Digital-Political Fantasies in Istanbul

An analysis of the perceived role of ICT in changing institutional politics, activism, and identity

İtir Akdoğan

Academic dissertation

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Abstract

This research analyses how different groups of people perceive the role of new information and communication technologies (ICT) in social change, and how they make sense out of these claimed changes in society.

There are claims for social change in many areas. This research frames its analysis in three areas of social change namely the local-global relation; politics and the political, and ICT. The study first looks at the theoretical discussions on how different perspectives conceptualize social change in these areas. The theoretical framework then looks at the three dimensions that emerge from the interaction of these three areas; institutional politics, activism, and identity.

There are different frameworks for making sense of social change. Lacanian fantasy is one that allows deeper analysis of perceptions and fluidity between the various perceptions. As all fantasies are frustrated, the concept also allows a critical analysis. The theoretical framework finally also looks at what fantasies the theoretical discussions create, regarding social change in the above three areas and dimensions.

At the empirical level, the research focuses on the perceptions of the role of ICT in the changing institutional politics, activism, and identity in Istanbul from the local-global relation, politics and the political, and ICT perspectives. The research then discusses what fantasies come out of these perceptions.

The research uses the grounded theory methodology. This is a methodology that allows researchers to discover new concepts that are not initially included in the theoretical framework so that they can extend and develop their theoretical frameworks. Once researchers find a new concept, they first need to theorize it by going back to the theoretical level, and analyse the empirical data deeper after that theorization. Fantasy is the new concept that was grounded in the empirical data of this research. That is how the concept was first theorized and used for the deeper analysis of the empirical data. The study collected the empirical data from 57 in-depth interviews with institutional politicians, activists, and ordinary citizens that each primarily fed one dimension of the study. The research also used secondary data for the chapter of the contextual background on Istanbul and Turkey.

The results of the analysis suggest that all three groups in Istanbul create fantasies in their perception of the role of ICT in social change. The research concludes that institutional politicians, activists, and ordinary citizens all create fantasies of political power, technological power, and harmony. The research also concludes that among the different groups there are variations and contradictions in the fantasies that all are frustrated by several local challenges, especially the political culture.
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PART I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Part I Theoretical Framework

1. **INTRODUCTION OF THE RESEARCH**

“Giving people the power to share and make the world more open and connected” is how a social network site, Facebook describes its service. Facebook publishes its statistics on July 2011: it has more than 750 million active users; who spend over 700 billion minutes per month on the website; who interact with others with over 900 million objects such as pages, groups, events, and community pages; an average of 10,000 new websites integrate with the website every day; all this in more than 70 languages; translated with the help of 300,000 users over the translations application. These statistics are not here at the very beginning to promote a profit making private company. Rather, they are here to say concretely that something curious is happening, and we are part of it whether we like it or not. My curiosity is not about how a couple of youngsters developed an online tool in a university dorm and turned it into a global business success, nor am I curious to know why people are attracted to this website. Facebook is just one of the many cases for concretely observing and thinking about social change. My curiosity lies more broadly in what information and communication technologies – ICT and the various applications mean for people, how they perceive the role of this technology in social change, more precisely in the changing political life, and how they make sense of these claimed changes.

The augmenting and creative uses of ICT in political processes increasingly emphasize these technologies in political discussions with popular references such as the *Twitter revolution* or *republic of Facebook*. There is, however, a need for a deeper analysis of the perceptions of the role that the Internet, mobile technology, and their diverse applications play in social change. After the first period of amazement about the Internet, and the vivid utopian/dystopian debate, as the use of ICT spreads in societies and as creative tools and uses of this technology develop, scholars of communication and democracy start to adopt a calmer approach and more comprehensive methods to analyse the role of the Internet in political life: “we can illuminate the Internet’s significance for politics and citizenship better by making use of a)good theories, b) critical analyses of policy debates, and critical, situated analyses of c)how users understand and apply the possibilities brought to them by the new ICT, and of d) what is actually happening on the Internet” (Olsson and Dahlgren:2010:11). In an era where users are deemed to become the producers (or at least the contributors to the production process) of the products they use, it also makes more sense to do this kind of analysis from their perspective. Therefore this study is not about the actual changes in society or what changes ICT instigate but rather how people perceive the role of ICT in their changing society.

Bell (1968:146) argues “modern life is a world of change”. Murdock (1961 in Shackman et al 2002) explains the process of change in society in a four step flow. He argues that the process of change starts with *innovation* which can be variations of what is already there, inventions, new habits, or cultural borrowing (see Barnett 1953

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for innovation). The second step is *social acceptance*; Murdock argues that society has to accept the innovation for it to become part of the culture. *Selective elimination* is the third phase where, Murdock argues, society selects the innovation that is the more rewarding. Murdock finalizes the process with *integration*. This is when the innovation is adapted to existing habits. The change may occur in many different areas and in many different dimensions. Sheldon and Moore (1968) suggest in their *indicators for social change*, demographic changes in population and trend; structural features in economics, politics, family, and religion; distributive features in consumption, leisure, health, and schooling; and aggregative features in mobility and welfare (see McMichael 2004 for development and social change). Giddens (2006) argues that historically cultural factors, physical environment, and political organization have an influence on social change and that in modern life cultural, economic, and political influences are the fuels of social change.

Whether society changes or not is one discussion. We see for instance lively discussions on the information society where the arguments of new and the same old society divide the academic perspectives (Webster 2000). How we make sense of the change in society, however, is another discussion. If change occurs in society, different groups and different frameworks may perceive and may try to understand and conceptualize this change(s) differently.

This research includes three areas of claims for social change: the local-global relation; politics and the political; and ICT among the many other areas. As I will explain, this research employs the grounded theory methodology for its analysis. This methodology permits researchers to analyse their data in a free and creative way in order to come up with new concepts. The founders of the methodology (Strauss and Corbin 1998) explain that freedom and creativity is ensured with a theoretical framework of several concepts rather than a strict one theory framework that would limit the development of new frameworks. Therefore this study takes the theoretical framework of those three areas of social change to form a framework with multiple concepts.

These three areas do not only permit me a comprehensive analysis of the perceived role of ICT in the changing local political life in theoretical level, but also, as I will explain, these are the areas of social change in my empirical framework. Finally, at a personal level, these are the three areas where my experience, interest and thus curiosity to learn more within a social scientific framework, concentrate. The focus of the research is not on the actual change but on how different frameworks try to make sense out of the claimed changes in society and in these three areas. To this end, this research looks at three frameworks: a) conceptualization of social change; b) conceptualization of the perceived role of ICT in social change; and c) fantasies about social change. In other words, after a review of pertinent literature on change, the dissertation has as its research goal to analyze how different groups perceive the role of ICT in this change, and how they make sense of social change, with social change being thematized in terms of institutional politics, activism, and identity.

Firstly, the research looks at the theoretical discussions on the conceptualization of social change where different perspectives discuss the claims for changes in the local–global relation, politics and the political, and ICT. Following the theoretical discussions
separately on these three areas, the research looks at their interaction in the network society (Castells 2000) logic that includes different dimensions such as the institutional politics, activism, and identity among others. The research then looks at how different theoretical perspectives try to conceptualize the change in society with regard to the relation of these three dimensions with ICT. I link these three dimensions (institutional politics, activism, and identity) in order to firstly reach a more complete picture of the network society dimensions and secondly to be able to cross check the concepts in different dimensions. Since this research analyses how people think ICT change society, linking the governor and the governed (both activists and ordinary citizens) permits me to see the differences in the perceptions in society. These discussions present the first framework of this research.

The research then moves to the second framework in which it looks at how different groups make sense out of the change and how they conceptualize the role of ICT in this change. For this framework the research focuses on different groups in a society where the political life in recent years has experienced structural changes at several levels. This research looks at the empirical framework in Istanbul in Turkey. The recent democratization project of the ruling pro-Islamic neo-liberal Justice and Development Party (AKP) brings in unprecedented changes in politics and the political. As the economic and intellectual centre of Turkey, Istanbul is at the same time the most prominent city in the globalization project of the central government. Istanbul is also the most connected city in the country with the best ICT infrastructure. This is at the same time a city with several challenges and limitations in its local political life. This second framework in accordance with the previous one consists of three dimensions in the society; institutional politics, activism, and identity. The research analyses different perspectives of different groups of people in these dimensions, based on the above three areas of social change. The different groups of people are respectively the institutional politicians, activists, and ordinary citizens in Istanbul. For this second framework the study answers the following three research questions:

Research Question 1: How do institutional politicians perceive the role of ICT in the changing institutional politics in Istanbul?

Research Question 2: How do activists perceive the role of ICT in the changing activism in Istanbul?

Research Question 3: How do ordinary citizens perceive the role of ICT in the changing identities in Istanbul?

Following the empirical analysis, the study looks at a third framework that is the fantasies of change. It looks at what fantasies are embedded in the ways people perceive the role of ICT in the changing society. For this last framework the study answers the following research question:

Research Question 4: What fantasies come out of these perceptions in each of the dimensions?

This research holds two reasons for this third framework. The first reason is in the theoretical level. Social change or claims for social change provide the hope for theoretical discussions to evolve into a better society and ultimately a better world.
There are different ways of theorising this hope for the better future. Utopia, first conceptualized by Sir Thomas More in 1516, is the expression of the dream for a perfect society, a perfect world. Utopia is a way of theorizing the hopes of the Western society (Kumar 1987). Kumar (1991) argues that utopia has to be understood as a social and political thought and that it may be used to critically analyse western societies. Utopia, however, is about dreaming for a better society; the focus is on the change and what we want the society to become. Myth is another frame to understand and conceptualize society and social change. Campbell (1991) proposed four functions for myth in 20th century. Sociological function of the myth, he argued, is to understand and support social order (see Campbell 1991 for the mystical, cosmological, and pedagogical functions of myth). Barthes (1957), for instance, argued that the French bourgeoisie used myth to assert their lifestyles. There are more theoretical traditions about collective subjectivity; Castoriadis’ (1987) notion of imaginary explains the aspects of cultures, how, for instance, the Greek and Jewish societies and political systems were created. Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) discourse theory critically analyses objects such as the (political) identity formation, social movements logics, and structuring of societies, (see Howarth et al 2000 for discourse theory and political analysis), among others. Castoriadis, and Laclau and Mouffe and their critical frameworks are inspired or explicitly refer to Lacan which makes Stavrakakis (2007) name the group of these scholars the Lacanian Left School.

In an analysis where we want to understand the perceptions of the people about social change, we need a theoretical tool that permits us to analyse more deeply and to conceptualize the perceptions and the meaning of the change. Lacanian fantasy (Lacan 1964) is a psychoanalytical concept that permits this deeper analysis because it allows an analysis in the unconscious level. In a more general, contemporary reading of Lacan, fantasy also allows for fluidity in the various ways of observing and making sense of change. Moreover, as we see above, Lacan is the source of inspiration of the theoretical traditions of critical analysis.

When we move this concept from the individual level to the society level as do the critical theorists of the Lacanian Left School, we reach for tools to analyse more deeply how people perceive social change and what lies at the basis of this perception. Fantasy also offers tools to see how and why hopes and scenarios created with various perceptions for a better future society are (or will be) frustrated. In that sense, fantasy permits a critical theorising of the perceptions of change. Even though Lacanian fantasy is increasingly used in the analysis of political processes, it still is an understudied concept in social sciences. This research opens up a new space to bridge the claims for social change and fantasy, to analyse how and why people perceive change the way they do from a critical perspective, as well as extending this framework by adding the analysis of the perceived role of ICT in social change in a developing country in the overall field of the school.

The second reason for this third framework derives from the methodology. This research uses the grounded theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin 1998) to analyse the empirical data. This is a cyclical methodology that permits researchers to flow from abstract to concrete, from theory to the empirical continuously. This methodology thus
permits researchers to find out about new concepts that are grounded in the data that were not initially included in the theoretical framework. This is how researchers can use empirical data to develop theoretical frameworks. During the analysis of the empirical data of this research, I found out about fantasies in each of the dimensions. As the methodology requires, I went back to the theoretical level to conceptualize fantasy. Lacanian theory helped me to link fantasy to different perspectives on social change. Once fantasy was conceptualized, again, as the grounded theory methodology requires, I reformulated the research questions putting more emphasis on fantasy in a fourth research question which guided me for more analysis and to see the fantasies (and their frustrations) more in detail in each of the dimensions. Fantasy has thus become a central component in this research.

Even though I explain that fantasy is a concept that I found in the data, the reader will read it before the analysis. The conceptualization and the theoretical discussion about fantasy and the political find its place within the theoretical chapter as the final section. That is again due to requirements of the grounded theory methodology. I needed to theorize the new concept grounded in my empirical data. This theorization could only be made in the theoretical framework chapter of the research. The analysis and the discussion of the fantasies in the perception of different groups of people, on the other hand, are placed as the discussion sections of each of the analysis chapters. This way, the reader will first be acquainted with the concept at the theoretical level and read the discussions at the empirical level later in the second part of the research.

While looking at the three frameworks that try to make sense of change in society, this study adopts a social constructivist position. It constructs meaning of change with the emphasis on the role of ICT in the perceptions of people. This qualitative research underlines the ideas, experiences, assumptions, and opinions of different groups of people on the role of ICT in social change in institutional politics, activism, and identity, rather than the materializations in these dimensions. The study constructs this meaning in two levels. The first one is the top level when it analyses the empirical data. This level permits us to understand how people witness, experience, and think that ICT change different dimensions in society. The research also constructs a meaning of ICT at a deeper level when it looks at the fantasies that people create out of their perceptions. This second and deeper level permits the research to construct a deeper meaning of the role of ICT in social change based on the perceptions of different groups of people. The research, however it tries to construct meaning, adopts a more critical constructivist position and it distances itself from essentialism. The research therefore recognizes that it is impossible to have claims of truth and that there cannot be one single meaning. The meaning constructed in this study is based on the researcher’s interpretation of the expressions of various people.

The three frameworks permit this research to learn, discuss, and understand how different groups and perspectives perceive the role of ICT in the changing society. In the following, the reading starts with the theoretical framework. This second chapter consists of three sections. “A changing world: concepts” introduces the various different perspectives of claims for change in the three levels namely the local-global relation, politics and the political, and ICT. These discussions move in the “Social change and
ICT” section to an interactive level where these three areas interact in network society that includes dimensions such as institutional politics, activism, and identity. The section discusses the different perspectives on the relation of these dimensions with ICT and different claims on how these relations change society. The third section “Fantasies of social change” presents the concept of fantasy. Following the introduction of the Lacanian fantasy, the section discusses how the concept is used for critical analysis at the political level. The section and the chapter end with the discussions of fantasies in the three areas of claims for change.

The empirical framework of this research consists of three dimensions such as the institutional politics, activism, and identity in Istanbul. The third chapter presents the context from which the data come from for a more comprehensive reading. The chapter introduces a country background on its political, economic, and cultural characteristics before it focuses on the contextual background on (local) institutional politics, activism, and identity. The chapter also present the media and ICT environment in the country and in the city.

The methodology chapter explains the grounded theory methodology used for this research. The chapter presents the data collection methods, the data analysis, and advantages and limitations of this methodology in the natural history format (Silverman 2000).

The analysis part of the research consists of three chapters named after the three dimensions: Institutional Politics, Activism, and Identity. Each chapter analyses people’s perceptions of the role of ICT in their changing dimension. Institutional politicians, activists, and ordinary citizens provide data for the analysis. In order to ensure rigidity in the analysis and in the presentation all three of the chapters have the same structure. They all have four sections. The first section in each of the chapters presents the analysis of the perceptions in the dimension and its relation to ICT. The second sections focus on the perceptions of the role of the ICT in linking local and global in the dimension in question. The third sections analyse the perceptions of the role of ICT in the politics and the political area. At the end of each chapter, the fourth section discusses the analysis in the framework of fantasy. These last sections discuss what fantasies come out of the perceptions, how they relate to main fantasies in each of the areas of claimed social change, and finally how they are frustrated.

The last part of the research discusses what conclusion we obtain following the study of the three frameworks of making sense of the changing society. The research concludes with the “contradiction in perceptions”, "multiple enjoyments and Others”, and “digital-political fantasies".
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents and discusses the theoretical framework of this research. The local-global relation; politics and the political; and information and communication technologies - ICT are the three areas of social change, relevant for this research, among the many other areas. Academic discussions on these areas suggest that the claims for change are more about hope than reality, and that there are limitations and challenges in the processes. The first section of the chapter discusses what the new concepts and definitions tell about the claimed changes in these areas. While the discussions of change in the three areas may occur separately, these areas may at the same time interact with each other in the society.

This interaction is conceptualized by Manuel Castells (2000) as the network society. ICT as the material facilitators of this network structure are claimed to change the power relations. The main dimensions of power change in this new society are institutional politics, activism, and identity. The second section of the chapter starts to discuss social change and ICT by elaborating on the network society and the relation between ICT and democracy. The section then looks more closely at these dimensions and how they interact with ICT.

There are different ways of making sense of social changes. Academic discourses on change in society contain in many cases hope that we are evolving towards better societies. The fantasmagoric discourse allows for looking at deeper and unconscious levels to analyse these hopes as well as fluidity among the different perspectives. Fantasy is also focused on a future hope for better (improved) societies. Thus the last part of the chapter focuses on the hopes and reanalyses the discourses on change as materialisations of fantasies in society. The claimed changes in local-global relation; politics and the political; and ICT, and the interaction of these areas provide the ground for fantasies of harmony, political power, and technological power. The last section discusses the concept of fantasy, how it relates to the political when taken from the individual level to the society level, before it discusses the fantasies created based on the claims of change in society.

2.1. A changing world: concepts

This section discusses how various authors and ways of thinking claim that there are changes in such areas as local –global relation, politics and the political, and ICT. The claims for change in local-global relation focus on new definitions, and the mutual impacts of local and global throughout their interaction. Different approaches suggest different terminology and different priorities for this interaction which itself is argued to change. Politics and the political (and democracy) is the second area where the introduction of the political to expand the power beyond politics brings in claims for change. This introduction is coupled with new definitions of and expectations from democracy. While new actors appear beyond the institutionalized politics with
the political, traditional institutions do not disappear but are argued to also change. Finally, new concepts and opportunities with the development of new information and communication technologies stimulate discussions on the relation between social change and (new) technology. Different approaches and schools discuss the role of ICT in social change.

2.1.1. the local - global relation

A first line of claims for change in this area is about definitions. The traditional definition of the local is clear; small territorially delimited locales with in-person interaction (Gould 2008). This definition clearly binds the local to a small scale locale. It is, however, not a complete definition anymore after the local migrated to cyberspace. Holmes (1997:18) questions the experience of the local on the Internet “when the significance of computer screen transforms from a second self which is manageable to a terminal window to diaspora”. It is claimed that locality is not necessarily bound to locale with the emergence of virtual communities - of placeless locals. Rheingold (1993) introduced the concept of virtual community to explain “social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace” (Rheingold:1993:e-book). Jones (1997: online) proposed more criteria for gatherings on cyberspace to take the form of online communities: “a minimum level of interactivity, a variety of communicators, common public space, and a minimum level of sustained membership”. As these quotes demonstrate, there is hardly room for locale in virtual communities on cyberspace. It thus becomes increasingly difficult to define the new local, hence a redefinition by Gould (2008:74) to fit the conditions of our day:

- territorially limited community with face to face communication but not necessary
- non territorially limited virtual community
- common feelings for each other and interaction either face to face or mediated
- local as a community with shared goals
- local as a particular discursive community
- local as a community determined by shared understanding of cultural and ethnic factors
- whatever is non-regional or non-global (and it is not given but constructed)

More authors separate local from its spatial component. Appadurai (1995:204), for instance, states that he takes locality “as primarily relational and contextual rather than as scalar or spatial… as a complex phenomenological quality constituted by a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity and the relativity of contexts”. These multiple definitions, however, still lack a precise answer. Even taken in its traditional, locale based definition; local may still indicate different locales for different people. Local may, for some, mean the neighbourhood,
Part I Theoretical Framework

for others the city, yet for others the country when contrasting it to regional and to
global. Therefore there is not one local anymore but locals. Local may become placeless
or globalize on the Internet with online communities or online locals but this said,
cyberspace is also claimed to witness otherwise. Schlehe (2004) argues that it is not
because it is possible to communicate globally on the Internet that everybody does so;
the argument is that cyberspace is also full of localizations. Discussions on political
localization will follow below, but before that as the other end of the spectrum, the
definition of globalization also differs from the previous interconnections in the world.

The world has been interconnected for centuries. The claims of change in this
level include a global system that is not under the control of nation-states; complex
global networks; virtuality of economic activities; and the spread of information and
communication technologies (Held and Archibugi 1995; Giddens 1998). Globalization,
however, is not only about interdependence in economic activity but it is also argued
that it is about supposed changes in time and space: “Distant events, whether economic
or not, affect us more directly and immediately than ever before” (Giddens: 1998:31).
Globalization is primarily defined economically: “globalization refers to more than free
trade and trade liberalization, but to the development of a world market, powered
by global corporations in which local economic and political actors are increasingly
losing influence and where these worldwide companies are characterized by globally
coordinated business strategies and accelerated flows of commodities” (King and
Kendall 2004:143).

Political globalization refers to the challenge the global activity and global actors
pose for national sovereignty (Held 1995, 2002; Keohane 2000; Mann 2002 among
others). Giddens (1998:31-32) argues that globalization, in this respect, holds a three-
way movement: pull away, nation-state’s lowering power; push-down, new demands
and opportunities for local identity and localization; and squeezing sideways, “new
regions that sometimes cross-cut the boundaries of nation-states”. The weakening of
the nation-state is claimed to happen everywhere including the dominant countries.
These dominant countries, therefore, Ladeur (2004:91) explains, “compensate their
decreasing domestic decision-making power by obtaining rights of involvement in
supra-national and international levels”. Held (2002) argues that the blurred divide
of the policy issues between the national and global weakens political power of nation-
states in their territory.

Rosenau (2002:73) however, argues that new actors do not totally eliminate the
state: “States are still among the main players on the global stage, but they are no
longer the only main players”. Beck’s (2005:249) explanation on this powerful global
business versus weakening nation-state situation is that “global business actors are not
fundamentally more powerful than states – but they have managed to break free from
parochial confines of the national orthodoxy: that is what is new”. Apart from global
capital, according to King and Kendall (2004:3) supranational governance, national
territorial fragmentation and political apathy, and (individual’s) lifestyles do also
combat nation-states. Pieterse (1995) argues that the differences in the definitions make
globalization multidirectional, open-ended, and plural. King and Kendall (2004) also
suggest that globalization manifests in different forms and with different consequences
in different places. Therborn (1995) claims that global is further decentred with new means and forms of global communication and global interdependence.

