "Turkishness" or to Atatürk.^{vi} In conjunction with a centralized board that monitors

expression in film, television, radio and online media, these laws have enabled the suspension of thousands of websites.^{vii} YouTube remains blocked by a renewable court order implemented through Türk Telekom,^{viii} the national telecommunications corporation providing most ADSL access.^{ix} Hence, when a user with a Turkish IP address attempts to access YouTube, she will encounter a suspension notice that lists the judge's name, the case number and the date of the suspension's commencement (see figure 1). By neither explaining a suspension's rationale nor informing the user of stipulations that must be met before the suspension is lifted, the notice acts as a one-way channel of sovereign discipline. However, underneath the notice's impenetrability, there exists a clandestine network of proxy servers, software and ICT knowledge used to circumvent web-filtering technologies and resist the state-corporate complex that the 2007 Internet laws were intended to fortify.^x Despite the argument made by technocrats in Turkey's urban centers that proxy technology renders website suspensions ineffective, there exist substantive impacts of this seemingly benign performance of state power. For example, when working-class users access the Internet at cafés where data caching (allowing for the surveillance of a user's online activity) and website filtering (implementing website bans and blocking proxies) are mandatory, suspensions create firmer digital borders for those users without personal computers or access to private connectivity.^{xi} Suspensions and surveillance is posited as a collaborative effort, as Turkish users are encouraged by the government to visit a state-produced website called "Informer-Web" where they can report questionable websites to the authorities. This interactive process hails the Turkish user as a patriot-informer, consenting to web-hegemony through his or her participation.^{xii}



Figure 1. Screen view when attempting to access <www.youtube.com> from a Turkish IP address (August, 2009). Top line reads “this website’s connection is in suspension.” <www.ihbar.org.tr> is the link for "Informer Web."

Importantly, recent battles over online expression exist within a milieu where Turkey’s struggle to maintain its national sovereignty has dramatically changed over the last two decades, in part caused by a politically fractured state and a sizeable diaspora. On the one hand, the majority party is Islamic, moderate and center-right, endorsing a relaxation of Turkey’s laicism and a series of neoliberal economic reforms to meet E.U. accession stipulations. However, nationalist, Kemalist parties promoting secularism, economic protectionism, continued militarization of the East and resistance to E.U. interference in domestic affairs, maintain substantial influence through parliamentary seats and military alliances. While negotiating this internal fissure, the state also attempts to regulate the diverse online activities of its dispersing population, as over 10% of Turks currently live outside of the national territory, mainly residing in Europe, the Middle East and the U.S.^{xiii} Additionally, Turkey continues to struggle with E.U. and IMF demands for continued democratization and economic liberalization meanwhile grappling with the violent dislocations and devastation caused by years of military conflict with

the Kurdish national liberation movement.^{xiv} This ecology of conflicting social forces raises the stakes of Internet regulation. Indeed, the government’s preoccupation with the activities on social networking and video sharing websites, exemplified in its suspensions of Blogspot.com, Wordpress.com, Blogger.com and GoogleGroups, is emblematic of how online control is seen as a key political strategy. Yet because proxy technology is used both to implement *and* to circumvent network control, what Turkey’s Internet laws were originally intended for – to protect state power and intellectual property rights – results in speculative, pre-emptive regulation, plural digital resistance and sovereign exception.

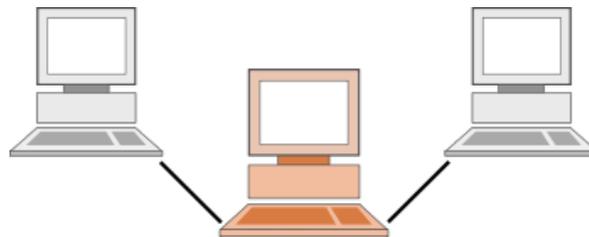


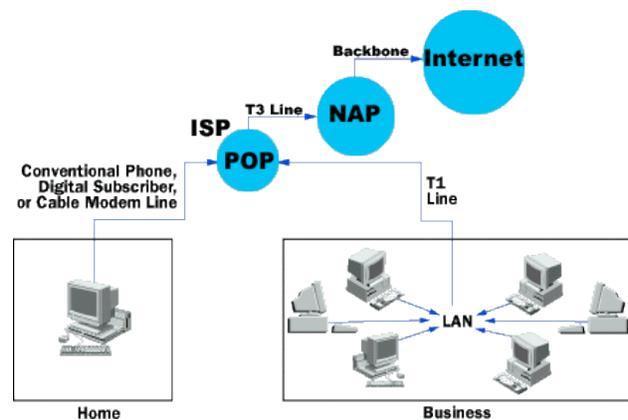
Figure 2. User with Turkish IP address ← Proxy Server → End Server