Globalization focuses on the blurring of borders, the fading out of nation-states and national identities, and it positions globalization and nation-states as mutually exclusive. Transnationalization (Smith 2001:3-4), on the other hand, confirms the significance of territorial borders, nation-state policies, and national identities despite transnational networks, and it assesses transnational activity and nation-state as mutually constitutive. The reconciling statement is: “the processes are transnational; the effects are global” (Hofmeister and Breitenstein 2008:480). Giddens (1998) adds that nations will retain power and national governments won’t disappear but that they will diversify their collaborators with, for instance, localities and transnational organizations: “‘government’ hence becomes less identified with ‘the’ government – national government- and more wide-ranging” (Giddens: 1998:32).

A second line of claims for change is about the interaction between the local and the global and their mutual impact. At the same time as local and globalization are claimed to change in their definition and in their context, their interaction also create various discussions. As globalization opens world markets to global companies, it was increasingly noted that the supply of Western and mostly American goods and cultural products were having an impact on the cultures and lifestyles of the population of these countries. American goods from clothing to technology, as well as cultural products from TV shows to music industry diffused with global media fuelled the discussions of cultural imperialism and Americanization.

Cultural imperialism is a critical theory about the domination of a foreign culture over another at the expense of the local culture. Tomlison (1991:20-28) explains, however, that there is no one definition of cultural imperialism but that there are four ways of framing it: cultural imperialism as media imperialism, as a discourse of nationality, as the critique of global capitalism, and as the critique of modernity (see Said 1978 for Orientalism and the post-colonialist theory). Americanization is a term introduced by Moffett (1907) to explain the influence of American products including the cultural products on other countries. Cocacolonization was another concept to imply the importation and invasion of American products - a term popular among the anti-globalist movement.

Barber (1996) illustrated Americanization with McWorld which meant a homogenous world where nations were tied by globally marketed fast music, fast computers and fast food. This homogeneity, according to the Americanization concept, derived from the American cultural products and images consumed worldwide. As a reaction to homogenization by the global (or West/USA) local would form, Barber argued, a Jihad which would be against this interdependence and everything that makes it happen (Barber: 1996:4). These two trends, Barber says, can simultaneously happen within the same country but that McWorld and its homogeneity would prevail despite the reactions of Jihad2.

2 These illustrative words may provoke another discussion which is not directly relevant in this research hence a quick footnote: Barber explains cultural imperialism and Americanization with McWorld which refers to an American/global icon of capitalism. Jihad (that is used to illustrate the reaction to this trend) however is not a globally embracing opposition since Jihad is a term in the doctrine of one religion (Islam) only. One may wonder why the rest of the people who react to Americanization,
Appadurai (1990:295) argues on the other hand that there are alternatives to Americanization for smaller nations who fear the cultural absorption of larger polities and that those alternatives such as Japanization for Koreans, or Vietnamization for Cambodian may be more irritating than Americanization.

The action-reaction and homogenization arguments on the interaction between local and global receive a counter-argument that is Glocalization. Robertson (1995) introduces the concept to explain that the global does not exclude or erode the local and that the local is embedded in the global. Robertson (1995:40) further suggests that using the term glocalization makes more sense (than using globalization) since “globalization has involved and increasingly involves the creation and the incorporation of locality, processes which themselves largely shape, in turn, the compression of the world as a whole”. Rosenau (2004:26) argues that the local and the global interact by simultaneously influencing each other in such a way to blur the boundaries between internal and external affairs. What he calls the emergent epoch is an era of “simultaneity of the good and bad, integrative and disintegrative, and coherent and incoherent”. This new era, according to him, causes crisis of identity due to the conflict between the local and the global (Rosenau: 2004:60).

Another critical argument against homogenization is the hybridization. Pieterse (1995: 51, 60) underlines the differences between categories, forms, and beliefs of local that form the mixture which he names global mélange. Global cities, for instance, and their ethnic mélange neighbourhoods are, he explains, hybrid spaces of global landscape. Lie and Servaes (2000:329) approach globalization as a local process of changing identities where local consumption of globalization may lead to inward processes of localizing identities. Moreover, Sassen (2001) argues that globalization in global cities partly stems from the local elites themselves and not fully imposed from the global. Neo-worlds (Luke 1995:103) appears as another example for heterogeneity (as opposed to homogeneity). Global flows create transnational topographies and transcultural territories; neo-worlds which offer opportunities for glocal activity and global thinking becoming the common ground of transnational society.

Friedman (2004:78) claims that while hybridization leads to hybrid cosmopolitans, the opposite trend, indigenization emphasizes rooted ethnicities (see Dirlik 2003 for more on indigenization and globalization). Meanwhile, Schiffauer (2004:100) expresses the importance of love to the city/place at the expense of the importance of sharing local values (of the majority of residents) to locally identify: “Cosmopolitans (in the sense of Weltbürger) are in fact cosmopolitans—inhabitants of world cities”. Creolization is another frame of reference in discussions on local and global. Palmié (2006:435) states “there are people for whom the term creole has served as an immediately significant predicate (whether imposed or self-selected) of selfhood and social practice for close to half a millennium.”

Similar to the difference between global and transnational, translocal insists on the importance of the local. Translocal indicates the local that reaches other local(s) beyond its borders. In this case the local remains local but interacts with other locals in other
places of the world. Translocal thus also refers to the interaction between local and global as the mirror image of the glocal (Carpentier: 2007:6). The difference between the two concepts stems from the two different approaches. The top-down approach places the emphasis on the global starting the interaction with the global. The bottom-up approach, on the other hand, does the opposite, and focuses on the local and takes local as the reference in the interaction between local and global (Carpentier 2007). Giddens (1990:64) also underlines the local in the definition of the global: “globalization can be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice-versa...Local transformation is as much a part of globalization as the lateral extension of social connections across time and space”. Gould (2008) proposes the network model of globalization as an alternative to homogenizing top down globalization in case local embraces these networks. An example of emphasizing the local in the interaction between the local and the global is the “rooted cosmopolitan” (della Porta & Tarrow 2005). Rooted cosmopolitans as della Porta and Tarrow (2005) borrow from Appiah (1996) are defined as those who are rooted in the local but who engage in the global level by joining global networks.

While the interaction between local and global evokes different discussions, there are arguments that favour the localization in political activity. Dirlik (1999:335) argues that place-based activities and spaces for democratic practices could fight the uneven distribution of wealth and power of globalization: “It [globalization] ushers in democratic forms of governance only to place the most important decisions of everyday life outside the scope of politics. It is more important than ever before, therefore, to create those spaces in which to establish democratic controls over economic as well as political life”. Dirlik (2004:161) thus refuses to “set them [places] against the new global or transnational imaginaries, with their fetishism of a dehistoricized developmentalism and placeless spaces” which he finds post-colonial. While Dirlik emphasizes and advocates for place-based politics, Lindell (2009) argues that local political activity may significantly benefit from the global networking to make a change in local politics. Appadurai (2002:45-46) also argues that both the local-national and transnational-global partnerships and networking lead to deep democracy for several reasons: “internal criticism and debate, horizontal exchange and learning, and vertical collaborations and partnerships with more powerful persons and organizations together form a mutually sustaining cycle of processes. This is where depth and laterality become joint circuits along which pro-poor strategies can flow”.

These discussions on whether the global homogenizes the local or whether the local and the global interact/hybridize are contrasted by two concepts. Appadurai (1990) presents an alternative to local-global interaction and their mutual impacts. He argues that economic, political, and technological flows form their own separate scapes. He names these scapes after their domains such as ethnoscapes (for movement of people), technoscapes (for technological flow), and finanscapes (for financial transfer). He completes the flows with the scapes of images that he frames as mediascapes and ideoscapes. He argues that the global flows occur in and through the disjunctions of these scapes.
The second concept that counters the homogenization/hybridization discussions is the firewall model. Norris and Inglehart (2009:310) introduce the concept to explain that the impact of the global on the local is limited. Market, poverty, and morality in low income countries form, they argue, the firewall which isolates the local from the global, hence the latter's limited impact: “the people of the world have come to share certain cultural icons and contemporary fashions, and increasing amounts of information and ideas about people and places, but this does not mean that they will lose their cultural heritage”. This concept suggests firstly a different approach to the interaction between the local and the global by presenting a (local) obstacle against the interaction, and secondly, the concept claims that the local does not change (at least significantly) in its interaction with the global.

2.1.2 Politics and the political

Politics was traditionally reserved for the institutions such as the state, parliaments, and political parties. The political, however, took power beyond the institutionalized politics and its sites, mainly the state, by introducing a broader understanding of political activity and power. The political covers the whole society with activities outside the traditional spaces of politics such as art galleries, football stadiums and the like and includes the conflicting and the agonistic views (Mouffe 2005, 2009). Parallel to this phenomenon, discussions on new kinds of democracy suggested pluralist, deliberative, and participative models which also enlarge the space of political power beyond the state by introducing new actors.

Nation-state and institutionalized politics used to dominate politics but new social movements and the political enter later in the power scene together with these new definitions of democracy. The keywords of the new era where politics and the political may interact seem to be individual and blurring. The individual becomes both the object and the subject of politics and the political with the blurring borders, divides, spheres, and levels. The new social movements blurring the public and the private spheres, the introduction of the individual in the political, the introduction of new levels (local/global) in the public sphere are causes and consequences of new kinds of politics and new definitions of democracy. New terms defined by political theorists permit us to understand and picture this claimed shift from collective to individual, from sharp to blurry, from traditional to new, and the consequent claims of change in society.

A major blurring seems to occur in the divide between the public and the private spheres. Habermas (1996:360) defines the public sphere as "a network of communicating information and points of view and it refers to the social space generated in communicative action". Habermas (1996) thus underlines the communication in public sphere and he suggests that the public sphere has a limited capacity. For him, the public sphere has to raise and identify issues and should be able to present them in such a way that institutional politics picks and deals with them. Habermas (1996) also underlines the importance of physical gatherings in the public sphere (as opposed to online communities) to avoid abstraction.
Habermasian public sphere was criticized by claims that it monopolized the political by homogenizing the public sphere with the political elite; that it limited oppositions (see Negt and Kluge 1993 for their proposition of a proletarian public sphere); and that it was gender blind (see Fraser 1989 for her analysis from a critical feminist point of view) (Poster 1997). Moreover, face-to-face public sphere was commented to be “clearly over: the question of democracy must henceforth take into account new forms of electronically mediated discourse” (Poster: 1997: 220; Moeglin 1994). Poster (1997:219) argues that the computer-mediated communication blurs the public and the private spheres: “the question of talk, of meeting f2f, of public discourse is confused and complicated by the electronic form of exchange of symbols. If people will never meet, if public is the pixels, screens, e-mails etc. then how is it different than private letters?” Before the computer-mediated communication, however, came the new social movements of 1960s which are deemed to blur the boundaries between the public and the private spheres. These movements are seen to have brought changes in the political.

The spark of the late 1960s movements all around the world marks the era of what was called the new social movements. The feminist and the environmentalist movements as well as those of students were argued to be new because they were independent from the traditional civil society organizations and they had a new agenda. Diani (1992:3) defines social movement as “networks of informal interaction between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political and/or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity.” Diani and Bison (2004:281) differentiate the informal networks and collective identity of social movements from the stronger identity links of alliances, and specific networks of organizations. Tilly (1999:257,261) introduces the challenge between these networks and decision-makers and he suggests the formula for the new social movements: “strength = worthiness x unity x numbers x commitment”.

While traditional social movements are claimed to be more into politics, it is argued that new social movements were more focused on culture and the individual which fogged the public and the private spheres (Touraine 1985; Melucci 1985; della Porta and Diani 2006). Zaretsky (1995) argues that the blurred division between these spheres also blurred the division of background and foreground of political life hence the raise of identity politics. Melucci (1985:815) names the new space between the civil society and state, an intermediate public space, a space “whose function is not to institutionalize the movements nor to transform them into parties, but to make society hear their messages and translate these messages into political decision making, while the movements maintain their autonomy”. Touraine (1985:780), on the other hand, criticizes this phenomenon by arguing that the fact that new social movements occur outside of traditional political institutions may separate social movements and state: “In such a situation, social movements can easily become segmented, transform themselves into defence of minorities or search for identity, while public life becomes dominated by pro- or anti- State movements.”

The gap between the civil society and the state, according to Melucci (1985:790), may signal another risk: “Needs and forms of action arising from the society are not easily adaptable to the existing channels of political participation and to the organizational
forms of political agencies". Nevertheless, Melucci (1985:813) argues that one should not miss the symbolic antagonism and political impact of mobilizations of new social movements as well as their innovation. New social movements are deemed to form a new part of the new society and new political life (Melucci 1985; Appadurai 2002; Della Porta and Diani 2006).

Another discussion concerning the change in public sphere is about the emergence of a global public sphere. While the (now old) new social movements focused on the self and blurred the boundaries between the private and public spheres, the social movements from the end of the 1990s on are claimed to focus on global social justice and fight against the neoliberal globalization. Della Porta and Diani (2006:61) argue that changes in new social movements do not indicate change in the political: “new movements” are not necessarily the reflection of global structural transformations, or forerunners of the rise of new criteria to determine the structure of political conflicts. They are, rather, the next in a long series of manifestations of the cyclical nature of political protest.” Downey (2007) argues that the demand for radical democracy in global issues such as poverty, labour conditions, and environmental change, to name a few, mobilized activists to create global social movements. The “Battle of Seattle” of 1999 is claimed to mark the beginning of the global social movements and globally networked activism. Activists of the world, who gathered in Seattle in December 1999 to protest the World Trade Organization meeting, discussed an alternative to neo-liberal globalization. 30 years after the new social movements, activists of global justice are thus credited with having started a new era of online/networked activism at the end of the 1990s.

Keane (2000:77) suggests a division of public sphere in three levels including the global level: micro-public spheres for interaction happening at the sub-nation state level; meso-public spheres for interaction among more people and at the nation-state level; finally, macro-public sphere for interaction among billions of people at the global level. Castells (2008) argues that the global civil society (empowered by ICT) forms the global public sphere. ICT are claimed to have fuelled the interaction and cooperation in transnational level, while at the same time creating an activist elite (della Porta and Diani 2006). Mayo (2005) argues that the global social movements’ representation of diversity is challenged by the problematic global democratic accountability. Sparks (2000:91, 2005) also argues that global media and The Internet are used by global elite who work in favour of global corporations and/or governments. He argues that there is a certain global interaction between activists but the public sphere is still at the national level and that “there is no sign that a global public sphere is coming in to being”.

The blurring of the public and the private sphere opens up more discussions on new kinds of politics. Emancipatory politics (Giddens 1991) refers to emancipation of groups but also of the individual from tradition and hierarchies, and from the inequalities these two may cause. This category aims at liberating oppressed/exploited individuals and groups by prioritizing justice, equality and participation (Giddens: 1991: 212). For Giddens (1991) this old form of politics is replaced by what he names the Life Politics which emphasizes the link between local and global and it includes transformation: “While emancipatory politics is a politics of life chances, life politics is
a politics of lifestyle”. In his definition, life politics “concerns political issues which flow from processes of self-actualization in post-traditional contexts, where globalizing influences intrude deeply into the reflexive project of the self, and conversely where processes of self-realization influence global strategies” (Giddens:1991:214). Life politics thus mutually links individual’s life and global issues. Beck (1997:152) argues that private life, questions on one’s life, lifestyle, and preferences become the very space of politics: “all the original sins of individualism lead to a different type of political identity: life-and-death politics”.

When Beck (1994, 1997) observed the self-transformation of the industrial society based on its own foundations and not by or from another source, he named this phenomenon reflexive modernization. He explains that he distinguishes this concept from Marx’s self-destruction of capitalism; the reflexive modernity is to transform itself not with crisis, revolution, or class struggle but with victories and further modernization to dissolve the contours of industrial society (Beck: 1994:2). Beck (1994:2) argues that reflexive modernity also differs from socialism because it forms a new society by bypassing politics of the government and parliament. This new concept permitted him to further explain his arguments of change in politics. Individual returned to society, according to Beck, with sub-politics (Beck 1997:94). What was happening, in his words, was the category transformation of politics where the political and unpolitical switched places while the institutions stayed the same: “We look for politics in the wrong place, with the wrong terms, on the wrong floors of offices and on the wrong pages of the newspapers. Those decision-making areas which had been protected by politics in industrial capitalism – the private sector, business, science, towns, and everyday life and so on- are caught in the storms of political conflicts in reflexive modernity” (Beck: 1997:99). Beck (1994, 1997) explains that sub-politics differ from politics in two aspects; firstly, it opens up the space of politics that traditionally belonged to state and political parties, to other social and collective agents from professional groups to citizen initiatives, secondly, next to the collective agents, it also gives voice to the individual.

We see that the concept of sub-politics is inspirational for more new definitions. Active and passive sub-politics, for instance, distinguishes between the activities that are directly (active) and indirectly (passive) linked to politics (Holzer and Sorensen 2001). Sub-activism emphasizes the private sphere and how it connects to social networks. Bakardjieva (2010) defines sub-activists as mostly young people who spontaneously initiate small scale actions with a political or ethical reference, which may later attract more attention from public activists. Dahlgren (2009:31) argues that the further fluidity between politics, identity, and cultural values made politics (also) an expressive and performative activity. Cammaerts (2007) also explains that various activities of cultural jamming such as guerrilla communication, guerrilla theatre, adhusting, billboard hijacking, and graffiti that traditionally used to target the corporations may be used by activists as well as civil society for political jamming addressing the governments.

If the private lives of people are argued to become political with life politics, Latour and Weibel (2005) argue that things (and natural sources and animals) also become political in object-oriented democracy. Object-oriented democracy focuses on things
that are forgotten in the political discourse. Latour and Weibel (2005) analyse the political beyond the professional politics framework by including public assemblies such as supermarkets, laboratories, and nature (e.g. rivers) in the political. They argue that “if man has become a political animal again, it’s also because animals have become political” (Latour and Weibel: 2005:351).

Another blurring occurs in terms of the traditional Left-Right divide. Tony Blair’s New Labour in the United Kingdom and Bill Clinton’s New Democrats in the United States at the end of 1990s developed The Third Way. Giddens (1998:26) explains that The Third Way was “an attempt to transcend both old-style social democracy and neoliberalism”. He also argues that it holds responses to globalization, scientific and technological change, and our relationship to nature with such values as equality; protection of the vulnerable; freedom as autonomy; no rights without responsibilities; no authority without democracy; cosmopolitan pluralism; and philosophic conservatism (Giddens: 1998:64-66).

The third way, however, was claimed to ignore the problems of inequalities of wealth and power (Faux 1999). It was criticized that it tried to please everyone and thus didn’t go anywhere (Hall 1998) or that it went too far: Mouffe (2009) argues that the third way didn’t succeed in gathering the Right and Left but it worked rather in favour of the Right that opened room for the extreme Right and eroded the Left from the political scene where the working class started to think that the right-wing parties defend their rights better than the left-wing parties. Therefore, Mouffe (1998) insists that it is better to keep the Left-Right divide to be able to see the real enemies of the Left. She also argues that this divide would ensure democratic political identifications (Mouffe 2005b; see also Laclau 1994 for making of the political identities).

Another level of claims for change is the stretching of politics beyond the local and global dualism. There are arguments of opportunities for political action in the glocal: “Global politics has turned into global domestic politics, which robs national politics of its boundaries and foundations” (Beck: 2005:249). There are still some global issues (e.g. climate change), however, that need solution policies and decisions at the global level. Can these decisions be taken democratically? Cosmopolitan democracy is the affirmative answer of Archibugi and Held (1995:13): “citizens, wherever they are located in the world, have a voice, input, and political representation in international affairs in parallel with and independently of their own governments”. In this model, together with the recognition of diversity in political regimes, global agencies would monitor the countries and influence their domestic affairs by limiting national sovereignties by transforming politics from a mode of domination to a mode of service (Archibugi and Held 1995:15).

The interconnectedness of people and global aspects of political issues make it less clear, according to Held (1995), whom governments are accountable to, or where the national policies stem from/stretch over. They claim that cosmopolitan democracy would respond to this problem of legitimacy with its expanded framework of nation-states. The UN system is deemed to be practical in implementing this model which empowers citizens in an institutional mode with the following reforms: “direct representation of citizens rather than their governments, strengthening world
judicial powers including the reform of the international court of justice, modify world executives powers, principally the security council and the veto power of its permanent members” (Archibugi 1995:135/123). Finally, cosmopolitan democracy, Held (1995:115) explains, does not demand consensus about a wide range of beliefs, values and norms because it is a “way of relating values to one another and leaving the resolution of value conflicts open to participants in a political dialogue, subject only to certain provisions protecting the shape and form of the dialogue itself”.

This way of reaching global democracy, however, is not convincing for others, if not a dangerous illusion: “If such a project was ever realized, it could only signify the world hegemony of a dominant power that would have been able to impose its conception of the world on the entire planet and which, identifying its interests with those of humanity, would treat any disagreement as an illegitimate challenge to its ‘rational’ leadership” (Mouffe 2005:107). Growing China and regional organizations inspire Mouffe (2005:107) towards a multipolar world that could replace the cosmopolitan democracy as a more democratic alternative. Saward (2000) argues that this model loses its relevance, given there are places and people who remain outside of globalization. Thompson (1998) claims that ethnic and/or minority groups demand their rights of autonomy in a community/local framework, introducing a political as well as a philosophical challenge to cosmopolitanism. Tan (2008) argues that it is not practical to create new agencies where it is possible to work within the existing national bodies. Finally, Patomäki (2003) argues that cosmopolitan democracy is not feasible without a global and pluralist security community.