In order to understand the divergent social uses of the proxy, it is imperative to understand its basic functions. The proxy server is a computer system or application program that acts as an intermediary between users seeking resources from other servers. It can be placed in the user's local computer or at various points between the user and the destination server. The “anonymous,” “open” or “tunneling” proxy allows the user to “hide” her IP address,^{xv} since the transport of data packets occurs between the end server and the proxy rather than the end server and the user’s machine. In other words, if a Turkish user connects to an open proxy from her personal computer to request a file or web page that is restricted by her Internet Service Provider,^{xvi} the intermediary proxy server first evaluates the user’s request according to its filtering rules (which in the case of an open proxy, is non-restrictive). After the request is

validated, the open proxy provides the desired connection to the destination server by requesting its service on behalf of the Turkish user without disclosing the user's actual IP address. However, the proxy is not necessarily a tool of circumvention to online hegemony, as just as frequently this technology is used to restrict traffic by IP address or Internet protocol for purposes including surveillance, network security, data collection, safe-guarding against viruses, information leakage protection, caching locally to increase speed and performance, and to restrict access to particular sites. Thus, while Türk Telekom uses "content filter" proxy servers to enforce website suspensions, "tunneling" proxies function to bypass the former. Also notable, although a tunneling proxy hides a user's identity from the end server (essentially erasing a user's "Turkishness"), the manager of the proxy can still access the user's personal information, introducing a certain level of risk to any reliance on a proxy. While journalists, scholars, businesspeople and political dissidents in Turkey may use tunneling proxies to circumvent website suspensions, depending on their management, these same proxies could monitor and document users' activities without their knowledge and provide or sell this data to governments and corporations.^{xvii}

Figure 3.

An example diagram depicting the Internet as a horizontal communication network^{xviii}



In his 2008 article “Uncommon Life,” Eugene Thacker analyzes the balancing principle of “the commons” through the lens of biotechnology in order to theorize “life itself.” First, he discusses how the concept of the commons historically responded to the problem of “governing the living” or managing the diversity that emerges within a heterogeneous society (Thacker, 309). The concept of the commons articulates the negotiation between the singular and the plural, which within the realm of the biological could be described as the interrelation between the microbe, the individual and the species. Within the context of Internet technology, the relationship between a computer, an Internet Service Provider, a Point of Presence and a Network Access Point is one possible way to imagine the singular-to-plural organization of the “digital commons” (see Figure 3). Whether the “life” of the commons is seen as a biological entity, an informational one, or as Thacker argues for, both,^{xix} its primary function is to balance rights with constraints, innovation with regulation. Yet the homeostasis resulting from the balance of control and freedom is always predicated on continuous internal flux, on micro-processes of change in a constant feedback loop with overall self-organization. This is why Thacker invokes Foucault to elaborate his definition of life as “(life is) what resists and life is also what is resisted” (Thacker, 318). This bidirectional description of life connects to his central claim that large-scale transformations – whether they are biologically categorized as evolutionary progress/pandemic or technologically categorized as IT innovation/cyber-terrorism – occur through a process of *transfection*, or the horizontal exchange of information across networks.^{xx} All life, whether it is the life of ideas or of microbes, shares this common design principle. Considering Turkish user-generated online expression as “emergent life” in a “digital commons” facilitates a radical reimagining of the tension between top-down state regulation and the grassroots struggles for deregulation. Global Internet debates exemplify transfection; they are

not “a conflict between opposing parties but between intersecting processes: multiplicity and control, circulations and regulations, emergence and exception” (318). In other words, contrary to arguments that website suspensions suppress minority expression and streamline media content into a unilateral regime of state propaganda, a significant yet overlooked purpose of every telecom regulation is to *manage* multiplicity, circulation and emergence rather than to end these processes altogether. Undoubtedly, we must acknowledge the potentially repressive consequences of a state institution delineating which websites may “live” from those that must “die” – as not all of digital life’s mutations are considered equal - but in order to critique state regulations, we must first understand why they exist and how they function, an understanding that is sorely lacking in current ICT policy debates.^{xxi}