Other definitions such as the pluralist, deliberative, and participative models of democracy prevail in the discussions of how academics try to make sense of the claimed social changes. Pluralism (in modern democracy) is either presented as the source of influence for deliberative and participatory democracies (Held 2006) or as an impossible project (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Mouffe 2005b). Pluralism for Held (2006:173) is a “system of checks and balances between the legislature, executive, judiciary, and administrative bureaucracy with such citizenship rights as freedom of expression and organization ensured for diverse interest groups”. He explains that classical pluralism values diversity of interest groups, consensus on political procedures, and political stability among the citizenry whereas neo-pluralism includes corporate power, inequalities, contested power, and lack of participation (Held: 2006:173). The other model is the agonistic pluralism. Mouffe (2005b) is confident that rather than a threat, agonistic pluralism, the involvement of agonistic, conflicting views in the democratic process is the very condition of democracy. She explains that in a democracy model without clear tools of political identification (she refers to the Left-Right divide) alternative fundamental identifications may and do find room to flourish which then threatens democracy.

In agonistic pluralism, on the other hand, she argues that citizens have the opportunities to enjoy conflict and their agonistic views without the need to reach a consensus: “the aim of democratic politics should be to provide the framework through which conflicts can take the form of an agonistic confrontation among adversaries instead of manifesting themselves as an antagonistic struggle between enemies”
Radical democracy is another name for this model where the enemy becomes the adversary and the diverse interests reach the chain of equivalence (Mouffe 2005b). The impossibility of this “true” radical or pluralist democracy, Mouffe (2005b:72) argues, stems from the conflict between the public and private lives: “We cannot say: here end my duties as a citizen and begins my freedom as an individual. Those two identities exist in a permanent tension that can never be reconciled. But this is precisely the tension between liberty and equality that characterizes modern democracy. It is the very life of such a regime and any attempt to bring about a perfect harmony to realize ‘true’ democracy, can only lead to its destruction. This is why a project of radical or plural democracy recognizes the impossibility of the complete realization of democracy and the final achievement of the political community”.

As for the influences of pluralism, deliberative democracy, according to Held (2006) is one of its outcomes. This model is claimed to value justification of political decisions in a pluralist approach with an effort to renew representative democracy towards participatory democracy (Held 2006:253). The popular sovereignty in Habermas is argued to revive deliberative democracy, even though he limited deliberation only to the essential structures of democratic organization as opposed to Rawls who argued that religious and liberal views should also be present in deliberation (Guttman and Thompson 2004). Deliberative democracy, Guttman and Thompson (2004:2-7) explain, is an accessible (with public deliberation and understandable content) and dynamic (where citizens regularly critically feed-back on decisions) process where the important is reaching minimum difference among the opponents. They argue that justification of reasons for decisions makes deliberative democracy preferable to aggregative democracy in which reasons are not justified but given. Deliberation, however, is explained to be mostly reserved for representatives who should (only) communicate with citizens, leaving little room for interaction between the two groups (Guttman and Thompson 2004).

The problem with the deliberative democracy, from the critical democratic theory perspective, is the emphasis on consensus. As mentioned above, the central idea in agonistic pluralism is that there cannot be a fully inclusive rational consensus (Mouffe 2000, 2005, 2005b, 2009). For Mouffe only an agonistic pluralism, conflict, and different identifications can ensure democracy. She recognizes division and conflict between people alongside the multiplicity. Mouffe further insists repeatedly that ultimate consensus is impossible, unnecessary, and undesirable for democracy (Mouffe 2000, 2005, 2005b, and in Carpentier and Cammaerts 2006). Deliberative democracy is claimed to permit citizens to deliberate on political issues and decisions to be taken by providing them with access to and interaction with representatives. This model however, does not seem to allow citizens for meaningfully participating in decision making processes.

Academic discussions on participation suggest that there are different definitions and different levels of participation. The concept of participatory democracy could be best understood with the discussion of these different levels and definitions.

“Citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and
economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled out.”  (Arnstein: 1969:1 from the online version)

Table 1: Ladders of citizen participation (Arnstein 1969)

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Arnstein’s (1969) critical analysis seen on the above table explains the different ladders of participation. She sets eight levels of participation. The objective of the bottom level, non-participation, she writes, is not to permit participation but rather to “educate” and “cure” citizens. She argues that citizens only gain voice and the opportunity to be heard in different levels of tokenism where they are able to express themselves but still without the power to make decisions. According to this model, citizens gain power to participate meaningfully in decision-making only on the top three levels, citizen power, where they can partner with power-holders in decision-making by defending their interests, or where they can enjoy the majority or the full power of decision-making.

Besides the citizen control, Fung (2006b:24) argues that participation in political life ensures legitimacy, justice, and the effectiveness of public action. Fung (2003:515) explains that the inclusion of associations in political life foster democracy for six reasons: through the intrinsic value of associative life, fostering civic virtues and teaching political skills, offering resistance to power and checking government, improving the quality and equality of representation, facilitating public deliberation, and creating opportunities for citizens and groups to participate directly in governance.

Participation holds different definitions and different forms. Forms of participation depend on the definition of democracy. Pateman’s (1970) “Participation and Democratic Theory” is a guide for an historical background. She explains that if democracy is defined within its Athenian framework, participation is the direct input of “all” citizens in decision-making. She says that if democracy, as Schumpeter understands it, is a political method where leadership compete for citizens’ votes, then elections become the only form of participation.
Other theorists broaden the definition, forms and the function of participation in a participatory democracy framework. Rousseau’s *Social Contract* introduces the political equality and interdependence among citizens and participation in decision-making. It is the law, made in a participatory decision-making process, that rules and not the leadership/representatives (Pateman 1970). Rousseau’s political equality means that no decision or policy should favour a citizen/group of citizens at the expense of the interest of the others. Therefore, he emphasizes individual participation and urges balancing policies if participation of associations is unavoidable. Pateman (1970) explains that the participatory democracy, according to Rousseau, is a sustainable system because participation permits a learning process for citizens. Citizens who start to participate in decision-making would participate more because the process would educate them. Thus, participation gains another function than choosing representatives (Pateman 1970).

While participation is far from being as complex as action, it seems to become a complex concept if it is to be avoided by the powerful. Thus the concept gains multiple definitions. In *pseudo participation* the aim is not providing participation but the feeling of participation used for persuasion rather than decision (Verba 1961 in Pateman 1970:69). *Partial participation* occurs when the participants do not have equal power of decision-making and when the inferior can only influence the superior who at the end makes the decision alone (Pateman 1970:70). *Full participation* happens when all participants have equal power and make a decision together (Pateman 1970:71). *Participation is broad and deep* when ordinary citizens have additional (next to vote and letters to representatives) channels of voice, and when they can have an influence on state strategies (Fung and Wright: 2003:27). There are two more kinds of participation that are suggested within the online framework; nevertheless, they may still find their room in this section: *managed (e-) participation* and *autonomous (e-) participation* (Coleman 2010). Coleman (2010) presents these two kinds of (e-) participation to distinguish between (e-) participation initiated by institutional politics (*managed*) and (e-) participation taking place in new forms (*autonomous*).

Access and interaction are two concepts that are very much present in participation discourse, sometimes even as synonyms of participation in policy documents of international organizations (Carpentier 2011). Access and interaction, on the other hand, however they are both prerequisites of participation, are not participation as in participation in decision-making. Carpentier (2011:102) introduces the *Access, Interaction, Participation model* exactly to distinguish between these three concepts in order to avoid weak/insufficient definitions of participation. In this step by step model, access comes first, in order to (secondly) interact, to finally participate in decision-making. The same seems to be the case for engagement. While it is a prerequisite for participation, Dahlgren (2009:58) argues that engagement is about aiming either at solving community problems as civic engagement or at influencing institutional politics as political engagement. He also claims that engagement does not necessarily foster democracy since it can aim *non-political* or *anti-democratic* areas (Dahlgren 2009:80).

*Strong Democracy* (Barber 1983/2003) is a concept to attempt to foster participatory democracy. Barber (1983/2003:4) calls liberal democracy *thin*, arguing that it is
not able to foster participation, public goods nor civic virtue. Strong democracy is presented as a participatory model where “active citizens govern themselves directly here, not necessarily at every level in every instance, but frequently enough and in particular when basic policies are being decided and when significant power is being deployed. Self-government is carried on through institutions designed to facilitate on-going civic participation in agenda setting, deliberation, legislation, and policy implementation.” (Barber 2003:151). Barber (2003:24) emphasizes that strong democracy is to be distinguished from classical democracy. He proposes it rather as a complementary to liberal (thin) democracy which is he says “never a politics of transformation, a politics of bargaining and exchange, never a politics of invention and creation, and a politics that conceives of women and man at their worst (in order to protect them from themselves) never at their potential best (to help them become better than they are)”.

The empowered participatory governance of Fung and Wright (2003), similar to Mouffe’s agonistic pluralism, is a model that recognizes conflicts in realist deliberation and it does not require consensus. Fung and Wright (2003:17) argue that the important point in this model is that “participants find reasons that they can accept in collective actions, not necessarily the ones that they completely endorse or find maximally advantageous”. They suggest that the empowered participatory governance involves ordinary citizens in the solution developing process for specific problems that affect these citizens. In practice they mean: “the devolution of public decision authority to empowered local units; the creation of formal linkages of responsibility, resource distribution, and communication that connect these units to each other to superordinate, centralized authorities; the use and generation of new state institutions to support and guide these decentred problem-solving efforts” (Fung and Wright :2003:15-16). Fung (2006) also argues that citizens’ participation is an opportunity with innovative, alternative, and creative solutions which only make institutional politics work more effectively.

The United Nations – the UN is an organization which claims to defend participatory governance with multistakeholderism for exactly the same reasons Fung (2006) lists. The UN decided to include different stakeholders in its global processes in the 1990s by, for instance, accepting civil society as a partner in the preparation and decision making processes of its global summits. The most relevant process for this research is at the same time the process that gathered the most of civil society representatives: The World Summit on Information Society (WSIS)³. This was an opportunity for activists of the world to share know-how, brainstorm, and fundraise as well as lobby with global and national governmental delegations and the private sector. The participation of civil society, however, was limited. Activists’ badges did not permit them to attend all the meetings. “Real” information, agendas, and pre-prepared documents/meetings were not openly accessible to all. Most activists could not meaningfully participate to the process. Some activists found their ways to attend the decision-making meetings by for instance exchanging badges with governmental delegations.

³ The researcher was the civil society youth representative from Turkey. She was an active member of the youth caucus which initiated several events and projects for youth capacity building with ICT in local, national, regional and global levels. The following relies on her first-hand experience.
Even though it was a big step for new politics/activists to be represented in a global process, WSIS failed in meaningful multi-stakeholder governance (see Cammaerts and Carpentier 2006 for an analysis of participation of civil society at the WSIS). The youth caucus, for instance, despite being one of most active caucuses of the summit, repeatedly complained about tokenism. This was exactly what Cammaerts (2009) concluded when he analysed the process. The democratically-challenged decision-making processes of governance in local, national or global levels (Cammaerts 2009), and the lower representation of social interest (by institutional politics) in favour of capital (Wayne et al 2010) are argued to discourage citizens to persist with politics. Dahlgren (2004) however argues that this detachment from politics does not necessarily mean a complete political disengagement.

The following discussions on the claimed changes in politics, the political, and democracy are focused on the new actors, new ways, and new subjects. The emergence of new actors and new spaces, however, does not necessarily mean that traditional institutionalized politics disappear. There are nevertheless also arguments of change concerning these institutions. As mentioned in the previous section, nation-states, for instance, are claimed to no longer act independently from their global networks or affiliations. This phenomenon either indicates national policy-making with new global partners or losing national sovereignty to these global actors. In either case it implies a challenge for nation-states’ power. Alongside this process, the 1980s were the years of a world trend of decentralization.

The World Bank (1983) that promoted decentralization especially in the developing countries defines the concept as the “Deconcentration of functions within the central bureaucracy, delegation of semi-autonomous or quasi-public corporations, devolution to local governments, and the transfer of functions to non-government organizations”. Bardhan (2002:185) argues that decentralization promised “a more responsive and efficient government” as well as “diffusion of social and political tensions and ensuring local cultural and political autonomy”. Sharpe (1988:365) explains this trend with “continued urbanization of most western countries; the associated need for more governmental services; and in the possibility that taxpayers’ resistance to tax increases is lower at the sub-national than it is at national level”. Decentralization, however, may also stretch beyond nation-states. The European Union, as a supra-national entity, also adopted the subsidiarity principle on the Treaty on European Union (Treaty of Maastricht) in 1992. The article A of the treaty notes that “the EU shall take decisions as close as possible to the citizen”\(^4\). Keating and Salmon (2001) are sceptical to decentralization and to the subsidiarity principle; they argue that “there is perhaps a feeling that changing the geographical location of power does not always match a change in the actual location of power”.

Although it is reported that decentralization was enthusiastically embraced by many countries and that it was on the agenda of international organizations, the practice was not seen as a success. The reports of World Bank suggested that the process was unsuccessfully implemented: “Some problems arose from insufficient central political and bureaucratic support and others from ingrained centrist attitudes and behaviour

on the part of political and administrative leaders” (World Bank 1983). Fifteen years later the World Bank was still reporting that the institution-specific design was central for the effects of decentralization and it suggested “enhanced focus on accountability, governance, and capacity in the context of designing policies for decentralization” (World Bank 1998: vii).

Prud’Homme (1995) argues that if not properly planned and implemented, decentralization may harm the stability and efficiency of institutions. Bardhan (2002:202) for instance argues that badly/wrongly implemented decentralization may make the local (business) elite harm the local social services. Therefore he underlines the need to restructure power in the local to increase participation of stakeholders: “the logic behind decentralization is not just about weakening the central authority, nor is it about preferring local elites to central authority, but it is fundamentally about making governance at the local level more responsive to the felt needs of the large majority of the population”. While authors and organizations present arguments on the change in institutional politics, Kriesi and Wisler (1999:43) argue that institutional change needs a new political paradigm: “Such a shift occurs only in periods of profound societal crisis, which open up the opportunity for fundamental social learning and the introduction of a new set of institutions, that is, a new political paradigm. This learning is, however, bound to people’s past experiences, which is why, in order to impose itself, the new paradigm must “resonate” well with the political heritage of the past.”

Alongside the trend of decentralization, global organizations, notably the United Nations initiated the empowerment of the local authorities (Pieterse 2000). The UN Habitat City Summits gathered various stakeholders to develop policies to give more power to cities. This flow of power from national to local was at the same time to be connected to global and to other locals elsewhere. A quick scanning of the aims and objectives of city organizations in regional and global level such as the Eurocities, Metropolis, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and Cities Alliances5 confirms that all these organizations promote (if not push) decentralization, urban governance with multi-stakeholder partnerships, and global networking and cooperation. Moreover, cities are deemed to transform with new technologies and globalization where innovation is claimed to be the most possible (Borja & Castells 1997; Graham & Marvin 1996; see also Mitchell 1998 for futuristic e-city).

Castells (2000) claims that cities gain more political power with global networks and cooperation. Co-operation with competitors was argued to be the new strategy of local institutional politics (Clark 2003) that ensures innovation (Castells and Hall 1994). Cities are told to compete to attract more headquarters of global companies, to host global events, and to bring in more global investment (Clark 2003). Positioning the city globally, reconnecting the online and offline fragments within the city, and creating electronic linkages between the city and citizens are the claims of broad urban policies of cities with a global city vision (Graham 1999). Old cities in strategic geographical locations, like Istanbul, have been attractive for the world in terms of trade and politics for centuries (Keyder 2000). In that sense, we can say that global city is nothing new.

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5 Eurocities: www.eurocities.eu; Metropolis: www.metropolis.org; United Cities and Local Governments: www.cities-localgovernments.org; Cities Alliance: www.citiesalliance.org
The claimed change is that global city derives from the economic and technological globalizations (Sassen 2001) and that it connects advanced and complex technological and informational services in a global network (Castells 2000). Appadurai (2002:24) argues that “wealthier ‘world-cities’ increasingly operate like city states in a networked global economy, increasingly independent of regional and national mediation, and where poorer cities—and the poorer populations within them—seek new ways to claim space and voice.”

In parallel with the global city discussions, were introduced new approaches to and definitions of citizenship. An approach is that citizens have new identification sources, therefore citizenship should be detached from the nation and should adopt new definitions whereas the counter-approach insisted on the importance of the nation(al) in citizenship. Preston (2001) argues that globalization and the decreased sovereignty of nation-states make national identity less relevant. This argument is supported by Isin (2000) who suggests that mobility of people in a global system makes them create such sources of identification as occupation, consumption, and the online world which are not (or less) territorialized and more globalized. Staff of global companies, for instance, are claimed to not to know nor care about the nationality of their colleagues (Castells and Himanen 2002). Urry (2000) adds that global images diffused by global media make people feel citizens of the globe.

Post-modernists argue that citizenship should then accept the diversity of identities rather than national homogeneity (Cessarini and Fulbrook 1996; Turner and Hamilton 1998; Gray 2002). Soysal (1994, 1996) argues that citizenship should be based on personhood (and not nation) in a post-national model of citizenship that awards rights and duties, including participation, in any polity, without historical or cultural connection. Citizenship, on the other hand, is deemed meaningless without a nation-state tie (Oommen 1997). Kymlicka (2001) argues that democratic citizenship can only occur in a national context, with a national tie because it only makes sense if it is in vernacular. Miller (2000) argues that in a global and mobile world, common nationality is what replaces the face to face gathering of Rousseau’s citizens⁶.

2.1.3. Information and Communication Technologies ICT

Another area of conceptualization of social change is information and communication technologies (ICT). This research limits the definition of ICT with The Internet and mobile communication technologies. Therefore, this section does not go as back as Guttenberg, keeping in mind, nevertheless, that all previous ICT were new in their day and that every technology comes with new advantages as well as disadvantages (Marwin 1988). What makes the Internet special and different from its predecessors is its own decentralized interactive network structure based on the concept of sharing. The network structure with the idea of sharing data further ensures interaction. The traditional one-way communication illustrated with Lasswell’s sender-message-

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⁶ In parallel of the discussion whether global citizenship is possible, the World Service Authority issues WSA world passport based on article 13(2) of the universal declaration of human rights “Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country”, see www.worldservice.org for visas issued on those passports.
receiver schema is thus challenged by this new communication environment. The lack of one central source, the lack of one main direction, and the lack of one main end point transform the one-way communication into many-to-many communication. The many-to-many communication replaces the idea of one central source of information or communication with the many sources of information and communication. Moreover, the many-to-many communication enables the receiver to send messages and not just the feed-back as in the traditional communication theory. In the many-to-many model the sender and the receiver adopt each other’s roles making information and communication available from multiple sources and multiple directions within the logic of interaction and network.

ICT continuously develop and change as hardware and software. When the masses of the world population starts to use new information and communication technologies with a very different (than the previous ICT) philosophy behind it with decentralized, networked, and wireless/mobile structures, it becomes increasingly difficult to ignore them in discussions on social change. Marvin (1988:235) argues that how new technologies change social relations is a continuous concern in society (see also Kubicek et al 1997 for social shaping of technology). The relation between technology and social change is a lively discussion fed by three approaches: technological determinism; social determinism; and interactionism.

Technological determinism’s motto is “We shape our tools and in turn they shape us”, written by Marshal McLuhan (1964) who has been the pioneer of technological determinism. He took his arguments further when he illustrated that communications media would transform the world into a global village. Toffler (1980) fragmented the human history into waves based on the factors of production. According to his divide, the first wave is the agricultural wave which is demarked with agricultural activities. Secondly the industrial wave is the period of facilities of industry as the defining factor of production. Finally the information wave is the period where knowledge and information technology are the determinant production factors.

Social determinism, as the counter-approach, argues that it is the society that changes technology. For social determinists “social, political, economic and cultural factors are the prime determinants of technological change” (Winston 1998:341). Winston (1998), disputing the information revolution, emphasizes the primacy of social sphere in the work of technology. Green (2001) explains that according to this approach, the market forces shape technology because ICT would disappear if people did not consume them. Social change, for social determinists, stems from social elites and political and economic initiatives and not from technology (Green 2001).

Interactionism, on the other hand, recognizes the limitations and unreliability of deterministic approaches that exclude one of the sides in the process of social change. This approach argues that ICT and society are converged and that they interact: “…communication is the fundamental process of the human activity, the modification of communication processes by the interaction between social structure, social practice and a new range of communication technologies, constitutes indeed a profound social transformation” (Castells et al. 2007:246). More authors who find the mutual exclusions in the deterministic approaches poor and unrealistic suggest alternative
positions for a more comprehensive approach: recognition of the political component of/in/by technology (Chadwick 2006); and the role tangible arrangements of steel and concrete, wires and semiconductors, nuts and bolts play in social reality (Winner 1998:43 in Chadwick 2006:19). Baym (1995:141) also argues that the computer-mediated communication (CMC) is not isolated from external factors; it is, in the contrary, the interaction of “temporal structure of the group, infrastructure of the computer system, purposes for which CMC is used, characteristics of the group and its members”

On long-term social and political implications of ICT there are further three schools (Miles et al 1988:4): transformists, continuists, and structuralists. Miles et al classify these schools based on four criteria: ICT, their diffusion, social change, and forecast. As for ICT and social change, according to their classification:

Transformists suggest that political activity will flourish with the use of ICT and they think that social and political change with ICT is inevitable. They argue that ICT is revolutionary and that they will change the basis of political power and social classes as fundamentally as the change between agricultural and industrial societies.

Continuists don’t attribute a role to ICT in social and political affairs and they find that scenario utopian. They argue that revolutionary claims of ICT are overstated and that change will come from social and political initiatives and not from ICT.

Structuralists argue that there potentially will be social and political change with ICT as long as people use them and as long as they want change in society. They think that ICT have revolutionary implications for economic structure and that they may lead to reshaping many areas of social life. Structuralists argue that social change needs organizational structures, styles and skills, and changes in issues and leadership.

These different approaches and schools also feed the discussion about whether we live in an “information society” - defended by those who believe that this is a new era, or we only witness the process of “informatization of the society” - defended by those who argue that the old society continues (Webster 2000).

The above discussions about the local – global relation, politics and the political, and ICT relate to the upcoming empirical analysis as they are the three areas of social change in the analysis. After the above discussion, we will have a more accessible reading of these concepts and the optimist and the critical approaches that are embedded in the perceptions of different groups in Istanbul.

The following section discusses the claims of change in society with ICT with the interaction of the above three areas of social change.