One step in this direction would be to consider examples of how state power not only controls digital emergence but also establishes a space for sovereign exception within its legal frameworks. That is, the state allows for those particular emergences that benefit national interests to survive, or as Thacker describes, “sovereignty creates the conditions in which *exception is internal to emergence* – in which it is even necessarily and naturally part of the logic of life as multiplicity, as emergence” (Thacker 318). A recent example of sovereign exception to a Turkish telecom regulation occurred in January 2009 at the Davos World Economic Forum, where Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan walked out of an internationally televised debate between himself and Israeli President Shimon Peres, after which he agreed to be taped for a YouTube video that was posted on *The Davos Question Channel*.^{xxii} In the interview, he addressed a global audience, knowing full well that Turks would have difficulty accessing the video because YouTube was banned from Turkish IP addresses. Erdoğan’s participation in YouTube’s “Davos Debates” - despite Google’s refusal to remove “insulting” videos from its

YouTube archives and despite the Turkish government's suspension of YouTube - is a significant example of sovereign exception. During a moment of heightened political spectacle (he walked off the stage mid-debate following his emotional critique of the winter 2008-09 Israeli airstrikes on the Gaza Strip), Erdoğan seized the opportunity to address a global audience via a popular online network, to position his nation as a key mediator in the Palestine-Israel peace process, and to promote himself as a humanist-hybrid figure bridging Middle Eastern and Western ideological divides.^{xxiii} As a member of the majority-ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) whose popularity had been in decline, Erdoğan sought to increase his domestic stronghold (his reproach of Peres deeply resonated with Turkish citizens who later greeted him with an enthusiastic homecoming parade) and to advance E.U. accession negotiations (by portraying himself as a rational mediator between East and West). If sovereign exception is a reach for control over online emergence's diffuse directionalities, then Erdoğan's paradoxical violation of Turkish telecom policy can be seen as an endeavor to shape the Turkish national imaginary in a particular direction that would benefit his sovereign interests at home and abroad.

By and large, the criticisms of Turkey's website suspensions waged by local and transnational activists, scholars and journalists take two forms: either the bans are positioned as an infringement of basic human rights as defined by international law (a humanist approach), or because of the circumventive capability of tunneling proxies, the bans are portrayed as futile (a techno-scientific approach). Both of these frameworks emphasize horizontal, geopolitical asymmetry between nations, for example, in the humanist comparison of an undemocratic Turkish Internet with a democratic European Internet, or in the techno-scientific delineation of China's strong filtering infrastructure compared with Turkey's weaker, partial implementations. However, both approaches fail to address how policies are experienced differently by diverse

user populations. The vertical metaphors employed by Achille Mbembe in "Necropolitics," could radically reconfigure current Internet debates. Mbembe describes our political moment as one in which the "subjugation of life to the power of death" has become normalized. This milieu, he argues, stems from the late-Modern political paradigm positing the body politic as an exercise of reason in the public sphere through the social contract between citizens and the state (Mbembe 39).^{xxiv} Today, instead of abstract reason and truth, the foundational terms of our contemporary body politic are life and death itself.^{xxv} In the age of necropolitics, "vertical sovereignty," or the splintering of people who share the same geographical place by way of infrastructural control, is how difference is managed by state and non-state actors. At times adopting IT language, he focuses on the Palestinian occupied territory as "divided into a web of intricate internal borders and various isolated cells" (Mbembe 28). Importantly, he transitions away from mapping traditional forms of sociopolitical control as a series of horizontally embedded borders within borders, towards outlining a new (neco)politics that is vertically constituted of "over- and underpasses, a separation of airspace from the ground":

Under conditions of vertical sovereignty and splintering colonial occupation, communities are separated across a y-axis. This leads to a proliferation of the sites of violence. The battlegrounds are not located solely at the surface of the earth. The underground as well as the airspace are transformed into conflict zones... Everywhere the symbolics of the *top* (who is on top) is reiterated. (Mbembe 29).

Mbembe's metaphor of verticality in describing necropolitical power relations is useful in conceptualizing the various interests vying for Internet control in Turkey. Although we cannot equate website banning with the occupation that Mbembe discusses, it does possess necropolitical functions as its foundational terms are life and death cloaked in two-dimensional reason. The website suspension notice in Figure 1 offers an illustrative example. Other than the sovereign's signature, no further elaboration or rationale is owed to the Internet user, and once a

notice marked with legal signage (a court case number, a date, a judge's name) is posted, a website can disappear. What is at issue here is the sovereign's ability to instantaneously render a website lifeless. Of course, materially speaking, a digital "life" is a series of encoded data packets - a webpage, a blog, a digital extension of the human being – not microbes, DNA, nor the human body. Yet the semiotics of the suspension notice indicates the Turkish government's attempt to subsume website extermination into a rational process of "e-death" and "e-life" management. Indeed, these bans can be viewed as an expenditure of those particular emergencies in the digital commons that are deemed threatening to the health of the Kemalist body politic. For example, among Turkey's Queer communities, blogs and social networking sites provide a safer space within which LGBTQ Turks can communicate without risking physical and psychological harm. Online presence protects and nurtures ways of being that are punished and censored through a hyper-masculine, hetero-normative, nationalist ideology. In lieu of the considerably high suicide rates among Queer Turks, online networking offers emotional and literal life-support for LGBTQ people. Arguably, the government's October 2009 suspensions of *gabile.com* and *hadigayri.com*, two enormously popular LGBTQ websites in Turkey, were intended to exterminate Queer online emergence and hinder the possibilities for expanding support, connection and community among Queer Turks.

It is no accident that a vertical metaphor is also inherent to Internet data transmission protocol. Internet Protocol (IP) is a system of rules that computers use to communicate across various servers and networks, and these rules are arranged into vertical modules or layers. Because the Internet is a vast heterogeneous network, maintaining a series of rule-layers in a shared protocol becomes necessary for communication between disparate sender and receiver machines. Each layer of IP performs a specific function for the layers above and below it. In the

sender's machine, the vertical layers allow for the disassembly of data into packets with different functions (or "multiplexing," see fig. 5); in the destination server, these packets are reassembled "up" according to the IP's rules into a unified signal ("de-multiplexing"). Hence, there exists a *simultaneous* horizontal movement of data across the Internet from server to server and a vertical movement of data "up" and "down" IP layers within an individual server. The IP model resonates with Mbembe's sociopolitical discussion of "who is on top" in that an Internet Service Provider, operating at the host level of the protocol (see fig. 4), can apply a filtering proxy that blocks requests from particular IP addresses, a form of data which is transmitted at the gateway level, which is "underneath" and cannot override the host level. Because digital "passing" becomes a prerequisite to successful signal transfer around a website suspension, a tunneling proxy will omit the user's IP address from its data-request in order for this request to successfully move "up" through the destination server's vertical protocol.^{xxvi}

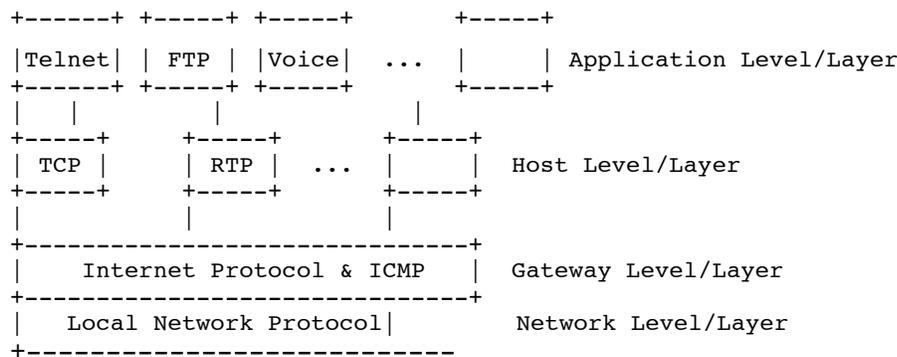


Figure 4. A model of Transmission Control Protocol layers.^{xxvii} Transmission Control Protocol (TCP/IP or IPv4) is a standard Internet Protocol used on the Internet.