2.2 Social change and technology

Following the first discussion on how authors see and conceptualize change in society in the three areas separately, the second section of the theoretical chapter will first look at how these areas interact in what Manuel Castells introduced as the network society. ICT are put in the centre of the network society as tools that provide material basis for this new social morphology. The new structure, as will be discussed shortly, is deemed to cause changes in political and power processes. After the Internet went public and
became popular with the World Wide Web in the second half of the 90s (at least in the Western world at that time), it fostered discussions with both enthusiastic and critical arguments concerning its effects on democracy. The optimist approach was convinced that the Internet was going to improve democracy by overcoming democratic limitations while the critical approach presented new limitations and challenges of the Internet that was not enough to strengthen democracy.

Castells (2000) claimed that the network society would cause changes in power relations in different dimensions. Institutional politics, activism, and identity are three of the dimensions where the network structure is expected to bring in new ways, new actors, and new definitions. At the heart of these changes, again, are claimed to be ICT which provide the network system. As discussed previously, there have been other claims of change in these areas with the political that opens up new and more spaces for political activity, creates new actors, merges public and private spheres, and brings in the identity politics. The previous discussion, here in the framework of the network society, will focus on ICT and discuss what the claims of change caused by ICT are in institutional politics, activism, and identity.

2.2.1. Network society

The claimed social changes in three areas; local-global relation; politics and the political; and ICT do not occur independently from each other. These areas may also interact. This interaction, according to Manuel Castells, creates the basis for the network structure that in turn shapes the social structure (Castells: 2000:76). Castells conceptualizes the convergence of social evolution and ICT and he names the new social structure, the Network Society: “As an historical trend, dominant functions and processes in the information age are increasingly organized around networks. Networks constitute the new social morphology of our societies, and the diffusion of networking logic substantially modifies the operation and outcomes in processes of production, experience, power, and culture” (Castells 2000:500). According to the network society concept we live in a space of flows and networks which will lead to reorganization of power relations in a computer-mediated communication culture without historical and geographical bindings. Networking existed before but for Castells the new ICT paradigm now provides the material basis for its pervasive expansion throughout the entire social structure.

Castells defines network as "a set of interconnected nodes". A node is "the point at which a curve intersects itself". The important logic here is that nodes are closer with the same distance to each other if they are in the same network. Networks are open to new nodes within a given set of values. The crucial point in the network system is that one is in or out (of a network) and this will change the power relation: “The inclusion/exclusion in networks and the architecture of relationships between networks, enacted by light-speed-operating information technologies, configure dominant processes and functions in our societies” (Castells: 2000:501). The change of power relations on
online networks also appears among the arguments of the enthusiasts who advocate that ICT would foster democracy.

The Internet, for instance, is seen as a democratic public space to boost political deliberation (Papacharissi 2002), to challenge the political hierarchy (Rheingold 1993), and to permit citizens organizing and communicating in groups, and to allow participation (Clift 1998). The Internet is deemed to mobilize citizens who otherwise are not in political networks, and make citizens be more expressive if they are already engaged (Bimber 1999). Blumler and Coleman (2001) argue that citizens start to engage widely in politics by expressing themselves and exchanging ideas online. Online discourse is claimed to extend the public sphere but not enough for a representative participation due to social limitations (Dahlberg 2001). The new technologies are deemed to be commercialized and monopolized (Barber 2000) therefore cyberspace is argued to need to be protected and enhanced if it is to improve democracy (Dahlberg 1998). Sassi (2000:91) argues that citizen activities in this new sphere depend on the structure and the management of the network.

The online public sphere and computer-mediated communication also bring discussions on social capital. Putnam (2001) defines social capital as "the collective value of all "social networks" (who people know) and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other (norms of reciprocity). The social capital, however, he argues, is in decline because people lose their connections with their family, friends and members of their communities in the United States. For this process he mainly accuses ICT. Coleman and Gøtze (2001), however, disagree by arguing that the capacity of ICT connects people and engage citizens. Resnick (2001) introduces the concept of sociotechnical capital referring to the joint influence of social and technical in people's acting together. More recently, it is claimed that masses use social networking sites to “maximize their social capital from relationships” (Shih: 2009:44). Supersession of space and time in a networked organization, is what, Castells presents, reorganizes power relationships. Castells argue that in a system where nodes in a network are closer to each other with equal or no distance, the switchers connecting different networks hold the power. Here again, Castells’ concern is the divide between the cosmopolitan elite and the local people in terms of accessing networks – which according to him is determinant for power relations.

A sub-concept of network society is the space of flows. Castells explains that this is the material organization of time-sharing social practices that work through flows. They seem to be the dominant spatial manifestation of power and function in society. Castells argues that society is constructed around several flows namely the flows of capital, information, technology, organizational interaction, images, sounds and symbols. Castells does not mean, however, that the localities disappear in this placeless logic. He thinks localities lose their dominant importance and get integrated in the global networks structure. ICT are deemed to provide the primary material support for the space of flows as tools which make communication in cyberspace possible. Even though space of flows does not have locality in its logic, there still are nodes and hubs for some global networks. Castells gives for instance the example of narcotics networks that constructed a specific geography. Space of flow is nevertheless where the dominant
interests and functions are argued to organize: “the power of flows takes precedence over the flows of power” (Castells: 2000:76).

Different flows on the cyberspace may provide different sources for citizens. Those citizens who see that ICT are valuable resources are claimed to engage more deeply in new activities (Lusoli & Ward 2006). Citizens who do not prefer talking about politics in face-to-face communication are deemed to do so when it is computer-mediated - which then is argued to make political talk flows on cyberspace more diverse (Stromer-Galley 2002). The Internet use and engagement seem to have a positive relation with time spent online which is argued to increase civic volunteerism (Shah et al 2002:978). Shah et al (2002) suggest that online information sources would help activate citizens and help them create stronger ties in their community and to organizations (Shah et al 2002). The same research group also argue that “changes over time in patterns of information gathering (increasingly with ICT), political expression, and civic participation are interconnected” (Shah et al 2005:551). In the early days of the millennium the Internet was commented to have a higher impact on youth in the United States than traditional media such as television (Rice 2002).

The Internet is deemed to increase participation with opportunities for citizens to engage with authorities on a more equal basis (Coleman 2001). Coleman (2004) argues that citizens are ready to participate in online consultations if they see that what they say is taken into consideration and if they can really contribute to decision-making. In the earlier times, online participation and /or interaction among citizens on political issues were claimed to be interesting for already engaged and active citizens. As political content spreads wider over blogs (seemingly increasingly popular spaces of political flows) passive citizens appear to also increasingly exchange political information with other citizens through online political talk (Kavanaugh et al 2008). The Internet, notably the blogs as spaces where private and civil spheres emerge, is deemed to give voice to unheard, marginal citizens (Coleman 2005). Poster (2007) argues that more technologies like the p2p file sharing provide more flows that appear as a radical democratizer. Many features of the Internet are claimed to permit agonistic pluralism (Hands 2007) (even though Mouffe disagrees with this argument in her interview with Carpentier and Cammaerts 2006).

Several features of the Internet that appears as advantages to optimists may be seen at the same time as challenges for democracy. Access is a key debate of the discussion on democracy and ICT. Access to the Internet is a legal right in such countries as Estonia, Finland, and Spain (UN 2011)7. The number of the Internet users reached 2 billion as of 20108. The Internet, however, is still inaccessible by the majority. As for the privileged who can access the Internet, the high speed and enormous volume of online communication are argued to be far from being meaningful or purposeful (London 1995). Access to an enormous volume of official information equally looks like a challenge for those citizens who are not ready to undertake that much government information

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7 The UN Human Rights Council (2011) declared that cutting of users from the Internet access was a violation of civil and political rights. The Special Rapporteur considers cutting off users from the Internet access, regardless of the justification provided, including on the grounds of violating intellectual property rights law, to be disproportionate and thus a violation of article 19, paragraph 3, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.” (UN:2011:21)
Part I Theoretical Framework

Moreover, Resnick (1998) argues that official information is not likely to be more transparent or other information not to be more reliable only because they are accessible online.

Regular consultation and citizen input facilitated with ICT, continuous polls, and instant referenda are reckoned to challenge the legitimacy of representative democracy (Snellen 2001). Access to representatives for interaction looks democratic; however, Dahl argues (1989:339) that only well-informed citizenry can ask meaningful questions on major issues. The blogosphere is accounted to offer a space for democratic deliberation allowing the previously unheard marginal citizens to present their views or causes (Coleman 2005). Some political bloggers for instance are claimed to serve as the watchdog of the mainstream media (Khan and Kellner 2007). The blogosphere, however, may not necessarily be free from restrictions. Cammaerts (2008) argues that the blogs may also be challenged by the rules of the capital and the state or by the restrictions from intimidating/offensive bloggers. It is also argued that the blogosphere has become a fragmented space where diversity of political views is eroded by the information cocoons and echo chambers (Sunstein 2001, 2009) where only like-minded people are claimed to interact.

The biggest disappointment for the utopians are the arguments that cyberspace soon started to imitate the offline; online power relations are deemed to have become no different than the offline. Hill and Huges (1998:182) argued that paradoxically, while digital divide is a challenge for e-democracy, bridging this gap and having more people online changed the (potentially) democratic structure of the Internet: “as more and more people get the Internet access, the differences between real life populations and the Internet’s population will diminish. Simply put, the net’s uniqueness will become diluted”. Moreover, cyberspace does not seem to be different or more democratic or more participatory than the offline spaces and communication (Streck 1998) because the characteristics of offline politics are argued to dominate the online (Resnick 1998, Dahlberg and Siapera 2007).

Furthermore, Weber et al (2003) argue that online participation does not eliminate the socioeconomic inequalities of offline participation. In addition, Hill and Huges (1998) argue that more interaction between citizens does not necessarily mean collaboration between them. ICT are deemed to technically facilitate communication and participation which may be the distinguishing features of e-democracy. These concepts, however, find little room in the Western e-democracy discourse (Padovani et al 2007). Taken broadly in their economic, political, and cultural context, ICT are claimed not to offer promising prospects for emancipatory change in democracy (Downey 2007). A more cautious approach suggests that ICT may have a vulnerable potential to enforce democracy with appropriate policy (Blumler & Gurevitch 2001). Kay and Johnson (2002) argue for instance that surfing on the web could mean entertainment for many but that those who connect to political sites are likely to have goal-oriented purposes.

In the placeless spaces of the network society time is claimed to be timeless. Castells argues that there is an emerging, dominant form of social time in network society. ICT

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9 That study is based on European e-democracy discourse; however, among the four documents the authors analyzed is a document by Steve Clift from the US. That is why the study is referred here as Western. (see also Magnette (2003) for elitist participation in the European Union)
are deemed to make it possible for people and functions to appear in the space of flows in different temporal frames. The traditional time restrictions for work/office seem to lose their meaning when the work is done in cyberspace free of limitations of office hour or time lags. The flexibility of making, for instance, a payment out of office hours and instant and real time communication are in the same time what breaks the rhythm of life-cycle. Finally the hypertext, Castells argues, is timeless by blurring the past, present, and the future. All this, according to Castells, brings the edge of forever in network society. Time, however, does not appear as a fundamental challenge of democracy in discussions. Most importantly, it is argued that the problems of democracy are not limited to technical issues. ICT are claimed to fix some of these problems such as the limits of time and space but it is argued that they cannot fix the lack of motivation and skills for participation (Dahl 1989; Hacker and Van Dijk 2000; Street 1997; Polat 2005).

Wealth, exercise of power, and creation of cultural codes are deemed to depend on the technological capacity of societies and individuals with information technology as the core of this capacity. Castells argue that this informationalism unavoidably brings a divide between valuable and less (or not) valuable people and locales which makes access to information and power networks unequal. Workers are claimed to be increasingly individualized and deprived from organizations to fight for their rights in global capitalism. Furlong and Cartmen (2007:52) also argue that the transitions in the information society are individualized even though flexibility offers new advantages for young people. Castells uses the black hole metaphor to explain the space created by those who are excluded from the informational capitalism. He explains that black holes do still network with each other but disconnected from the mainstream network society: “Networks of capital, labour, information and markets linked up, through technology, valuable functions, people and localities around the world, while switching off from their networks those populations and territories deprived of value and interest of the dynamics of global capitalism. There followed the social exclusion and economic irrelevance of segments of societies, of areas of cities, of regions, and of entire countries, constituting what I call “the fourth world”” (Castells: 1998:336-337).

Cammaerts (2008) argues that the dilemma of ICT and democracy relation, as in previous technology, is that it holds contradictions. It is argued that ICT may be used for both democratic and anti-democratic ends (Shapiro XX, Ferdinand 2000). Terrorist groups and extreme right, for instance, are claimed to equally use ICT (Khan and Kellner 2007) in a similar way to democratic civil society organizations (Reilly 2006) to benefit from the technical advantages and interaction that is impossible in conventional media (Conway 2006). Another claimed challenge is that the low cost of the Internet may introduce the cheapest form of democracy but has little to give to the digitally divided (Anttiroiko 2003).

Castells updates his concept and calls it Mobile Network Society in 2007, by adding mobile/wireless technology and youth to the framework. In Mobile Network Society, he puts the communicating young individual in the centre because “young people have been the drivers of the diffusion of wireless communication technology in developed countries, and they have invented, created and adapted new communicative uses” (Castells et al 2007:245). Networks and interaction in Mobile Network Society are
of "constituent of a set of practices around the interests, values and priorities of each individual" (Castells et al 2007:250). From the point of view of social change, he argues that mobile communication would empower people by freeing them from formal information sources. This, according to him, would have direct consequences on governments and media corporations’ manipulations with quick counter-information diffusion: "It is an individually centred production of the material and social process of communication. In so doing, networks of individual interaction tend to free themselves from organizations, institutions, norms, and material constraints, on the basis of personal convenience and suitability to individual projects. As a result, there is an extraordinary strengthening of the culture of individualism (meaning the primacy of individual projects and interest over the norms of society or reference groups) in material terms. ...the blurring of time, space and activities into a new frame of chosen time, space and multipurpose communication dematerializes social structure and reconstructs it around individually centred networks of interaction" (Castells et al 2007:250).

Castells analyses the new society in social and political dimensions where he focuses on institutional politics, activism, and identity: "The fact that politics has to be framed in the language of electronically based media has profound consequences for the characteristics, organization and goals of political processes, political actors and political institutions" (Castells: 2000:507). As for the political trends in network society, Castells foresees the re-creation of local state, e-participation, and development of symbolic politics by (global) organizations that are not affiliated to political parties, such as humanitarian and human rights organizations (Castells 1997:350). The following sections discuss the claims for change that occurred with ICT in these three dimensions.

### 2.2.2. Institutional politics and ICT

The use of ICT by traditional institutions such as governments, parliaments, and political parties promised some institutional changes such as higher transparency in government work and in elections (Meeks 1997), accountability, and high quality consultation (Coleman 2004). ICT are deemed to also cause some efficiency in the institutional work. Parliamentarians, for instance, think that ICT have the biggest impact on their legislative role because technology seems to make them work more efficiently (EPRI 2005). Local authorities are argued to act more enthusiastically and faster than central governments in adopting ICT in their work because this strategy, they are argued to believe that this technology would refresh local politics (Tsagarousianou: 1998:168) and help them reform their management (Musso et al 2000). Castells (2000b) claims that cities play a key role in the development of technological innovation with the use of ICT in the public services.

In many of the e-government cases, however, it is argued that the emphasis is on electronic service delivery and not on the back office agencies which also need redesigning for a better redesign of the front office (Bekkers and Homburg 2007).

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10 Castells wrote an updated preface for the 2010 edition of his trilogy where he analyzed some developments of the last decade that are connected with the trends that he suggested would appear in society.
Hampton & Gupta (2008:846) argue that e-government practices should not be limited with pages on the Web but public spaces should also be redesigned by (local) authorities with appropriate infrastructure starting from power outlets to flat surfaces in shades for better use of digital displays (see also Mitchell 2005; and van Audenhove 2009 for wireless city). The incorporation of ICT in institutional politics, however, does not seem to necessarily change the institutions because these institutions are claimed to adapt ICT according to their own perception of democracy (for municipalities see Tsagarousianou 1998) or their pre-existing characteristics.

Political parties, for instance, are argued to adapt technology for their already existing goals rather than for fundamental change in their work or communication (Lusoli and Ward 2004). ICT are deemed to be more useful and central for smaller political parties with dispersed membership and for political parties that already have a participatory structure (Lusoli and Ward 2004). Youth’s digital participation in new politics is deemed to unavoidably push traditional politics to reconfigure their online communication to catch youth’s attention (Calenda & Meijer 2009).

As for local e-government, there are claims that citizens do not always use e-services provided on municipal websites. The explanations for this reluctance include lack of motivation and required skills to use these e-services (van Deursen et al 2006); lack of knowledge that these e-services are available (van Dijk et al 2007); and age and education divide (Gauld et al 2010). Moreover, the high quality service supply from the private sector is argued to make citizens expect the same from governmental websites and from online public services. In their global study, Chhabra and Kumar (2009) argue that e-government models are slow to respond to this demand. Even though citizens try online public services, it is argued that they are likely to turn back to offline modes of transaction and not recommend e-services to others (Anthopoulos et al 2007).

Analysing the evolution of e-government definition may be a concrete way of observing wishful change in institutional politics with ICT. In the earlier years of using ICT in institutionalized politics, the criteria for different stages of e-government were rather simple and government-centric. The United Nations Division for Public Economics and Public Administration (UNDPEPA) and the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) (2002:10) proposed five stages of e-government:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Five stages of e-government (UNDPEPA &amp; ASPA 2002)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Emerging</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A government web presence is established through a few independent official sites. Information is limited, basic and static</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Enhanced</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content and information is updated with greater regularity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Interactive</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users can download forms, contact officials, and make appointments and requests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Transactional</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users can actually pay for services or conduct financial transactions online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Seamless</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total integration of e-functions and services across administrative and departmental boundaries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the uses of ICT developed in quality and in quantity, and as ICT developed themselves to offer new and more sophisticated uses, the authorities start to define the e-government more carefully and to expect more changes from these applications. In its latest e-government survey, the UN (2010:95) revises the stages of online service development as the following.

Table 3: Stages of online service development (UN 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Emerging</td>
<td>Government websites provide information on public policy, governance, laws, regulations, relevant documentation and types of government services provided. They have links to ministries, departments and other branches of government. Citizens are easily able to obtain information on what is new in the national government and ministries and can follow links to archived information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Enhanced</td>
<td>Government websites deliver enhanced one-way or simple two-way e-communication between government and citizen, such as downloadable forms for government services and applications. The sites have audio and video capabilities and are multi-lingual. Some limited e-services enable citizens to submit requests for non-electronic forms or personal information, which will be mailed to their house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Transactional</td>
<td>Government websites engage in two-way communication with their citizens, including requesting and receiving inputs on government policies, programs, regulations, etc. Some form of electronic authentication of the citizen’s identity is required to successfully complete the exchange. Government websites process non-financial transactions, e.g. e-voting, downloading and uploading forms, filing taxes online or applying for certificates, licenses and permits. They also handle financial transactions, i.e. where money is transferred on a secure network to government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Connected</td>
<td>Government websites have changed the way governments communicate with their citizens. They are proactive in requesting information and opinions from the citizens using Web 2.0 and other interactive tools. E-services and e-solutions cut across the departments and ministries in a seamless manner. Information, data and knowledge is transferred from government agencies through integrated applications. Governments have moved from a government-centric to a citizen-centric approach, where e-services are targeted to citizens through life cycle events and segmented groups to provide tailor-made services. Governments create an environment that empowers citizens to be more involved with government activities to have a voice in decision-making.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This updated and more detailed version obviously indicates higher and more precise expectations from governments in their e-government policies. The new version also recommends some structural changes concerning the institutions. The transactional stage is a case for this situation. While in the earlier definition (see above), the transactional stage includes payments only; in the new definition it includes interaction with “Government websites engage in two-way communication with their citizens, including requesting and receiving inputs on government policies, programs, regulations, etc”.
Another recommended change is about the move “from a government-centric to a citizen-centric approach”. This means that the e-government is not anymore only about providing information and services to citizens but also about transforming the government approach.

Finally, the new highest stage of e-government includes citizen participation. While in the earlier definition the highest stage an e-government application could reach was the total integration of services, the new highest stage of e-government is the one that “create(s) an environment that empowers citizens to be more involved with government activities to have a voice in decision-making”.

These changes in the definitions suggest that online applications and practices of institutions are not only about efficiency in management but also about improved governor-governed relations and ultimately about democracy. Interaction between the institutions and citizens, and participation bring in the democratic component of the e-government practices. ICT thus are not only expected to facilitate a managerial efficiency but they at the same time are expected to empower citizens by providing tools to make them participate in political decision-making processes.

Introducing these definitions in international documents\(^\text{11}\), however, does not necessarily mean that this is what happens in current e-government practices. The UN (2010) reports that as of 2010 only 20 countries\(^\text{12}\) are at the third or the fourth stage in the world even though e-government data are available from all the countries except from Kiribati, Somalia, and Tuvalu. The report claims that telecommunication structure and human capital are crucial in e-government quality. Therefore, e-government is deemed to be more advanced in countries where governments can afford the investment in both. Accordingly, e-government is expected to be less advanced (but growing fast) in developing countries where governments should invest not only in ICT infrastructure but also in education and in bridging digital divide\(^\text{13}\) (UN 2010). UN reports that underdeveloped countries are the most disadvantaged unless, like in the case of Ethiopia\(^\text{14}\), they develop a good ICT and e-government strategy, and unless they make use of the enormously penetrating mobile technology (UN 2010).

The UN 2010 e-government survey report also presents promising cases from Latin America, Central Asia, and Africa that shows that institutional politics around the world do use ICT for better/more efficient government work. While there are arguments that the use of ICT by the authorities is rather focused on efficient management level, Norris and Coursey (2008) argue that the local governments’ use of ICT in the United States is not even very promising at this level, because they argue that the local e-governments are informational but that they do not offer quality functions or transaction as it was

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11 See also the documents of the OECD, EU, and OSCE on the subject
12 Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States
13 Digital divide is not only about access to hardware and software but also about the costs. ITU (2010) reports that while the entry level fixed broadband subscription cost is 28 PPP$ in developed countries, it is 190 PPP$ in developing countries. ITU (2010) illustrates the difference the speed makes over downloading a 4GB high quality DVD movie: It takes 34 hours 43 minutes 20 seconds to download this movie with 256 kbps (the minimum broadband speed) compare to 5 minutes with 100Mbps (the maximum broadband speed).
14 See the report for details on their strategy
expected from the e-government applications (see also Norris and Moon 2005 for their empirical analysis on the local e-government in the United States).