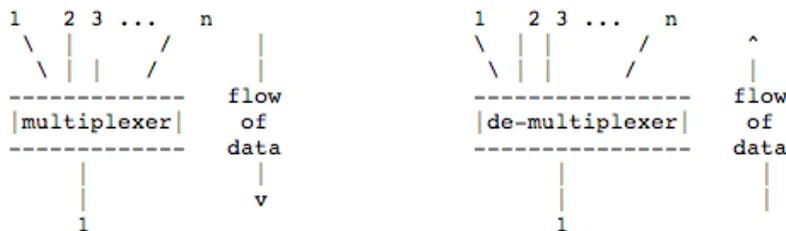


Figure 5. Model of a signal being sent along Internet Protocol from a sender machine to a receiver machine. The multiplexer function vertically breaks down data into distinct datagrams (packets of information) that travel

horizontally to the destination server. A de-multiplexer does the opposite, vertically reassembling datagrams into a unified signal.^{xxviii}

In December 2009, the Internet Technologies Association (ITD), a Turkish NGO, filed a lawsuit in the European Court of Human Rights against the Turkish government for blocking YouTube from Turkish IP addresses. The ITD is arguing that website blocking is a violation of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950) which protects the individual's freedom of expression as a universal human right. Using human rights law to curtail Turkish website banning may be effective as long as the AKP – who privileges E.U. accession and will likely conform to human rights stipulations – maintains a majority vote in the Turkish parliament. However, if and when nationalist parties regain seats, the humanist appeal will fail to curb restrictive Internet policies. Likewise, activists who use a techno-scientific argument – reasoning that tunneling proxies render the bans ineffective – fail to consider how perfecting online filtering technology for a complex, dynamic system in continuous transformation will always be an impossible feat, and the state never aimed to perfect its filtering technology in the first place. Similar to Thacker's metaphor of transfection, IT innovation serves a dual purpose: for the state sovereign, innovation can improve the health of the body politic by way of improved targeting technologies, yet these same innovations will always lead to new forms of proxy resistance.

Thus far, in their attempts to establish universal, online free-speech, the techno-scientific and humanist arguments dominate public debates, yet neither has had a substantial impact on Turkish Internet policy, aside from Turk Telekom's recent privatization. In lieu of this, how do we include other paradigms in order to understand and negotiate differences between Internet policies worldwide? Furthermore, how do issues of access and exclusion interrelate with the global trend towards an increasing commoditization of online information exchange? Including a

framework of verticality in Internet policy debates is an important step in beginning to answer these questions. That is, policy makers must seriously consider the disparate impacts of a single policy on the differently situated communities within a society. In closing, I will briefly mention two vertical disjunctures, the first of which arises when comparing those Turkish citizens with access to personal computers and thus to tunneling proxies that can circumvent website bans, to working class and rural citizens whose online engagement is powerfully shaped by Internet café filtering and surveillance technologies. Another form of vertical disjuncture exists at the sites of electronic waste dumping in the Global South, which serve as the receptacles for the toxic vestiges of Western technological progress; the violent repercussions of hazardous e-waste on the individuals laboring at these sites is excluded from the "symbolics of the *top*" in E.U. Progress Reports and Google ad campaigns. I conclude with these two issues – the former positioned during a computer’s “life” and the latter at its “death” – because they point to how asymmetrical relationships shaped by class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and citizenship acutely impact the ICT empowerment of local communities. Verticality foregrounds previously overlooked patterns of connectivity or lack thereof and would illuminate the various ways that telecom policies limit and/or expand the Internet practices of working class and minority communities. This is a matter that deserves more attention in transnational debates that erroneously contrast a democratic West with a repressive Middle East and fail to acknowledge the influence of transnational media corporations and global capital in determining the ICT capacities of the multitudes.^{xxix}

Notes

ⁱ “Turkey’s Electronic Communications Law which would provide the basis for alignment with the EU framework did not enter into force after its adoption by the Parliament. Competition in the fixed and broadband markets remains marginal. More than 95% of broadband Internet access services are provided by the incumbent’s

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- Internet operator. . . Implementing regulations on provision of Internet services at public places and on principles and procedures concerning the regulation of broadcasts on the Internet have been adopted during the reporting period. Implementation of these regulations has the potential to violate freedom of expression” (*Turkey 2008 Progress Report*, 52).
- ii There is an extensive amount of research contesting Turkish Internet policies, including Akdeniz & Altiparmak's study "Internet Restricted Access" as well as studies by *Reporters Without Borders* and *Open Net Initiative*.
 - iii In *Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics*, Wendy Chun problematizes the notion of “cyberspace” as a utopian landscape providing a shared global experience in the present. Chun focuses on various attempts to either ignore or hide the fissures of online temporal and spatial disjuncture. The metaphor of “cyberspace,” Chun argues, is designed to interpellate individuals as “users,” governments as “regulators” and corporations as “providers,” making each party feel a sense of control, mastery and autonomy that finally serves online advertisers, Internet corporations and state institutions alike (Chun 15-16).
 - iv “All of these processes have to do not with *infection* but rather with *transfection*, the ability of microbes to exchange, share, and distribute genetic information through a microbial network. This new microbiology suggests that evolution happens horizontally. In this sense *resistance is contagious*.” (Thacker, “Uncommon Life,” 316).
 - v “This just in – Atatürk is gay!” was allegedly the punch-line of *Stavraetos212007* news-parody YouTube video, but as it was permanently removed from YouTube’s archives, online descriptions and responses to the missing original are the only records of its existence.
 - vi Notably, website suspensions occurred before 2007: “several websites were blocked starting in 2000 in Turkey through orders issued by courts and enforced by the then dial-up ISPs.” However, Law No. 5651 on the “Regulation of Publications on the Internet and Suppression of Crimes Committed by means of Such Publications” provided a legal framework that rapidly promulgated website banning (Akdeniz 5-6).
 - vii 77% of the blocking orders are administered by a centralized telecom board, the Information Technologies and Communication Institute [BTİK], while 23% are court ordered. (Akdeniz 5).
 - viii Türk Telekom (TT) became operational in 1995 as the sole telecommunications operator, owning the entire telecom infrastructure including conventional telephone lines, satellite communications, cable TV lines, submarine lines and the Internet backbone. In 2003, the Turkish government partially privatized TT as part of the IMF’s emergency rescue package and its liberalization commitments to the WTO. The state now owns 30%, Oğer Telecom, a Lebanese multi-national media corporation, owns 55%, and 15% is free standing. Today, over 95% of online connectivity in Turkey is still controlled through TT’s ADSL (Tunç).
 - ix On October 30th, 2008, a fourth court order was issued to renew the suspension of YouTube from Turkish IP addresses. Iran, Pakistan, the UAE, Thailand and Brazil are examples of other states that have banned YouTube. <<http://mashable.com/2007/05/30/youtube-bans>>
 - x Internet laws not only reinforce state ideology but also support private media conglomerates that control domestic television and news markets. A significant example of an intellectual property related website suspension order occurred on October 20th 2008, when access to Blogger.com and Blogspot.com were blocked by a Turkish court. Digitürk, a subscription based digital TV platform in Turkey, owns the rights to transmit live coverage of Turkish football league games and obtained the suspension order after identifying blog entries on Blogger and Blogspot that provided links to websites hosting pirated transmission of the games (Akdeniz 37).
 - xi Most Turks do not own personal computers and access the Internet at cafes and universities. “The OECD called in 2007 for more initiatives to increase public use of ICT, with research from the EU Statistics Office showing that Turkey is among the countries in which Internet access is very low. The research found that only 39% of Turks had computers at home, and that Turkey was below the EU average in terms of both computers per household and internet access...” <<http://www.pr-inside.com/turkey-information-technology-report-q-r804349.htm>>
 - xii “Informer-web”: <<http://www.ihbarweb.org.tr/>>
 - xiii This figure is an estimate using data 2006-09 data compiled on "Turkish Population": <http://www.filepie.us/?title=Turkish_population#Turkish_populations_by_country> c. Filespie, 2009.
 - xiv Although the purpose of the Turkish military’s 30-year campaign in the East (which has killed an estimated 30,000 individuals) is purported to fight PKK terrorists, it has arguably functioned to thwart Kurdish human rights and assertions of political mobilization. The PKK – Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan or the Kurdish Workers Party – was the political party formed by the Kurdish national liberation movement in the early 1980s. It is regarded as a terrorist organization by Turkish and U.S. governments, and in Turkey it is illegal to promote this organization in public discourse. An estimated 20-30% of Turks are Kurdish. Over the last decade, the demands