Chadwick and May (2003) argue that the gradual development of information, transaction, interaction, and participation on government websites depends on which e-governance model the authorities adopt. They present three models of e-governance: managerial, consultative, and participatory e-governance. They argue that the role for government, principle actors and interests, flow of information, principle mechanisms for interaction, usage issues, and defining logic determine the model of e-governance. Chadwick and May explain that the managerial model of e-governance uses ICT for better management, better public services, and for a one-way communication between governments and citizens; the consultative model’s use of ICT includes more interaction with e-voting, e-input from citizens and online town meetings; and the participatory model of e-governance benefits from ICT for many-to-many communication between the various groups of citizens, citizens and government, and to facilitate participation. Here again, the different models of e-governance suggest that alongside the management, there is a democratic component in the online applications of institutions with consultations or with participation.

There are claims that ICT foster the institutions-citizens relations. OECD (2001) reported that all OECD member states regarded ICT as a tool for stronger government-citizen interaction alongside for better public services. As citizens accessed information online, and used e-services, e-government websites were claimed to increase the interaction between citizens and governments (Reddick 2005). European Parliamentarians’ Research Initiative - EPRI (2005) reports that ICT inspire citizens for contacting their members of parliament more often and with higher expectations for faster and personal responses. The study of EPRI concludes that the remarkable rise in the communication between citizens and parliamentarians is not only in numbers but also in profile; in the study parliamentarians report that young citizens and citizens from other constituencies contact them. They think that this wouldn’t be the case if it was not with ICT. Therefore, to parliamentarians, ICT seem to have a positive impact on citizens’ political awareness and participation (EPRI 2005).

Even though on the one hand ICT give the impression that they raise the quality and the quantity of the interaction between institutions and citizens, there are arguments that they may on the other hand do the very opposite. Proudfoot (2002) argues that the overwhelming amounts of e-mails, for instance, prevent the communication between the two groups. The presence of political institutions on the web and particularly on social media looks like these applications increase interaction. Websites like “theyworkforyou.com” or “hearfromyourmp.com” permit citizens to track parliamentarians’ work, position, votes, profiles, and contact details. Miniblogs of parliaments or parliamentarians on Twitter or video channels like EUtube on YouTube update citizens regularly.

Interaction on social media, on the other hand, seems problematic. The study of the Hansard Society (2009) on MP’s use of Facebook concludes that parliamentarians insist on using social networking sites for one-way communication: “Most MPs have a long way to go before they can claim to truly understand the power of social media”.

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Jackson and Lilleker (2009) also analyse the political parties’ use of Web 2.0 (in Britain) and conclude that the parties’ use can rather be labelled as Web 1.5 because even though they are present on Web 2.0 they still use the capacities of Web 1.0. Moreover, UN (2010) claims that government websites look far behind non-governmental websites in the use of Web 2.0 with % 23.4 against 54.1% respectively.

ICT further promised an increased democracy. Online consultations introduced by some governments were deemed to foster democracy (Coleman 2004). Encouraging empirical results supported this view. Williamson and Dekkers (2005) claim for instance that in Australia, 88% of the citizens felt that they could exert at least some influence over their government. Countries like Australia, Canada, and New Zealand are claimed to develop professional expertise in e-consultations (Chadwick 2006:320). Incorporating ICT in political party work is also deemed to open up opportunities for bottom-up input in party decision-making processes (EPRI 2005). Efficient uses of ICT may further prove that it may be possible to mobilize citizens for elections. Statistics of Barak Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign provide some data: Following 14.5 million hours of viewing on YouTube, more than 5 million fans on Facebook, and 500 million blog postings mentioning Obama, “close to 65% of the American population voted in the 2008 election, the highest turnout since the election of 1908” (Qualman 2009:66).

Participation, however, appears as the least developed feature of e-government applications in the world (UNPAN and ASPA 2007; UN 2008; UN 2010). Participation, as explained earlier, has multiple definitions. The definition of online public participation also seems to change as the ICT offer new uses and new features. The steps of public participation by the OECD in 2001 included the three steps of information, consultation, and participation. The International Association of Public Participation IAP2 (2007) however presents a five step spectrum of public participation: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower. This model suggests that citizens are empowered with a government’s promise of “we will implement what you decide”. Integrating ICT in political institutions is argued to have opened some space for participation but Sassi (2000:98) argues that this didn’t have much influence on institutional politics.

Even if e-government offers better access to information and some interaction, it does not seem to necessarily incorporate e-participation. Chadwick and May (2003) argue that this is not due to the digital divide but due to elitism in liberal democracies. Even if new technologies could potentially increase participation, they argue that participatory models of interaction between citizens and authorities would take a “radical reconfiguration of existing policy” (Chadwick & May 2003:295; see also Chadwick 2006). If it is argued that integrating ICT in the administrations does not change the policy of participation, Gasco (2003) argues that this integration does not necessarily make other institutional changes either. If there is a change, Barber (2000) argues, it is not in the direction of better democracy but rather in the direction

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15 The first generation of Web, Web 1.0 was a static system with one-way communication and with complex computer language. Web 2.0 is all about interactivity with easier language and more developed data sharing technologies. This is the generation that is currently and widely used globally and this is the generation that unsurprisingly fostered social media. The third generation, Web 3.0, also known as the Semantic Web permits making more sense of the endless data on the web (see Jacobs and Walsh (2004) for Web 3.0)
of e-commercialization of governments. The managerial change with a liberal-consumer approach is argued to bypass the possibilities of debating and challenging the power (Dahlberg and Siapera 2007), rather than work for full participation (Scott 2006). The incorporation of ICT in institutional politics, the UN (2010) argues, does not offer citizen participation nor online decision-making as it was foreseen in theory and in policy hence a reminder: “Fundamentally, e-government is not about “e”, but about promotion of citizen-centric and participatory governance – helping people to improve their lives and have a voice in decisions affecting their future.” (UN 2010:6)

Finally, Castells (2000:80) argues that the increasing production of and access to political information on/with ICT will transform institutional politics into a media game. He claims that while leadership will be personalized, its power will depend on the image shown by media, which will shift the politics from institutional politics to new forms. Castells (2007) also suggests that the public sphere will transform from the institutional ground to the new communication space. The following section discusses these new forms and ICT.

### 2.2.3. Activism and ICT

As explained earlier, computer-mediated communication followed by the Internet induced a two-way communication permitting the audience to interact with the source. This interaction, according to Castells (2000), gives a material basis for power holder networks and switchers to expand in the society. The online networked society will, according to him, change political actors and processes and opens up room for alternative/new politics.

It becomes increasingly difficult to discuss the political without the alternative frameworks of our day and without these frameworks’ use of ICT for organization, network, mobilization, and interaction: “The Internet is an indisputable feature of contemporary social movements’ strategies” (Chadwick: 2006:124). Kahn and Kellner (2004:94) claim that politics and the political will increasingly be online: “The political battles of the future may well be fought in the streets, factories, parliaments, and other sites of past struggle, but politics is already mediated by broadcast, computer, and information technologies and will be so increasingly in the future”. Gerodimos (2008) argues that therefore alternative politics use ICT more efficiently to reach and mobilize (young) citizens.

Using communication technologies in fact is nothing new for activists who benefited from the earlier technologies to spread information and raise awareness (McCaughey and Ayers 2003). What distinguishes ICT today is that they are deemed to increasingly play a significant role in new politics by offering new e-participation tools (Dahlgren 2004). Bennett (2003:164) claims that “the ease of creating vast webs of politics enables global activist networks to finesse difficult problems of collective identity that often impede the growth of movements”. Norris and Curtice (2006:4) adopt the principle of multidimension in activism established by Verba et al in (1978) and later in 1995 to explain the potential impact of ICT in political activism. According to this principle, activism has four dimensions namely voting, campaign-oriented activism,
cause-oriented activism, and civic activism. They argue that the impact of The Internet would be different in each of these dimensions and that it would depend on the social profile that The Internet activism interacts with among the online population.

Van de Donk et al (2004:4) argue that ICT respond to the values and needs of new politics which are *diversity, decentralization, informality and grassroots democracy rather than unity, centralization, formality and strong leadership*. Olsson (2008) claims that the Internet with its very own structure suits and supports the network structure of non-institutional political organizations. Castells (1997) argues that this phenomenon has several social consequences including the development of symbolic politics by (global) non – governmental organizations not affiliated to political parties. He argues that politics’ presence on online media and virtual communities would allow a more decentralized and participatory system. As ICT develop, Castells (2007) updates and supports his argument with mass self-communication and wireless communication technologies which he claims will permit social movements to intervene more strongly in the political life.

We should also remember that activism is not entirely the same as the new social movements. Though activists do also aim to make a change in society, they may adopt more creative and innovative methods than the new social movements in terms of organization (e.g. more network based than established organization) and in terms of awareness raising in a wide range of activities from economic activism to peace activism, from student activism to media activism. Creative methods include: guerrilla theatre (e.g. *Billionaires for Bush* who overidentified with the supporters of the Bush government and its policies publicly in the streets); identity correction (e.g. *The Yes Men* who impersonate political leaders or corporations to publicly humiliate them); culture jamming (e.g. *Adbusters Media Foundation* which organizes campaigns such as *buy nothing day*, or which jams the advertisements to criticise and challenge consumerism) among many others. Another difference is that non-organized individuals may also initiate activism as discussed in the earlier section in the case of sub-activists. Activism may be spontaneous, temporary, and fluid between the offline and the online.

McCaughey and Ayers (2003) argue that online activism (which they call cyberactivism) raises new questions and new forms of activism which would have new consequences in social change. Besides being a tool to help activists in their organization and spreading information, there are arguments that the Internet may also become a space and the very subject of activism; protest against the corporatization of the Internet (Gurak and Logie 2003), for instance, is a kind of activism that challenges the injustices within the Internet. Independent media such as the indymedia.org is a way of using ICT to bypass the mainstream media (Kidd 2003; see also Downing 2011 for social movement media; Bailey & Cammaerts & Carpentier 2008 for alternative media); this is one way how ICT are claimed to give voice to activists who are not represented in the mainstream media (Bennett 2005), as well as to anti-capitalist oppositional movements (Kahn and Kellner 2007).

A kind of activism which is unique to the Internet is hacktivism. Hactivists may use the technology to hack the websites of governments or corporations to protest against their policies (Vegh 2003). Hacktivism does not necessarily incorporate cyberwar or
cyberterrorism (which is about damaging and/or (re-)moving military data) but it may include virtual sit-ins, website redesigning (defacement), e-mail spamming and so on.

Even though ICT may facilitate access and communication, theoretical discussions suggest that activists do not necessarily work only online. They still seem to need people to get together in the street to support their cause. Bennett (2005) argues that it is this ability to use ICT for interaction between offline and online that makes activism reach a global scale. Cammaerts (2007b:281) argue that the combination of the offline and the online builds trust and solidarity among the activists: “it is in that real messy world that social change has to be argued for the most, winning the ‘hearts and minds’ of citizens and political actors”. Khan and Kellner (2007) argue that using ICT for mobilizing citizens is not what activists need to reach but what they need to do to reach their goal. They also argue that The Internet offers a new space for both traditional and new politics. Activists can use new technologies for propagating a radical structural transformation.

Kavada (2005), however, argues that the new space holds the old characteristics of politics: unequal representation of different/marginal voices and the replication of offline power relations on the Internet show, according to her, even new activists do not entirely make use of the network technology to make a structural change in politics. Della Porta and Tarrow (2005) argue that social movements may also face challenges such as limited reach and skills and they emphasise that movements need individuals and organizations that have the capacities and commitment to make ICT useful for their action. Van de Donk et al (2004) underline the importance of organizing and spreading innovation. Young people are seen as the early adapters and drivers of mobile technology as well as inventors of new kinds of uses (Castells et al 2007). There are on the one hand arguments that this wide use of the Internet by young people is a promise for civic renewal (Shah et al 2002:979-980) while on the other hand other arguments say that youth is less engaged and more into entertainment than politics (Coleman et al 2008:181). Young people, however, use ICT for alternative political frames, for instance, to organize for (offline) transnational activism (Owen 2006) or for sub-activism (Bakardjieva 2010).

One of the first cases of using ICT for activism is the call of Zapatista movement to the global community on the Internet in the 1990s. The significance of this case is not only that they reached a global community overnight but it is also claimed that it initiated a global NGO network where different causes and activists of the world could start to interact (Chadwick 2006). From the late 1990s on, activists started to use ICT to organize globally for global events. The global events such as the Carnival against capitalism, Battle of Seattle, and later the Live8 are claimed to have led to global protests for social justice and democracy against neo-liberal globalization (Kahn and Kellner 2004). The global network of anti-war activists, for instance, helped the organization of anti-war demonstrations against the US army. Demonstrations against the invasion of the US army in Iraq on February 15th 2003 are told to have gathered 16 million people all around the world (Della Porta and Tarrow 2005).

16 For cases from different continents on how young people use media to participate in social change, see Tufte and Enghel 2009
As activists’ use of ICT spreads worldwide, local activism seems to reach the global more conveniently. Sassi (2000) for instance argues that the online public sphere distinguishes from the offline public sphere because it permits local issues to reach a global audience. ICT are claimed to also permit activists to organize transnational and hybrid movements (Chadwick 2006) as well as global events simultaneously in different locales (della Porta and Tarrow 2005). Lipschutz (2005) argues that ICT don’t only offer access to global information but that they also permit interaction and cooperation among the activists of the world. The global alter-global movement, for instance, is listed as a case for the use of p2p technology (Bauwens 2006). E-mail lists of global social movements are seen as the primary meeting points of communication and exchange for the members of these movements spread around the world (Kavada 2009). On July 2nd 2005 an estimated 3 billion17 people raised their voices against poverty in Africa at the Live8 movement initiated by the rock stars Bono and Bob Geldof to pressure G8 member states to take measures for eradicating extreme poverty in Africa.

Pieterse (2005) argues that linking local and global activism is helpful for locals to ask/receive support from global networks in the case of, for instance, minorities or indigenous people’s local movements of human rights. Kymlicka (2001) on the other hand, argues that the language barrier risks reserving this local global link to demand for local democracy for the elite who can speak foreign languages. That is why he argues that even though transnational activism is good in terms of interaction, democracy can only happen in national boundaries. Tarrow (2005) argues that the most effective transnational activists are the rooted cosmopolitans - who are closely linked to local networks.

### 2.2.4. Identity and ICT

Identity is a cross disciplinary concept that is approached from different perspectives. Stryker and Burke (2000:284) who developed the identity theory in the 1980s explain that there are three approaches to the concept: a first approach takes identity as the culture of people without any distinction between identity and ethnicity; a second approach is the social identity theory which refers to collectivity or social category for common identification or common culture of social movements, the third approach, their own, “refers to parts of a self composed of the meanings that persons attach to the multiple roles they typically play in highly differentiated contemporary societies”. They write that the identity theory contain two separate flows under structural symbolic interactionism (Stryker 1980 in Stryker and Burke 2000) each providing context for the other. Stryker and his colleagues develop the first flow which studies the external factors; how the social structures affect the structure of the self and how structure of the self influences social behaviour. Burke and his colleagues, at the same time, develop the second flow which focuses on the internal dynamics of self-processes as these affect social behaviour. Fung (2002: 189) in his Foucauldian post-structuralist analysis of

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17 The number that appears on the official website of the event www.live8live.com
identity argues that the “identity has to be understood as embedded in the multiple ‘linkages’ of power that extend throughout all social and cultural practices”.

Turkle (1996:269) states 7 years before SecondLife18: "Some are tempted to think of life in cyberspace as insignificant, as escape or meaningless diversion. It is not. Our experiences there are serious play". Livingstone (2008) argues that (among youngsters) identity, lifestyle, and social relations management are done through creating and networking online content. Wood and Smith (2005) claim that personal and social building of identity consists of three parts: who we think ourselves to be, how we wish others to perceive us, and how they actually perceive us. They argue that computer-mediated communication research focuses on the second part whereas other authors of the field ask more questions such as “how computer-mediated communication affects the organization of the self”, "Are virtual communities most appropriately viewed as being structured around personal identity or communal identity” (Foster: 1996: 21) or "are we ready and willing to allow a right to lie for the sake of a right to privacy?” (Woo: 2006:966).

Cyberspace and virtual communities seem to be important spaces for identity building because they contain both closer and impersonal association (Foster: 1996). The tricky question is who creates the identity. On the one hand, invisibility on computer-mediated communication is argued to give people a bigger control over identity building (Wood & Smith: 2005; Rheingold 1993) but on the other hand, on social networking sites, there are claims that it is the audience that frames the identity development (Boyd: 2007). Communication on social networking sites differs from the face-to-face communication. This difference, however, is not necessarily due to computer-mediated communication.

Apparently, on social networking sites, there is more than simply sending e-mails or instant chatting. Boyd (2007:2) suggests four properties of the social networking sites: “persistence, searchability, exact copyability, and invisible audiences”. These properties, she argues, make social networking sites an attractive research field because they are strong characteristics of that environment that are likely to change how people act, react, communicate, and develop identities.

Building identities online with ICT brings about discussions on the differences between the online and the offline identities of the same person. Jordan (1999:59) prefers the term avatar for online identity: “The existence of an avatar means someone has used some of cyberspace’s resources in ways that result in other avatars recognising a stable online personality. Someone’s avatar may be constructed from the style of their online writing, from the repeated use of a name or selfdescription, or from any of many other virtual possibilities. More than one avatar can be created and the relationship between these identities and someone’s offline life is complicated.” He argues that Web presents three distinctions in terms of identity building: he claims that the connection between the online and the offline induces identity fluidity; that the cyberspace is an anti-hierarchical environment with its decentered structure; and that it is a space of knowledge.

18 “Second Life® is a 3-D virtual world created by its residents. Since 2003, it has grown explosively and today is inhabited by millions of Residents from around the globe.” (secondlife.com)
Jordan (1999) also argues that online and offline identities differ; he explains that the difference between the offline and the online activity is not only about the abolishing of the offline prejudices or the lack of domination in a loud conversation but it is rather about the absence of the physically marked offline identities in cyberspace. Thus he argues that one may have different identities in offline and in online life. While these variations of the self are claimed as faking on online identities such as the “fakesters” (Boyd & Heer: 2006), Turkle (1996) doesn’t call people who have different online identities as fakesters but she calls the situation as multiplicity and flexibility of online identities. She argues that this has different effects such as "uncomfortable sense of fragmentation, relief, possibilities for self-discovery, even self-transformation" (Turkle: 1996: 260).

Turkle (1996: 263) explains that the Internet may change the popular understandings of identity because it helps approaching one’s story in different ways and this encourages people to think of themselves “as fluid, emergent, decentralized, multiplicitous, flexible and ever in process”. Poster (1997) also argues that the Internet is not only a communication tool but a social space where people build mobile identities. Moreover, Barker (1999) argues that electronic communication of the culture when coupled with globalization and mobility contributes to formation of multiple, fragmented, and hybrid identities. The diversification of contexts and interaction possible with ICT, he argues, allow the same person to move among different identities.

For Kennedy (2006) online identities are the extensions of the offline selves. Therefore in order to understand the virtual life she thinks that one should look at the offline contexts of online selves. Another difference may occur between online synchronous and asynchronous communication when it is about faking identity. People are claimed to be comparatively more honest about themselves on asynchronous communication such as home pages because they have information tied to offline life such as photos, e-mail address, connections to people the person knows (Chandler: 1998).

Nakamura (2002) argues however that even though virtual communities and computer-mediated communication on the Web promised a new space for an alternative identity building, the ethnic and racial identities duplicated as they were in the offline life. McKenna and Bargh (1998) also argue that virtual groups on the Internet accept and obey the structures and principles of social groups in general (offline) and that activity in these groups has offline consequences for individuals with marginal sexual or ideological identities. Warschauer (2000) supports this argument that the virtual communities do not cause a change in identity building: “The Internet does not introduce totally new ethnic dynamics, but rather magnifies those that already exist. New immigration patterns and increased interracial marriage make racial identity more subjective and multiple; the anonymous, multi-channelled communication facilitated by the Internet deepens this trend toward multiple subjective identity (Turkle 1995)”. He, however, also argues that while on the one hand communication on the Internet promotes the use of English language as the lingua franca of the online

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19 The reseacher prefers the term offline rather than real-life
population, it on the other hand offers opportunities for local/reactive identities to challenge the hegemony of this language.

Fung (2002:201) from a Foucauldian perspective argues that ICT and online activity provides tools for normalized minorities to resist the power networks to revive their own identity. He, at the same time warns about the commercialization of the Internet which may prevent this small scale resistance: “Given the challenges to the dominant discourses of identity politics posed by a group such as HKnet, as well as the strong presence of China in the interplay of international politics and business, the kind of political practice that was possible in the late 1980s and early 1990s may now be significantly diluted, or even cease to exist under the pressure of external political-economic constraints on websites”.

Jordan (1999) emphasizes that even though we enter cyberspace as individuals and remain alone offline in front of our ICT, we build cultural and political places in cyberspace where we socialize with others. That is why he disagrees with the argument that people who spend time online are asocial individuals who prefer machines to humans (Jordan 1999:96). We also see claims that ICT may induce network identities. Russell (2005) for instance argues that a network identity beyond a group identity has been created by Zapatistas. Kavada (2009) claims that some e-mail lists of social movements succeed in creating a collective identity even though the collective may be fragmented as the geographies of members expand. Wall (2007) however argues that other e-mail lists fail to offer a successful locus to express movement or collective identities.

ICT and the network society are also deemed to create global identities. Castells (1997) claims that cultural expressions become mediatized by e-communication networks with diverse values, and that they are increasingly detached from local history and geography. He suggests that those people who enjoy the networks of wealth and power tend to be identity-less because the space of flows for the elite is placeless and cosmopolitan. People, however, live their lives in a place, connected to their culture and history, therefore, he argues, those who cannot benefit from the online global/cosmopolitan networks tend to be attached to their local, communal identities: “the more a social organization is based upon ahistorical flows, superseding the logic of any specific place, the more the logic of global power escapes the socio-political control of historically specific local/national societies” (Castells: 1998: 338-339). As already discussed in the previous section, Rosenau (2004:26) argues that the local and the global interact by simultaneously influencing each other in such a way to blur the boundaries between internal and external affairs. He argues that this situation causes a crisis of identity due to the conflict between the local and the global.