- of Kurdish rights groups have transitions from national liberation to federal autonomy. Until 2003, public expression in Kurdish (in television, radio, print, and public schools) was illegal.
- ^{xv} An IP (Internet Protocol) address is a four-part number separated by dots (e.g. 192.321.991.2) that uniquely identifies a computer on the Internet. Every computer has a unique IP address.
- ^{xvi} There are approximately 30 Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Turkey, all of whom rent ADSL use from Türk Telekom.
- ^{xvii} Turkish law requires ISPs to document and cache their patrons Internet use for a specific amount of time and hand over this documentation if requested by the government.
- ^{xviii} From "Internet Infrastructure," *How Stuff Works*: <<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/internet-infrastructure1.htm>>
- ^{xix} "In the age of biotechnology and biomedica, life is also increasingly fashioned and refashioned along several lines, as evolutionary or species life, as a molecular and informative code, as a set of pathways or systems, even as a set of nanoscale machines" (Thacker, "Uncommon Life," 318).
- ^{xx} "All of these processes have to do not with infection but with *transfection*, the ability of microbes to exchange, share and distribute genetic information through a microbial network" (Thacker, "Uncommon Life," 316).
- ^{xxi} "This essay assumes that the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and capacity to dictate who may live and who must die" (Mbembe 11).
- ^{xxii} Erdoğan talks to "global citizens" in the YouTube "Davos Debates" (Davos Economic Forum, January 2009): <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szRc0eZO6hA>> (YouTube, January 2009), visited 12/1/09.
- ^{xxiii} Erdoğan and the AKP continue to attempt to act as mediators between Iran and the U.S. over issues of nuclear energy development.
- ^{xxiv} "Within this paradigm, reason is the truth of the subject and politics is the exercise of reason in the public sphere" (Mbembe 13).
- ^{xxv} "Therefore, contemporary experiences of human destruction suggest that it is possible to develop a reading of politics, sovereignty and the subject different from the one we inherited from the philosophical discourse of modernity. Instead of considering reason as the truth of the subject, we can look to other foundational categories that are less abstract and more tactile, such as life and death" (Mbembe 14).
- ^{xxvi} Wendy Chun's book *Control and Freedom: Paranoia and Power in the Age of Fiber Optics* provides a nuanced explanation Internet infrastructure and the imaginary of cyberspace, Publications from DARPA and USC give insight into the debates around the initial construction of Internet Protocol and explain how IP functions.
- ^{xxvii} "Transmission Internet Protocol," DARPA, 1981. <<http://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc793>>, accessed 12/10/09.
- ^{xxviii} Solofsky and Kale, "TCP/IP Tutorial," Network Working Group, Spider Systems Ltd. January 1991. <<http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc1180.txt>> accessed 12/5/09.
- ^{xxix} "One thing I've recognized is that Toni and I use the term multitude in essentially two ways. They're in contradiction with one another. . . In one sense, and in *Empire* it was used more this way, the multitude is an always-existing social force that insists on its own freedom, refuses authority, breaks its chains. On the other hand, and this is our inclination in the new book, multitude is a political project. Multitude hasn't yet existed. Multitude could exist as a form of organizing, something that could be created today. There's one notion of multitude that's always-already, and there's another that's not-yet." - Michael Hardt, interview by Smith and Minardi.

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