ICT may also create other identities such as the e-citizen. Using ICT to access official information, to benefit from the online public services, to communicate with representatives/governors/officials, and to participate in online political processes may transform citizens into e-citizens. Government websites, however, are not the only sites to turn citizens into e-citizens. The rearrangement of the government work by focusing on the state-citizens relation and the supposedly increased interaction between the two gives the opportunity for citizens to communicate and to interact with
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governments and as discussed above, it offers opportunities for citizens to access more official information as well as officials online as e-citizens. Any other public or official online or mobile tools such as interacting with a library, buying tram tickets, or making money transfers on mobile phones are also among the practices of e-citizens. Moreover, e-citizens may use spaces which are primarily not created with political intentions for talk on politics. Online sites of popular culture, for instance, may turn into spaces for political deliberation. Graham’s (2010) analysis of the Big Brother site claims that about a quarter of the postings from this site were engaged in deliberative political talk.

Institutional politics, activism, and identity are the three dimensions of the study in which the researcher is analysing the various perceptions of the role of ICT in the change. The relation between these dimensions with ICT, thus, is a discussion that covers concepts such as access, interaction, efficiency, democracy, empowerment, global city, virtual creation of identity among others, which the reader will find in the upcoming empirical analysis.

2.3. Fantasy

Another framework this study looks at is the fantasy about change. As explained in the introduction, this Lacanian theory permits a deeper and critical understanding of people’s perceptions on change. In the following, the section first explains this concept and discusses how it is related to the political. The section then takes the concepts of the first framework and rediscusses them here in the framework of fantasies about the claimed change in society.

2.3.1 Fantasy in Lacanian theory

Jacques Lacan (1964) conceptualized fantasy when he reintroduced psychoanalysis in France. Though Lacan developed this psychoanalytical concept referring to the subject (individual), fantasy increasingly becomes a tool for critical theorists to explain the political hegemonies, moving from the subject to society and to the political (Stavrakakis 2007). Central in fantasy are the split, lack, and enjoyment (or jouissance as in Lacan’s original terminology). The subject (the individual) is split from the source of enjoyment. The enjoyment is thus lost forever causing a never-to-be-filled lack in the subject. The subject endlessly searches for the enjoyment but this is impossible because it is stolen forever by the Other. This situation is unbearable for the subject. The subject, thus, in order to cope with this situation imagines scenarios where he believes he reaches the enjoyment. This scenario that serves as the drug to cope with the lack is the fantasy.

Fantasy is the promise of filling the lack and thus reaching the enjoyment. Another element of the concept is the desire. Desire too endlessly searches for and pushes the subject to the enjoyment (fullness). If desire reaches the full enjoyment, however, it loses its very existence. The paradox is that in order to keep this quest live there is always a distance between the subject and the enjoyment which is never fully reachable (Stravrakakis 1999). Žižek (1989) illustrates this paradox, at the society level, with anti-
Semitism; the anti-Semite who hates the Jew and whose fantasy is a world without Jews, paradoxically needs the Jew in order to continue to be an anti-Semite.

It is Lacan (1964) who developed the concept. Reading Lacan, however, is like practicing the fantasy since he designed his lectures in such a way that the audience never fully understands what he means. This intentional (Stavrakakis 1999:5 quotes Lacan who admits his intention) complexity of his transcribed seminars as well as some seminar videos available online may be one way of showcasing the fantasy. The problem in reading Lacan is not limited by the lack of a clear expression but as Stavrakakis (1999) explains, Lacan didn’t publish anything himself; others around him transcribed his seminars. That is why, in the following, in order to avoid absurdly difficult, impossible to fully understand, at any rate unoriginal reading (despite some trials in the beginning) the researcher prefers discussing the rest with references to other authors (than Lacan) who relate fantasy to the political, moving it from the subject to society and to the political.

2.3.2. Fantasy in the political

Lacan introduced psychoanalysis as a science where there was no room for certainties. Turkle (1992) tells that students (as well as psychoanalysts) of post-1968 Paris supported this position because they were against the then politically insensitive university discourse. He is thus, from the beginning, present in the political. Later, fantasy starts to be an attractive concept for critical theorists of the political and democracy. Stavrakakis (2007) names the group of critics who use this concept as The Lacanian Left. He categorises in this group different theorists who refer to Lacan in different ways: “At the epicentre of this emerging field one would locate the enthusiastic endorsement of Lacan by Žižek; next to him – at what some would call a healthy distance- the Lacan-inspired Laclau and Mouffe; at the periphery – negotiating a delicate balancing act between the outside and the inside of the field, often functioning as its intimate ‘others’ or adversaries- we would have to locate the critical engagement of thinkers like Castoriadis and Butler” (Stravrakakis 2007:3-4).

Stavrakakis (1999:13) argues that the split subject as the locus of an impossible identity is the major contribution of Lacan to critical political analysis. Stavrakakis (1999), in his Lacan and the Political, explains how the various elements of fantasy relate to the political. He starts with the subordination in the being of the subject. The subject can only be represented by the symbolic (linguistic), he then argues that from the very beginning there is an exercise of power in the being of the subject (Stavrakakis: 1999:20). The impossible-to-fill-in lack of the subject, according to him, indicates that the fullness of identity is impossible, but identification is (Stavrakakis: 1999:29). Concerning the new forms of politics that take place outside of the traditional frames, “Politics is identical to political reality, and political reality, as all reality, first, is constituted at the symbolic level, and second, is supported by fantasy” (Stavrakakis:1999:73).

Glynos and Stavrakakis (2008:261-262) illustrate how fantasy permits political analysis. They emphasize three components of fantasy to schematize the parallelism
between the subject and the political: imaginary, enjoyment of the body, and the stolen enjoyment. The *imaginary* promise of reaching the lost enjoyment, according to them, is visible in the political discourse about the better future society without today’s problems. This abstract fantasmatic promise, however, is not enough because the *enjoyment of the body* sustains the desire and motivation. That is why the subject/society also needs this enjoyment which, according to them, is found for instance in the defeat of the national enemy or the victory of the national football team. This short term enjoyment, however, is not enough to satisfy the desire and thus creates dissatisfaction. The enjoyment will never be reached because it is lost. If it is lost and impossible to gain back that is because it is stolen by the Other. Glynos and Stravrakakis use the *stolen enjoyment* and the Other to explain the Other in the nationalist narratives. One of their examples of this argument is the immigrant who comes and steals the jobs (which takes the enjoyment away). Glynos and Stavrakakis (2008:262) underline the role fantasy plays in building of national identity and desire: “It does this by structuring the social subject’s partial enjoyment through a series of collective practices (celebrations, festivals, consumption rituals, etc.) and by reproducing itself at the level of representation in official and unofficial public discourse (as a beatific narrative and a traumatic scenario).”

Žižek (1989) reads Marx’ formula “they do not know it but they are doing it” differently by placing the illusion not on knowledge but on the reality. This time what people do not know is that their reality is structured by the illusion. So the new formula by Žižek is: “they know very well how things really are, but still they are doing it as if they didn’t know”, Žižek calls this unconscious overlooked illusions *ideological fantasy* (Žižek 1989: 32-33). He argues that fantasy helps the ideology to “take its own failure into account in advance” (Žižek: 1989:126) linking it to Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) antagonist theory where they state *society does not exist.*

Žižek (1989, 1997) repeatedly uses the anti-Semitism case to illustrate his reference to Lacan/fantasy in his analysis of the political. He explains (1997:32) “fantasy provides a rationale for the inherent deadlock of desire: it constructs the scene in which the jouissance we are deprived of is concentrated in the Other who stole it from us. In the anti-Semitic ideological fantasy, social antagonism is explained away via the reference to the Jew as the secret agent who is stealing social jouissance from us”.

*Che vuoi?* is another sub-concept of fantasy which translates as what you really want when you say that you want something that is the desire of the Other (who stole the enjoyment). Here again, Žižek (1989:114-115) argues that *che vuoi?* manifests in the political, as in the anti-Semitism case, with the *Jewish conspiracy* – the fantasy on what the Jew wants.

Finally, Žižek (1999:92-93) explains that in fantasy there is a multitude of “subject-positions”. This means that the subject is free to flow among different identifications; he is not only/automatically identified with himself. Secondly, fantasy always involves an impossible gaze. Therefore, from the political point of view, he argues that it is important to know for which gaze the fantasy is created.

The conditions and the elements of fantasy, when taken broadly, and when applied to society, provide the tools to critically analyse the political processes. This research
approaches fantasy in a more contemporary, unorthodox way taking it more in general. In the following, the section discusses what fantasies come out of the claimed changes in the three areas that we studied in the framework of this research: local – global relation, politics and the political, and the ICT. Each area creates a main fantasy that each includes variations based on the different gazes (Žižek 1999).

### 2.3.3. Fantasies of social changes

When looked at the three areas of claims for change from a Lacanian point of view, some of the concepts in the discussions manifest as fantasies that are created and accepted because they help to cope with the lack, and “fantasy beholds the promise of the unachievable wholeness and the harmonious resolution of social antagonism” (Carpentier 2011b:119). The claimed changes in the local-global relation, politics and the political, and ICT provide imaginaries for fantasies in each of the areas. The dominant fantasy in the area of local – global relation is the fantasy of harmony. The interaction between the two levels is to create a harmonious world. The area of politics and the political creates imaginaries predominantly for the fantasy of political power. This is about the power over institutionalized politics and the power of the political with other/new actors. Finally the dominant fantasy in the ICT area is the fantasy of technological power. This fantasy is about who holds the power; technology or society. Each of these areas creates these dominant fantasies that may be present in the two other areas in a secondary level. We also observe variations in the fantasies when taking into consideration the different gazes that provide basis for fantasies (Žižek 1999). The following discusses these fantasies and their variations in each of the three areas.

**Table 4: Fantasies of social changes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of change</th>
<th>Local – Global relation</th>
<th>Politics and the political</th>
<th>ICT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>Political Power</td>
<td>Technological Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalization</td>
<td></td>
<td>Institutional power</td>
<td>Technological determinism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Localization</td>
<td></td>
<td>Full participation</td>
<td>Social determinism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2.3.3.1. Fantasies in local-global relation

Žižek (1999) argues that fantasy makes believe in solidarity and co-operation in an unharmonious society. This solidarity and co-operation are embedded in the fantasy of harmony. There are two variations in this fantasy: globalization – to reach a better world by enlarging it, and localization – to maintain a good world by protecting its community. Globalization is based on the neo-liberal idea that the world will evolve into one harmonious society. The global village is one unified society where everybody is connected. Global city, global public sphere, and global citizen are all part of this
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Globalization fantasy. Localization, on the other hand, is based on the romantic fantasy of rural peace. Tönnies (1963) for instance fantasizes the community by distinguishing it from the society with close human ties and community identity (Carpentier 2011b).

Žižek (1999) emphasizes the importance of the gaze in fantasies. As discussed above, he argues that fantasies vary depending on for whose gaze the fantasy is created and that this information is important in analysing the political processes with the concept. The differences of gaze thus create variations within the fantasies. The global city for instance is an example for the fantasy of harmony. It can be seen as a way to reach harmony in a global world because it is a scenario of ensuring harmony of the local and the global by networking the two levels in the local. The global city may have another variation; a site where the community persists despite the impact of globalizations. The firewall (Norris and Inglehart 2009) discussed above, is part of this localization fantasy. The global city may also have a third variation where globalization is reconciled with the local – again in order to reach harmony. Glocal/translocal relations can then be taken as the variations of this fantasy. Sub-fantasies may however construct frustrations for each other. The global city for instance is frustrated by the challenges in the local. While the global elite (of the local) benefit from the global city in terms of flows of information, capital, and people with the help of ICT, ordinary people of the city who don’t benefit from these flows, who are not wealthy, and who are attached to their local/communal identities are to be excluded. If the residents are the most important components of the city, then leaving this component out of the global city frustrates the very idea.

The global public sphere is an example of perfect interaction as part of the globalization fantasy. It is about global harmony and global solidarity among activists or civil society on a broader basis. The global communication and networking possible with ICT allow the idea of the global public sphere where a fight for global justice and democratic policy-making for global issues may occur. This fantasy, however, is also frustrated by the challenges of several digital divides, elitism among activists, the impossibility of a global democracy, the impossibility of global organization of activists, and representation crisis of the global activist organizations in global processes. The translocal online networks of grass-root or local activism may be seen as another variation where activists reconcile local and global but remain in the local for their local cause/fight. Rooted cosmopolitans (Appiah 1996; Tarrow 2005) discussed above form here the variation of the harmony fantasy from the gaze of the local.

Global identity or the global citizen is an example of integrated subject as another part of the globalization fantasy. Global identity suggests that the interaction between the local and the global will make people adopt global identities detached from the local/communal/national identities. Once freed from the locally binding identities, global identity will ensure harmony in the global village. Global identity is frustrated with the challenges of strong local identities, barriers to reach the global, and resistance to keep local values. Hybrid identities may be commented here as a variation of this fantasy. Local and global are mixed in hybrid identities as new identities that interact both with local and the global and that feed both levels with new presentations.
2.3.3.2. Fantasies in politics and the political area

The claimed changes in politics and the political area provide imaginaries for the fantasy of political power. Carpentier (2011b:121) suggests that the fantasies of post-political, social makeability, and universality are all created to cope with the impossible-to-be-reached full power. The post-political fantasy preserves the privilege of the institutional politics in decision-making desires for the political consensus (see also Mouffe 2005). The social makeability fantasy is about the power of structuring the social, in other words, the social engineering by the politics. The universality fantasy is based on the political and social-cultural unity. Despite the frustrations in all of these fantasies, Carpentier (2011b:125) argues that these fantasies cause certain hubris in policy making that needs to be confronted with modesty, restraint, and respect for diversity. There are again two main fantasies of power in the politics and the political area; institutional power and full participation.

The fantasy of institutional power couples with efficiency. Institutionalized politics benefit from the ICT for efficiency to keep their power over citizens as well as other institutionalized politics. From the gaze of the central institutionalized politics, one variation of this fantasy is centralization. Central governments have the power over the rest of politics with efficient tools. A second variation of the same fantasy, from the local authorities’ point of view is decentralization that grants the institutional power to local politics. Each of these variations poses at the same time mutual reasons for frustrations.

As for the political, the fantasy of the new social movements/activism is full participation. As the space and actors of the political activity diversify and increasingly find more room outside the traditional institutional politics space, the fantasy of participatory democracy emerges. This fantasy is based on the idea that political decision-making is participatory where activists of various political identities and affiliations can equally join the institutional decision-makers in the decision making processes. The active citizen is another variation of this full participation fantasy. The claimed changes in politics and the political, and the trend of expanding the space of the political both in offline and online create the fantasy of active/engaged citizenry. The many (ICT) tools to raise awareness on social issues and the many (ICT) tools of deliberating on these issues provide the imaginary to create the fantasy that citizens are more active and more engaged in politics and in the political.

Citizens, however, don’t seem to be very much more active or engaged only because it is possible. The interest and engagement in politics and in the political occur only if citizens see that what they say is taken into account (Coleman 2004). The lack of participatory models of democracy and governance (Chadwick and May 2003) makes it very difficult for citizens to experience that what they contribute with is actually taken into consideration by the decision makers. The lack of full participation by activists and ordinary citizens means that politics prevails and that the political remains weak. The central idea of split and lack in Lacan’s fantasy, however, relates to unharmonious society: “If, according to Laclau’s Lacanian dictum society does not exist (as a harmonious ensemble) this impossible existence is all the time constructed and reconstructed through the symbolic production of discourse and its fantasmatic investment, through
the reduction of the political to politics” (Stavrakakis: 1999:82). Reducing the political to politics is the frustration of the participatory democracy fantasy. Following his analysis of fantasy and how it relates to the political, Stavrakakis (1999:140) states “a real and pure democracy “does not exist”” what Žižek has previously formulated as “real democracy’ is just another name for non-democracy” (Žižek : 1989:148).

2.3.3.3. Fantasies in ICT

Technology, including the new information and communication technologies and the claimed changes in this area also create fantasies. The main fantasy in this area is the fantasy of technological power. Who holds the power is the basis of the variations of this fantasy. Technological determinism is an example of the power of technology over society. This is based on the idea that technology shapes society and social change. The fantasy foresees that technology will cause structural changes in the political and social future independent from other social dynamics.

Uses of ICT by institutionalized politics such as the applications of e-government may be seen as the efforts to attain the technological power by institutionalized politics over whole politics and ultimately over the society. Virtual identities may be another variation of this fantasy. Creating a whole new identity in the cyberspace is an example of full power over our life / our identity. Cyberspace provides opportunities to create new, different, fake, multiple identities (Boyd 2006; Turkle 1996; Jordan 1999) that one can have power over from the beginning. Creating identities online however is not independent from the others/audience. This fantasy is thus frustrated because the power is not fully at the hands of the creator of the online identity. Moreover, virtual identities are argued to be the extensions of the offline identities especially in the online tools where people are connected to people they are connected to in their offline life.

The counter-variation of the fantasy of technological power is the social determinism. This is the idea, on the contrary, of the society which exercises power on technology. This fantasy completely denies any role of technology in the social change granting the social institutions, and social and political elite the power over technology and the power over society and social change. Both variations here again frustrate each other because neither of them can deny the other in the process of social change in our society where technology has become a solid component. Interactionism is a concept that reconciles technology and society, arguing that the social change would occur with the interaction of the two sides. Interactionism is at the same time what frustrates the fantasy of technological power by taking the full power away from technology and from social institutions.

The study will continue by looking at the empirical framework to understand how different groups in society such as institutional politicians, activists, and ordinary citizens make sense out of the claimed changes. This empirical framework offers the analysis of how citizens perceive the role of ICT in the changing society. The empirical framework analyses the perceptions of the role of ICT by these three groups in Istanbul. In order to better captivate the analysis, the following chapter will first present a contextual background about Turkey and about Istanbul.
3. **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND: ISTANBUL AND TURKEY**

Istanbul and Turkey in general, have experienced in the recent years social changes especially in politics and the political. That is mainly related to the democracy project of the ruling party that focuses on the relations of the army and the civil politics. Another project is the zero-problems-with-neighbours policy that reshapes the foreign policy of the country in the framework of the neo-Ottoman approach. These changes reflect on the relations of the country and the city with the global, the relation of politics and the political, and the uses of ICT. Three dimensions of this research namely the institutional politics, activism, and identity are the contexts from which the interviewees speak. All these three dimensions seem to be influenced by the above overarching trends. This chapter presents these contexts as well as a background on the media and ICT environment in the country and in the city.

3.1. **Introduction: country background**

Mustafa Kemal founded modern Turkey in 1923 as a successor state to the Ottoman Empire. The new republic and its founder’s reforms transformed the legal, political, economic, social, and cultural life within less than a decade. The reforms which aimed to westernize the country included among other things equal civil rights for men and women with the new civil law derived from several European civil codes; abolishing the Khalifat1 status and adopting secularism; reform in language by replacing the Ottoman alphabet with Latin letters, and by *purifying* the language (from Arabic and Persian words); bringing in western clothing by banning burka and fez; and changing the measurement units and calendar. When citizens were obliged to adopt family names by law, Mustafa Kemal took the name Atatürk (Father of Turks).

Atatürk’s Republican People Party (CHP) ruled the country until 1950 when Turkish politics switched from the one-party system to the multi-party system. The opposition Democratic Party (DP) won the first elections. The new multi-party era initiated democratization in the country; however, the traditional2 presence of the army in politics and its regular coups between 1960 and 1980 highly challenged the process. The coup of 1980 destroyed (mainly left wing) activism, civil society, and media. The army later adopted softer methods of interfering in civilian politics: in 1997 by the widely named “post-modern coup” against the Islamic-oriented government, and in 2007 by the e-memorandum against the former foreign affairs minister, pro-Islamic Abdullah Gul’s election for presidency.

Turkey has been ruled since 2002 by Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s pro-Islamic neo-liberal Justice and Development Party (AKP)3. The recent unprecedented democratization momentum that AKP government initiated is promising in terms of empowering civilian

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1 Leadership of the Islamic community that the Ottoman Empire held since 1517
2 The army was also strongly present in civilian politics in the Ottoman Empire era
3 The party won 49.9% of the votes in the 2011 parliamentary elections to rule the country for the third successive term.
politics and taking away the political power from the army but the freedom of press and media including the Internet; freedom of speech, especially of citizens from the opposition; freedom of academe; citizen participation; accountability; and tolerance for oppositional/alternative political views and lifestyles are still under serious threat. The police are still violent in street demonstrations to the extent of killing demonstrators⁴. Turkey is placed among the hybrid regimes⁵ on the Democracy Index 2010 of the Economist Intelligence Unit (2010) of the financial publication the Economist⁶.

Turkey was absent from the World War II scene; however, its geo-politically strategic location causes (or caused) political disputes with its neighbours. Turkey’s location also makes her a key transit route for global drug trafficking and global money laundering. Turkey is a member of all the major international organizations. She joined the UN in 1945, the Council of Europe in 1949, and NATO in 1952. She was a temporary member of the UN Security Council in 2009-2010. She is also member of the OECD, OSCE, OIC, G-20 and D-8 among several others. Turkey is an associate member of the European Community since 1964. Full membership to the European Union (EU), on the other hand, is a very slow⁷ process that has a considerable impact on Turkey’s democratization process. Turkey’s traditional reactive diplomacy used to be focused on her relations with the Western world. This diplomacy recently became pro-active and started to be multidirectional, reviving the relations with the Eastern world (Keyder 2011)⁸. The new era, also known as the Neo-Ottoman diplomacy (Keyder 2011), on the other hand, together with the EU’s own ambiguities, slowed down the EU negotiation talks and damaged the traditionally good relations with Israel.

After the 1980 coup when power returned to civilians in 1983, the then prime minister liberal Turgut Özal adopted the policies of opening the Turkish economy to global market, and privatization. Massive investment in telecommunications also started in the second half of the 1980s. Private television and radio, although in the beginning illegally and indirectly, started to broadcast in early 1990s. The Middle-eastern Technical University in Ankara was the first user of The Internet in 1993. The sectorial share on the GDP shows that services and industry are highly developing while the traditional agricultural sector is in decline. The overall foreign direct investment (FDI) as of the third quarter of 2009 was $128.8 billion with energy sector as the primary share in the FDI in 2009 (as the end of September) (YASED 2009).

⁴ On the long list of victims of police violence in street demonstrations are a retired teacher who was killed with overdose of pepper gas, and a young pregnant woman who lost her baby while being beaten by a police agent during the past year. Many students are detained only because they wore t-shirts with political slogans.

⁵ The regular report of the Democracy Index classifies democracies as full democracy, flawed democracies, hybrid regimes, and authoritarian regimes.

⁶ In June 2011, the newly elected parliament went through a crisis because some of the elected (and currently imprisoned) representatives are not given the right to enter the parliament.

⁷ The accession negotiation talks started 41 years later in 2005

⁸ The highlight of this new era in Turkish diplomacy started in 2009 with the “one minute” request by the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan from the moderator of his talk with the Israeli Prime Minister Simon Peres at the Davos Summit. When he was given the extra minute to talk he criticized Israel’s Gaza policy with a populist language and he walked out. That one minute aired live on global media made him the most popular ever Turkish politician in the Arab street. Erdogan’s next transnational move to reposition Turkish diplomacy included the President of Brazil, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva with whom he met the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama in Washington in April 2010 to propose negotiations with Iran without new UN sanctions pushed by the United States.
investors, on the other hand, mainly invest in Central Asian (Turkic) countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and in the Middle-East and Northern Africa. Turkey has gone through a national financial crisis in 2001 after which banking regulations have been revised. That is why the government claimed that the global financial crisis of 2007 did not hurt the Turkish economy as much as it hurt other economies. This situation, however, does by no mean indicate a fair prosperity in the country where, as of 2008, 17.1% of the population lived below the poverty line (UNDP 2010).

The half millennia long mighty Ottoman Empire ruled in a large area covering South-eastern Europe, Western Asia-Middle East, and Northern Africa. Anatolia, where the majority of the territory of Modern Turkey is situated was home to many civilizations prior to the empire9. Therefore there is a rich ethnic diversity in the country. The nation-state, however, built the national identity that is Turkish. The official criterion of minority is religion. This criterion derives from the Treaty of Lausanne that was signed between the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (founded in Ankara in 1920) and the Allies of the World War I, in Switzerland, in 1924. The sovereignty of the Republic of Turkey was internationally recognized after this treaty. The rights of minorities were ensured with the definition of “non-Muslim”. Citizens who belonged to other religions than Islam have thus become the minority. All the rest, regardless of ethnic and linguistic differences were the majority (see Oran 2007 for the minority concept and rights in Turkey).

Different definitions of minority by international organizations, the unequal practices of governments over different local languages and ethnicities, unequal financial development between the regions, and the Kurdish separatist movement from 1984 on, have brought in lively and delicate discussions on minorities. The Human Rights Advisory Commission (HRAC) appointed by the Prime Minister’s Office prepared a Minority Report in 2004. This report suggested a supra-identity, “Türkiyeli” (from Turkey): “which has a territorial meaning and is encompassing all ethnic-religious communities in the country, to replace the concept “Turkish” that has an ethnic meaning” (Oran 2011:2). Oran10 (2011) tells that the term was very strongly objected to and even insulted by many. Whereas Kurds constitute the largest ethnic group in the population they are not the only ethnic group with different language and history. The conflict between the Turkish army and the Kurdish Workers’ Party11 (PKK), however, cost the life of 30,000 people and millions of Euros. The religious diversity, on the other hand, decreased dramatically following nationalistic attacks after the nation-state. Today, even though Istanbul is still home to the head of the Orthodox Church and even though Turkey and Istanbul embrace the priceless heritage of Christianity and Judaism, the vast majority of the population is Muslim. The population in Turkey is both large and young. 34.58% of the 72,561,312 population was under 20 years old at end of 2009 (TÜİK 2009).

Istanbul is the largest city of Turkey situated on both sides of the Bosphorus, the strait that divides Asia and Europe. The history of Istanbul goes back to the 7th century

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9 Ottoman Empire was founded in the 13th century.
10 The professor who heads the committee which prepared the report
11 The PKK is listed as a terrorist organization internationally by several countries.
Constantine rebuilt the city in 4th century A.C. and declared it as the capital. Istanbul remained the capital of the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires for 16 centuries. Istanbul also has been the capital of religions. Throughout the Middle Ages, the city was the centre of Christianity, and later the centre of the Orthodox Church. The city was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in 1453, a date used by some historians to mark the end of the Middle Ages. Istanbul also became the capital of Islam when Yavuz Sultan Selim gained the Khalifat position in 1517. The city has lost the status of capital when the Republic of Turkey decided to make of Ankara a new city and the capital of the republic in 1923. The city also lost the status of the capital of Islam in 1924 when the secular republic abolished the institution of the Khalifat. Today Istanbul is the centre for economic and cultural life as well as the country’s gate that opens to the world with at least 13 million residents.

**Figure 1: Location of Istanbul**

Source: Google maps 2010

### 3.2. Institutional politics in Turkey (and in Istanbul)

A very important characteristic of institutional politics in Turkey is the political power of the army. Historically, the military had a great deal of political power in the Ottoman Empire. The first constitution of the Ottoman Empire in 1876 is interpreted as the first military intervention in civilian politics. In the republic era, military and civilian officers were clearly divided. If elected as parliamentarian, the military officers had to resign from the army - unlike in the Ottoman era. This legislation, however, was not enough to detach the Turkish army from civilian politics. The army took over the

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12 This date may change with new archeological findings in the framework of urban regeneration projects.

13 It is a common assumption that there are more residents than the official population statistics due to unregistered citizens in the illegal housing areas.

14 The second constitution was by the Young Turks in 1908.
government three times in 1960, 1970 and 1980. The latest coup in 1980\(^{15}\) caused the biggest harm to civil society and to media. The undemocratic 1982 constitution of the coup has been amended many times over the years (Özbudun 2007) but it has never really been totally replaced by a constitution prepared by civilians. The Ergenekon Case initiated in 2007 by the AKP targets the military structures within the state named as “deep state”, investigates on the attempts of military coups and interventions, and detains high level army officers for the first time in the history of the republic. The case receives different comments by different circles. It is claimed to be either a democratization effort by taking away political power from the army or abolishing the only guarantee of secularism in favour of an Islamic rule (see Young Civilians and Human Rights Agenda Association 2010 for more on the “deep state”, the Ergenekon court case, and how it is received in society). While this court case causes discussions on democracy and democratization in the country, Çarkoğlu & Kalaycıoğlu (2010) argue that citizens who are satisfied with the current democracy in Turkey dropped from 52\% in 2007 down to 28\% in 2009.

Another characteristic of the institutional politics is the central government tradition. The central government is very much present in local decision making, and the local authorities depend politically and financially on Ankara: “Much of Istanbul’s faith depends on the present government” (Öncü 2011). Local authorities therefore strive for decentralization. Moreover, local institutional politics present a complex structure in Istanbul (and in the rest of the country). There is on the one hand the elected local authority called the mayor of the municipality, and on the other hand, the assigned authority by the central government, called the head of the provincial administration. Both elected and assigned authorities have tasks and rights at the local level. These tasks may either overlap or there may be cases when none of the institutions can act due to lack of authority (Turgut 2004).

Municipalities, established some 150 years ago, went through some legal changes over time. The municipality law of 1930, inspired by European models, included such changes as women’s right to vote and to eligibility, participation in local governance, democratic representation, accountability, and an introduction to decentralization (Tokşöz 2009). Constitutionally, mayors were no longer elected by the municipal councils but directly by citizens in 1961. This change, however, lacked new regulations for municipal councils. Consequently, councils used their power and mayors became the “local feudal lords” (Tokşöz 2009: 130). A further decentralization step was the metropolitan municipality law of 1984 that was made to mainly save Istanbul from the burden of rapid urbanization and that gave more power and resources to local authorities of large cities (Tokşöz 2009).

\(^{15}\) The army was softer and worked rather like an interest group (Özbudun 2007) in its fourth intervention in 1997. The army wanted to stop the emergence of an Islamist era following Islamist extremist statements of the then coalition partner Islamist Welfare Party (RP). This was called a “post-modern coup” because it was limited to a symbolic parade of a tank in the Ankara streets. The army pacifically proposed measurements to maintain the secular state, including the extension of primary education at the expense of religious high schools. 10 years later, in April 2007, the army was concerned about the originally Islamist, new Muslim-democrat candidate Abdullah Gül for the presidency. The fifth and the last intervention appeared on the army’s website, at midnight as an e-memorandum.
The Habitat II City Summit of 1996 that took place in Istanbul played an important role for local institutional politics. Such concepts as good governance, participation, transparency, and accountability entered in the local governing jargon after that global event (Toksöz 2009). The last of the legal changes concerning local authorities was in 2005. The local authorities’ reform of 2005 aimed to develop democratic governance, a new division of task between local and central government, new governance tools, and new allocation of resources (Toksöz 2009). The reform, however, holds several limitations. It was not clear about the definition of tasks (Toksöz 2009), and there was no constitutional change in favour of decentralization (Üskül 2006). Moreover, municipalities still receive a very limited share from the national budget which makes it difficult for them to implement their (augmented) tasks (Akgün 2009). Finally, municipal councils are not independent (Toksöz 2009).

Thus, despite the local authorities reform, Ankara decides for and governs the rest of the country. Even though constitutionally there is no hierarchy between the local and central (Toksöz 2009), in practice, the local authorities depend on the central government (Dağı 2009). The central government may tend to punish, and even threaten and blackmail during election times, if municipality and central government are represented by different political parties (Toksöz 2009). If central government is a challenge for local authorities, the organic connection to central government is the opposite: “After ten years, the mayor of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) is once again a member of the ruling party. This makes a big difference in the relations between central and local government” (Uzun: 2007:134).

Turgut (2004:138) argues that the biggest challenge for Istanbul is, however, that there are too many authorities from local and central governments and they lack competence and coordination, which cause chaos in legal, institutional, and organizational levels, a situation that she names “organized organizationlessness”. On the assigned side of the institutional politics is the provincial administration. The governor (vali) is assigned by the central government. The administration has a provincial council and provincial executive committee. Central budget is the only financial resource of the administration. On the elected side, there are in Istanbul, one metropolitan municipality and 39 district municipalities. The mayor and the municipal council are elected by the Istanbul residents. The municipalities also have executive committees. Financially, municipalities also depend on the central government budget. IMM, however, has 23 companies and it has the biggest budget among the metropolitan municipalities in the country. Besides metropolitan and district municipalities, there are in every neighbourhood headmen who are also elected. Neighbourhood headmen are the elected bodies that are closest to citizens and whom has the least political power.

As for local democracy, by law, municipalities should consult civil society, they should facilitate city councils, and they should invite the neighbourhood headmen (muhtar) in the decision making processes. There is however a contradiction between the written rules and the practice in terms of participation. In practice, participation in local

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16 Article 123
17 The budget of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality is bigger than some ministries including the foreign affairs, justice, and health, with an expected budget of about 9 billion euros for 2011
18 This is an organization introduced in Turkish local institutional politics by the Local Agenda 21 Turkey program. This is a council composed of the representatives of civil society and non-affiliated citizens
Part I Theoretical Framework

decision-making in Istanbul is very limited if not absent (Turgut 2004) with top-down approaches by local authorities (Karaman 2008) despite new tools of participation after the local authorities reform of 2005 (Toksöz 2009). Toksöz (2009) explains that the basic principles of local democratic governance namely participation and accountability are absent at the local level because citizens neither pay for nor participate in local politics. The representative democracy tradition, according to him, made the citizenry passive and uninterested in participating, questioning, and fighting for their rights. He also argues that citizens do not demand accountability or transparency because the budget of the municipalities comes from the central government and not from local people. This said, politicians are the professional group citizens trust the least (GfK 2010).

Institutional politics at the national level restructures its organization, mainly with the instructions of the EU and international financial organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to create new agencies with more participatory decision-making and a certain level of autonomy (Sezen 2002). At the local level, the democratization process advances in interaction with Europe (Daoudov 2008; İçduygu 2004). Toksöz (2009), on the other hand, think that there are both local and global dynamics that prepared the local authorities reform process. According to Toksöz (2009), the local authorities’ reform is the result of a series of internal and external dynamics: internally, change in the economic structure, fast urbanization, regional inequality, rising demand for democracy and emergence of civil society, and the clumsy structure of the central government necessitated a change in the local authorities system. The reform, on the other hand, is not independent from external dynamics such as global processes like the Local Agenda 21 process of the United Nations Development Program UNDP, globalization of cities, and the accession to the EU in which local authorities have a more powerful and different structure (Toksöz 2009).

Uzun (2007:137), however, points out that this is a rather new concept that comes from above, and it is not very compatible with the local government tradition in Turkey: “In Turkey, entrepreneurialism depends on the characteristics of the mayor. Inevitably, in Istanbul the transformation of the government organization towards governance will be part of an ongoing restructuring process, one of the manifestations of globalization”. The accession process empowers local authorities also in terms of playing active roles in the negotiations process that started at the end of 2004 between Turkey and the EU: “It of course is the central government who conducts the negotiations with the EU, however, it is not possible to do so without the civil society and local authorities. Most of the chapters are directly linked to local authorities” (Davutoğlu 2008).

It is this importance in the relationship between the EU and the elected local authorities that was at the core of the idea of the Istanbul Centre in Brussels (Gümüştekin 2008). The Istanbul Center was opened in the European capital in 2008 in order to introduce the city to European public opinion, and to reach the individuals in the decision-making processes of the EU and the institutions that influence these processes (and to promote the activities in the framework of Istanbul being the 2010
European Capital of Culture, see Çolakoğlu 2008 for ECC). The chairwoman of the Centre, Gümüştekin (2008) explains that Istanbul was very active in the committee of regions of the EU and that the city had an important role in Turkey’s accession to the union: “we aim to gain Istanbul friends as friends of Turkey”.

Municipalities in Istanbul both at the Metropolitan and the district level seem to have global partners in one way or another, but when looked more closely these relations are mostly limited to coincidental sister cities agreements. District municipalities of Istanbul are absent in specific global networks like Eurocities or CittaSlow which municipalities from other cities in Turkey have joined (Emrealp 2010). IMM is the municipality that benefits the most from the global networks. As the chair of the United Cities and Local Governments UCLG, IMM attends and plays a central role in significant global events like Local Governments Climate Change Leaders Summit in June 2009, Africa City Summit in December 2009, as well as hosting such events as the UCLG World Council in 2008, the UN Alliance of Civilizations II in April 2009, and the 5th World Water Forum in March 2009 (Emrealp 2010). Globalization and global networks of local governments may teach them and influence them for more decentralization and urban governance. There are signs in that direction in Istanbul. The mayor of Bayrampaşa, a district municipality in Istanbul, who originally is from the Balkans, is claimed to take partnership initiatives and may bypass the central government to start projects with sister cities from the Balkans (Davutoğlu 2008). It seems like the priorities of the local authorities in linking Istanbul to the global are limited to finances. The metropolitan mayor stated: “Istanbul, together with its historical and cultural heritage, is in the world agenda with its interesting offers to world economy circles. Many companies who wish to benefit from Turkey’s potential as well as reach Turkic Republics, Russia, Middle-East, Northern Africa and Balkans over Turkey chose Istanbul to base their offices” (Topbaş 2009).

Local authorities use ICT mainly for managerial development. The Turkish Industrials and Businessmen Association (TÜSİAD), the Turkish Informatics Foundation (TBV), and the international consultancy company Deloitte have published “The e-Municipalities Comparison Report” in 2007. The report covered 101 municipalities in Turkey including IMM and a periphery district municipality of Istanbul. According to the study the municipalities (as in many cases in the world as discussed in the previous chapter) use ICT primarily for managerial improvement. The list of their priorities included: improving the efficiency of the work (52%), improving the quality of services to citizens and companies (32%), reaching women, the elderly, the handicapped, the poor, and former prisoners (13%). Even though the use of online applications has risen, public services are mainly provided either at the counter or via phone calls. On the study, the fax appears as the most used ICT for communication whereas 39% of the municipalities reported that they can’t deal with the amount of e-mails they receive.

As for participation, the study reports that while 49% of municipalities think that digital information and ICT would encourage citizens to participate more in politics, 44% of them think the opposite. Unsurprisingly, the biggest target group of e-municipalities is the young people under 21 years old (TÜSİAD; TBV; Deloitte 2007). The website of
the IMM was the first municipal website in Turkey. It is still the most comprehensive public website with 140 thousand guests per day in 2009 (IMM2009). According to The Internet traffic metrics company Alexa’s statistics of 25 July 2010, IMM’s website, www.ibb.gov.tr’s traffic ranked 291\textsuperscript{st} (in Turkey), while the website of the provincial administration www.istanbul.gov.tr was 481\textsuperscript{th}. The IMM website was even more visited than the website of the Ministry of Interior Affairs that ranked 453\textsuperscript{rd} that day\textsuperscript{19}. The IMM website ranked 31\textsuperscript{st} on the Digital Governance in Municipalities Worldwide Report with the best success in usability and content and with the worse score in participation (UNPAN & ASPA 2008). Apart from the website, IMM is accessible to citizens via e-mail, SMS, and more traditionally fax and landline telephone. Citizens can use these tools to reach the citizen service centre which informs field teams of IMM who work to solve citizens’ problems (IMM 2009).

The use of ICT gradually becomes integrated to municipal work in Istanbul municipalities permitting citizens to access better quality services. Especially graphic based applications such as map-plan charts, land registry, infrastructure network, transportation planning, catastrophe-crisis planning, and so on are claimed at global standard (Emrealp 2010). Non graphic-based data, on the other hand, such as sustainable development and urban poverty maps, and databases and applications to encourage participation are not as efficiently used (Emrealp 2010). It is argued that the public sector should use the new ICT applications to foster public-private partnership as well as citizen participation in local decision-making and social cohesion (Velibeyoğlu & Yiğitcanlar 2008).

Emrealp (2010) argues that the challenge is not the cost or the lack of skills anymore but the emphasis on the technical aspect of ICT rather than their impacts on the institutional structure of municipalities. He explains that Istanbul municipalities are the municipalities that invest the most in ICT but they are way behind the level of using ICT to guide the administrational and organizational structure. Moreover, even though, some applications like Akbil (smart ticket for public transportation) or OGS (automatic payment on the bridges/motorways) are technologically successful cases, the lack of transparency and information in the process, and lack of participation in decision-making make citizens suspicious and critical (Emrealp 2010). As for local e-democracy, the ministry of interior sent a circular\textsuperscript{20} in 11 August 2009 to all provincial administrations on “Local e-Democracy Program”. The circular communicated that local e-democracy applications and democratic participation would be developed, and that all municipalities should do the necessary work for this (Emrealp 2010).

3.3. **Activism in Turkey (and in Istanbul)**

During the westernization reforms after the foundation of modern Turkey people switched from subject of the empire to citizen almost overnight with a top-down process. Civil rights have been given to citizens, especially to women, without them asking for those rights. Therefore the concept of citizens-fighting-for-their-rights is

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{19} www.alexa.com
  \item \textsuperscript{20} Circular no: 20928
\end{itemize}
absent while at the same time the tradition of over-respecting the head of state is still alive. Centralized and strong government tradition in Turkey prevents the development of a powerful civil society (Toksoz 2009). The representative democracy culture does not permit different voices to participate in decision-making processes. In addition to the government tradition, the army’s strong presence and interference in national politics has muted civil society activity (Özbudun 2007).

From the mid-90s on, however, global events that took place especially in Istanbul permitted Turkish civil society and activists to join global networks. This new era meant higher access to information and increased interaction between Turkish civil society and its global counterparts, letting Turkish activists learn and be inspired by participatory democracy and governance models. Even though civil society and activism in Turkey are still weak and still struggle against anti-democratic policies and practices, they are significantly transforming in terms of engaging citizens in policy issues, creating new methods, and local–global interaction and partnerships (CIVICUS 2006). Even though some activists of provinces are networked, Istanbul is still the centre for activism and civil society to interact globally.

The strong and central government tradition in Turkey have limited local democracy, local multi-stakeholder partnerships, citizen participation, and demand for accountability. If non-organized citizens do not care (or dare) about asking for accountability, civil society is not very strong either. Even though the constitutional monarchy of the last years of the Ottoman Empire provided some freedom, organizations were under government control up until the 1961’s Constitution that stated: “everybody is free to set up an association without prior authorization. This right may be limited by law to protect public order and general morale” (Özbudun: 2007: 117). Of all the three coups, that of 1980 was the most bloody and harmful to civil society. Özbudun (2007) explains that civil society organizations (associations, trade unions, and semi-public professional organizations) received severe limitations under the 1982’s constitution, a product of the 1980 coup. A shortcut to see the context of those days’ civil society’s political activities is the quote Özbudun cited from the General Kenan Evren who became the president after his coup: “Political activities are reserved for political parties. None of the other kinds of organizations will act politically. Political parties, on the other hand, will not be involved in the fields reserved for trade unions, associations, and professional organizations. Every organization will function in the framework of its own field” (Özbudun: 2007: 117). This means that while in the West with the new social movements the space for the political enlarged, the boundaries between the public and the private blurred, and politics and the political started to interact, in Turkey politics and the political were legally separated with a banned interaction.

Strong state tradition and pressure also hit the freedom of expression and news media. Different governments exercised different kinds of pressures to control the media (Çatalbaş 2007). The limitations for civil society and press were not the result of a peaceful process. Civil society organizations’ members, activists, and journalists have been literally muted after the 1980 coup either informally by vanishing in prisons, or formally by the death penalty including a minor.21 Thousands have been victims of
torture, hundreds had to escape abroad, mainly to Western Europe, and thousands simply had to become passive or tried to organize underground without real success (see Mumcu and Soyer 2007 for more on the 1980 coup aka September 12).

Istanbul started to host international political events from the 1990s on. The global summits and conferences and the use of ICT permitted the Turkish civil society a rebirth. Local activists met global activists and they could sustain their relations by joining global networks that they discovered during the events. UN HABITAT II Human Settlement Summit that took place in June 1996 in Istanbul was a turning point for Turkish/Istanbul activists. The summit organized an NGO Forum. As mentioned earlier in the theoretical chapter, the 1990s were the years when the UN started to accept civil society as a partner by giving them the right to contribute to the official documents of the summits. Hundreds of NGOs from around the world, motivated by this opportunity for a higher voice, spent at least 10 days at the NGO Forum, at the Istanbul Technical University’s Taskışla building, in the heart of the city. It was the first time many young people, born after 1980, heard the words “civil society.” The summit was significant for activists to wake up from a long and forced sleep, and it was the first opportunity in the city, for local activists to meet and discuss with their global counterparts.

In April 2004, Istanbulite activists were hosting 350 activists from 18 countries, for the general preparation meeting of the 3rd European Social Forum (ESF). That was the first event of the ESF that has taken place outside of the European Union (Şensever 2004). There were 130 organizations from Europe and more than 60 from Turkey. This meeting, according to Şensever (2004), was significant in the sense that it didn’t only permit the exchange of ideas and experiences, but activists also prepared a common plan of action and a common calendar. The problem, Şensever (2004:9) commented, was that especially some leftist organizations from Turkey could not see the European dimension of the process. Those organizations acted too locally by only bringing in their local and subjective worries to the meetings. That explained the distance some local organizations had from global activism. The meeting has, on the other hand, raised awareness in the city and incited lively discussions over the subject (Şensever 2004).

The international civil society and participation organization CIVICUS published a Civil Society Report in partnership with Turkish Third Sector Foundation (TÜSEV) in 2006. The overall result of the report was that: “civil society in Turkey is of limited strength, yet undergoing a significant era of transformation” (CIVICUC-TUSEV 2006:14). The report explains this situation with several structural reasons including the weak state - civil and private – civil linkages as well as the lower adoption of such values as tolerance, democratic practices, and good governance within the organizations. Civil society, according to the results of the study, has a limited impact in making the state and the private sector accountable and responding to social needs but it is a strong actor in empowering and engaging citizens in policy issues. The report also shows that civil society organizations increasingly work beyond Turkish borders or partner with international civil society organizations. During those 10 years, the government

22 The researcher’s experience as a volunteer supervisor at the NGO Forum; the word “civil” meant for most of the youngsters clothing other than uniforms
23 Local activists in Istanbul hosted the European Social Forum 2010
took certain measures\textsuperscript{24} to develop cooperation with the civil society but CIVICUS and TÜSEV (2006) report that those are not enough.

Civil society in Istanbul and in Turkey has thus switched from sleeping to dead status into a transforming, globally interacting, and engaging status. Keyman and İçduygulu (2003:223) argues that this interaction of the local and the global opened space for the political by challenging the strong state tradition: “new actors acting at the global/local levels and calling for democratization have confronted the privileged role of the state at the national level. In this sense, one of the important impacts of globalization on Turkish modernization has been, and still continues to be, the fact that the state has a legitimacy problem in maintaining its position as the primary context of politics, as a result of the shift towards civil society and culture as new reference points in the language and the terms of politics”. The accession process to the EU permits civil society organizations to partner with EU institutions as well as other European NGOs (CIVICUS-TÜSEV 2006). Alemdar (2008) argues that employee organizations from different political backgrounds, for instance, all benefit from the EU and relations with its institutions to reach better conditions for themselves in the local. Moreover, the negotiation talks with the EU push the central government to include civil society representatives into the process (Davutoğlu 2008).

Globalization, however, does not always incite mind opening and democratization. Anti-democratic social movements have also emerged simultaneously to use the civil society space for their anti-democratic communitarian practices (Keyman & İçduygulu 2003), as a reaction by those who see a risk in democratization (Kentel et al 2009), or as injected counter-organizations in social movements (Laçiner 2006), all implicitly trying to prevent democratization in the society.

Activists and civil society organizations in general gained credibility and support from the public at the end of 1990s. Citizens witnessed the dynamism, speed, network, and solidarity of activists and civil initiatives before they offered their support to these structures. Citizens could witness all this during the post-earthquake crisis management in 1999. Following the devastating\textsuperscript{25} earthquake that took place some 120 km away from Istanbul\textsuperscript{26}, both central and local authorities were unprepared, late, and uncoordinated\textsuperscript{27}. The central government was unprepared for such catastrophe and consequently it could not act on time, either for rescuing or for helping the victims. Local organizations, on the other hand, mainly the Local Agenda 21 City Council, took the initiative to manage the crisis independently from the central government. They set up the crisis centre, and started to manage both rescue teams and the enormous amount of help pouring from everywhere by civic initiatives, set up the camps, provide information for media and so on. They were even quicker than the local government.

\textsuperscript{24} Among the provisions is the invitation of NGOs to commission meetings at the National Assembly. There are, however, doubts about this provision because it is not clear which NGOs will be invited, whether they are experts of the field, and whether there would be enough time to listen to all of them. Therefore, Bakirci (2010) from the Legislation Association, proposed the flexible and volunteer based, Western style “hearings” as an effort to make the presence of NGOs more meaningful at the commission meetings.

\textsuperscript{25} 7.5 richter earthquake that killed more than 20 thousand people

\textsuperscript{26} The earthquake also damaged some parts of Istanbul but the epicentre was Gölcük

\textsuperscript{27} The researcher’s experience both as victim and as humanitarian volunteer in one of the relief camps, from the very moment of the crisis.
This situation showed the public the power of the local civic organizations and activists and equally, the incapability of the central government28 (Toksöz 2009).

This incident is also significant in the sense that it helped the local-global interaction and collaboration. The global community was there to help only couple of hours after the earthquake happened. Medecins Sans Frontières (MSF) was the first international organization to reach the region29. The collaboration of the local and global volunteers permitted local organizations to adopt a more transnational (/translocal) approach (Keyman & İğduygü 2003). A couple of weeks later when there was an earthquake in Greece; Istanbul based rescue organizations like AKUT were there to help the “enemy” who became the “brother” when they came to help Turkish victims30. This interaction of the local and global further made narrow minded nationalist citizens to reconsider if not change their minds about foreigners (Birikim 2006). Citizens who lost their families and homes were in the street and in need of drinkable water, food, and medicine. They witnessed the fact that foreign volunteers from thousands of kilometres away were there to provide drinkable water before the Turkish government reached the region. International volunteers were also involved in the spontaneously set up management teams in the relief camps until the central government sent official teams of management to replace the volunteers.

Finally, the incident promoted online interaction among citizens (Hoşgör 2001). The public conscience was highly disturbed by the incapability of the government as well as by thousands of people who died as a result of corruption in construction companies. Besides, there was a need for information flow regarding the survivors, victims, lost people/children, as well as regarding the needs in the camps. Volunteers needed to coordinate the help and flow of information. For all these information needs, interaction, and discussion citizens and volunteers used online communication31.

Young people born after the last (conventional) coup in 1980 are labelled as apolitical or lost generation (Toprak et al 2009). Lüküslü (2009 in Toprak et al 2009) however argues that the apolitical position is equally political and that the political beliefs of the young people of the 80s should be discussed over their collective or personal online content. A study conducted among the young people of Istanbul in 2004 suggests that they discuss politics more within the family (47, 8%) than with friends (27, 6%) (Kazgan 2007). Another reason may be the lack of participatory decision making that prevents young people from having a voice (UNDP 2008). Kazgan’s study also shows that only 21.5% of young people participate in political activities. Of those who participate, 78.1% join marches/street demonstrations, 40.5% petitions, 8.8% resistance, 7.9% political party activities, and 2.8% conferences, meetings, and seminars (Kazgan 2007).

Another study on young people in Istanbul suggests that young people who have access to ICT and who can benefit from globalization are much more likely to be members of a civil society organization (CSO) (Yentürk et al 2007). The study argues that young people who are involved in CSOs are more capable of distinguishing between

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28 Ironically, the crisis centre was set in a tent in the yard of the building of the administration of province. That was because it was logistically (communication, transportation, media etc) the best location
29 Others shortly followed from various countries.
30 “enemy” and “brother” were used by the mainstream (nationalist) media.
31 Wireless Internet connection was not available at the time, which is why the volunteers connected to the Internet in the Internet cafés.
representative democracy and participative democracy. That is because young people who are involved in CSO trust those organizations more than they trust the national parliament, while young people who are not involved in CSO have the same level of trust for both CSOs and the national parliament (Yentürk et al 2007). Atikkan and Tunç (2011) argue that blogs have become the refuges for young people who develop political views and identities. They argue that young people prefer blogs both as sources of news and as spaces to express their political opinions and opinions on politics.

Young activists, on the other hand, work to gain more political rights. Most of them are claimed to master ICT and to use the tools for their causes. Youth activist members of the Local Agenda 21 National Youth Parliament32, for instance, used e-mails and scanners in the organization of their nationwide “The Age 25 Campaign”33 (Telli Aydemir & Apak 2010). According to the European (Union) CIVICWEB project that studies the use of ICT by young people in eight European countries, young people in Turkey score the highest in online participation by 13.3%34 (Telli Aydemir 2008). The described online participation in the study however is limited to participating in online civic and political discussions, signing e-petitions, and forwarding political e-mails (and not online youth participation in decision-making). The study also finds that young people created a civic and political discourse on the Internet during the 2007 elections with several websites (Telli Aydemir 2008).

Moreover, there are new youth movements created with ICT, maintained online, that create a new language of politics (Lüküslü 2008). Lüküslü argues that these new online youth movements don’t only reflect the characteristics of the new urban middle class youth generation born to ICT, but also their search for new politics and alternative ways of doing politics. The alternative way, according to Lüküslü (2008), is to criticize current politics, stay away from any political affiliation, and to use humour as the tool. One of the youth movements referred in Lüküslü’s study, Ekşi Sözlük (Sour Dictionary), is an alternative, collective, and interactive dictionary. The alternative dictionary and its new and informal language already caught the eye of scholars in earlier years who were wondering whether the dictionary was bringing about a new discourse (Uğur & Geyisi 2002). The dictionary inspired many more such dictionaries created for instance in university/campus frameworks. These dictionaries (or other humoristic (news) websites such as Zaytung) provide spaces for young people to be political in Mouffe’s (2005) definition. Atikkan and Tunç (2011) argue that the reason why these interactive dictionaries are very popular and have become more and more political is the reluctance of young people to blog individually with their real names in an increasingly pressured and censored political environment. They argue that young people prefer expressing their opinions on these dictionaries with nick names. Besides the Ekşi Sözlük, university dictionaries have emerged some35 of which are popular among the young people.

Online platforms as alternative organization tools permit other groups too to be political. Feminist movements, the women’s council, for instance, extensively use

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32 An outcome of the Local Agenda 21 Turkey program
33 A campaign organized to decrease the eligibility age from 30 to 25. After the last elections, there are about 10 MPs under 30 years old.
34 One reason for this may be the fear from police violence in street demonstrations
35 Santral sözlük of the Istanbul Bilgi University, ITU sözlük of the Istanbul Technical University, and Uludağ Sözlük of the Uludağ University in Bursa
their e-groups. Unlike the above youth movements though, the success of the feminist e-group is argued to be linked to their offline organization (Göker 2007). Toprak et al (2009) however, argue that the other way round is also present. They argue that the practices of online organizations on social media in Turkey may contribute to the offline political organization. Online tools, especially the social media like social networking sites also permit new kinds of organization and activism. Less formal, temporary, and spontaneous networks and platforms seem to emerge with an alternative language and approach to actually try to solve the old problems of democracy in the city (and in the country). These new tools also permit citizens to lobby individually for certain causes. Toprak et al (2009:292) lists “groups to express both negative and positive opinions on the actualities” among the reasons why Facebook is very popular in Turkey. While drafting this chapter, the researcher observed many people using this most popular social networking site for this end. The status update, profile photo, and video sharing features of this website, for instance, were used for propaganda, individually by ordinary citizens, for the referendum of 12 September 2010 on constitutional changes.

Activism in Turkey and in Istanbul is still weak due to the political tradition in the country. Soysal (2011) argues that there is protest but that it becomes part of the larger entertainment context of Beyoğlu (the neighbourhood where Taksim Square and Galatasaray Squares, the traditional meeting points of activists are situated). He argues that there is not an institutional frame for participation.

There is however a fast transformation. As for the local - global link, Istanbul is the leading scene for (civil) society to link the local political to global. Activists of Istanbul seem to increasingly connect to the global by organizing and/or hosting such events as the European Social Forum 2010; the 10.10.10 event on climate change hosting global figures; or in a more regional level but gathering world activists, in the Mavi Marmara flotilla that headed to Gaza in May 2010. It may be claimed that activism in Istanbul is now beginning to connect to the global and is becoming more visible and active even though, as explained above; activism is not always in favour of democracy.

3.4. Identity in Turkey (and in Istanbul)

The imperial background and the millennia long heritage of Anatolia grant Turkey a very rich ethnic diversity. Istanbul was the capital of the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires for 16 centuries. This status, together with its geographic location, made it one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the country and in world history (Keyder 2000). In Turkey, the question “where are you from?” is rather asked as “where are you originally from?” because even though the nation-state created the national Turkish identity from 1923 on, sub-identities are still alive with their living languages and cultures (Oran 2011). Therefore, many people who would call themselves Turkish abroad would give their original identity when asked at home. The building of national identity enhanced the Turkish identity. Turkish is the only official language in the country. Those who wanted to access full rights had to learn and speak it. Those who
refused to give up their mother tongue had to also give up their rights to education, publication and media, and until recently, their right to talk in a public space.

Many different identities in the society create an inner nationalism in the country. Nationalistic attacks and discourse are targeted at different ethnic or religious groups within the society rather than at outsiders. The majority of the society is proudly nationalist however they may easily forget about it when their business interests are on the table (Kentel et al 2009). Identity became a topic of public discussion only for the last two decades giving non-Turkish identities (especially the Kurdish identity) a weak voice. While some citizens enforce their communitarian local identities, others develop new, global, and/or hybrid identities.

Anatolia, where the most of the country is situated, has the banal (but rightly so) nickname that is the cradle of civilizations. There is a rich ethnic and religious diversity in the country. Istanbul was the centre of attraction politically as the capital of three empires for centuries, commercially as a global market between Europe and India, culturally as a cosmopolitan city offering education and publication opportunities in many languages, and religiously as the centre of orthodoxy and then of Islam in the Ottoman Era. In that sense, Istanbul was a global market and a global city long before urban sociologists define it in the 20th century. The city, however, lost its glory when it lost its status of capital (Keyder 2000). It also lost its status as the center of Islam when the secular republic abolished the Khalifat position in 1924 (Kazgan 2007). From the 1980’s on, another transformation started to emerge to make Istanbul a global city. The penetration of ICT in the 1990s and the rise of the global financial, cultural, and political activity brought about hybrid identities in the city. This big city also welcomes alternative identities which may not be peacefully practiced in smaller cities of the country (Kentel et al 2009). As the identity of the city changes the identities of its residents also change. Therefore the background information in this section covers both the identity of the city and the identities of the people who live in the city.

When Ankara decided to open up the economy to the world in 1980s, Istanbul was on display. Keyder (2000) claims that the instability in the Middle East in the 1980s36 was a missed opportunity for Istanbul due to the lack of trust between Turkey and the Arab world. Keyder (2000:23) argues: “What was made possible with technology and geography was prevented by the competing international alliances and different desires of the political elite”. Keyder (2000:24) explains that investors and capital in Istanbul used the second opportunity, the collapse of the Soviet Bloc to make business from Romania to Kazakhstan, which also made Istanbul a centre for many companies operating in the world markets: “the finance sector was the first to integrate with the world economy”. The infrastructure for telecommunications, however, was not sufficient for world companies to open offices in the city. Keyder (2000) emphasizes the insufficient The Internet service in that process. The lack of necessary policies and initiatives by the political elite in 1990s, delayed, according to Keyder, Istanbul’s real globalization, and the local capitalists lost faith in the process. Despite this situation, Istanbul was still the most attractive city in Turkey for transnational companies that operate in various sectors (Özdemir 2002).

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36 The war between Iran and Iraq, and civil war in Beirut
Istanbul was slow to catch up with other global cities within the accepted definition of the term (by Sassen, Friedman, Castells, Castells & Borja) due to lack of a clear vision and policy of central government (Bozlağan & Daoudov 2009). Keyder (2000) suggests that even though Istanbul cannot be placed among the global cities due to lack of knowledge economy and innovative services, it is an alternative global city. He explains the alternative global city with illegal and informal globalization that permits global connection and global networking in Istanbul. He explains his argument by referring to unilateral informal commercial activities from ex-Soviet countries, informally called suitcase commerce; and illegal activities such as the money laundering of global mafia networks, and transit of global drug networks, all possible due to the incomplete process of switching from nationalist-statism to liberal-internationalism (Keyder 2000).

The informal economy is argued to have existed for centuries to bypass the political pressures of all three empires to control the commercial activity in Istanbul (Keyder 2000). The informal and illegal activities and networks cannot be used to name Istanbul as a global city but they still permit it to join informally or create global networks and their benefits. It may also be argued that they also create a certain link between locals and the world. The writings in Arabic and Slavic languages in shops, restaurants, and hotels show the will of locals for interacting with these newcomers or passengers, and for benefiting financially from the whole process. The current minister of foreign affairs Davutoğlu (2008) stated that it was enough to check the foreign languages on Laleli37’s windows to see which countries and networks are active in Istanbul.

International consultants at the same time, list such cities as London, Singapore, Dublin, Madrid, Israel, and Moscow as Istanbul’s competitors in becoming the global financial centre (Deloitte 2009). Keyder (2011) argues that Istanbul’s journey from a physically, socially, and culturally grey looking standard third world metropolis between the 1950s and 1990s to today’s neo-ottoman globalizing city, is due to including the bourgeoisie in the growth development following the stability which began in 1994 when the current prime minister was elected as the mayor of Istanbul. Keyder (2011) argues that the new narrative of the city is no longer the Turkish/Islamic in the making but the tolerant/diverse Ottoman. He explains that the neo-Ottoman is not “the sick man”38 of the 19th century but the “magnificent”39 of the 16th century. Emphasizing the neo-Ottoman narrative, Öncü (2011) argues that Istanbul takes the model of eastern cities in its globalization: “the model is Dubai, not London”.

A formal and legal way of placing Istanbul on the global scene is its cultural life. International festivals, Istanbul biennale, and private museums that have opened in recent years have made the city a venue for global cultural activities. Both public and private sector are argued to have supported these activities generously believing that they will attract global capital and global wealthy art lovers to the city. Therefore, according to Yardımcı (2005), festivals are the tools to market Istanbul globally rather than only enriching the cultural life in the city. Yardımcı (2005) further explains that because 70% of the sponsorship of international festivals comes from the private sector, the content of the festivals is biased and limited to the preferences of companies’ target

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37 One of the neighbourhoods in Istanbul where these networks operate
38 That was the nick name given to the late Ottoman Empire by the Western countries.
39 Referring to Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent
groups and of the government. Art events don’t only bring world artists in the city but they also create a community for Istanbulites. Yardımcı (2005) argues however that these activities create a local – global link for a limited number of Istanbulites who are already globalized, and that they are not fully accessible to public due to financial and cultural limitations.

As in cultural life, the overall process of globalizing embraces the private sector but neglects the public. Aksoy (2011) argues that citizens feel increasingly disconnected from the city’s globalization and that they have become the spectators if not the victims of urban regeneration. She explains that the corporate neo-liberal renewal of the city excludes poor people literally by moving them from their houses. The transformation of the city, changes in lifestyles and consumption habits, use of new technologies, and spatial changes have all happened fast and unevenly (Aksoy 2011). New social groups like the new bourgeois and professional class emerged with the globalization. While these new groups who started to work and interact in the global networks could reach the lifestyle and consumption habits of their counterparts in the world, the urban poverty has become so visible that it is compared to Latin American income inequality (Keyder 2005). Keyder (2000) argues that despite the inequalities, there is a certain interaction between people with different financial, cultural and political backgrounds.

Income polarization, however, incited spatial reorganization (Güvenç & Işık 2002) and urban regeneration (Keyder 2011; Aksoy 2011). City planning scholars emphasize the gated communities mushrooming in the city. These communities provide spaces to escape from the social heterogeneity of the city, and the insufficient municipal provisions and infrastructure (Geniş 2007). Gated communities are literally gated; they require membership or permission to enter. These communities gather upper middle class Istanbulites who have reached similar lifestyles to the global elite and who don’t wish to mix with other profiles of the city (Turgut Yıldız & Göksenin 2007). The gated communities, sometimes located very close to slums, may appear as obstacles to social interaction in the city. Aksoy (2008) argues that the social exclusion of the imbalanced globalization questions the globalization of its public cultural life.

Slums, on the other hand, don’t only integrate with the centre with the growth of the city but they also become urbanized and they create a cultural synthesis that is reflected in music, literature, and culinary arts (Kazgan 2007). Moreover, as a consequence of the global financial activities in the city, new actors like disadvantaged groups are also claimed to enter the labour market. Even though salaries are not always fair for this group, this situation permits certain mobility in the society and diminishes the spatial disconnection (Eraydın 2008). Still, the new urban poverty is claimed to be deeper, having informal/black jobs without social security and even without secured salaries. It is however not the first time Istanbul has witnessed the dramatic divide between the wealthy and the poor. The city’s commerce-oriented the wealthy occidental section of Byzantion against the agriculture-oriented poorer oriental section of Khalkedon has presented a big divide that continued over the centuries. The same divide was

\[40\] The growth of the city may also mean living 100 km away from the centre but still in the city

\[41\] Workers in hazardous jobs such as the stone treatment of blue jeans are one case of young workers who earn less than the minimum salary, and who lose their health and even lives because of the chemicals they have to inhale during the work.
there when the city became Constantinople, when it was the capital of the Ottoman Empire, and finally when it became the largest city of the Republic of Turkey, and it still continues today (Kazgan 2007).

As for the identities of the residents, non-Muslim Istanbulites were the majority at the end of 19th century until the refugees of the Balkan Wars changed the statistics to 55% of Muslims in 1914 (Keyder 2000). Demographics are dramatically different today with a vast majority of Muslims. Istanbul is the largest city of Turkey. It constantly receives migration from all the other cities reaching an estimated 11 million42 migrants in the past 50 years. This situation makes the city still the most diverse population of the country - within the country's own ethnic and religious diversity (IMM 2010). The number of foreign residents, on the other hand, is limited to 54,644 in 2008 (TÜİK 2009). According to the 2010 statistics of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM), less than 3 million out of more than 12 million residents are registered in Istanbul43. This situation makes some scholars argue that “the real Istanbulite is myth” (Öncü 2000:117).

If “who is an Istanbulite?” is a problematic question, “whose is Istanbul?” is as unanswerable especially for some neighbourhoods like Beyoğlu/Pera which has been home to many ethnicities and religions over the centuries44 (Bartu 2000). The fellow countrymen (hemşehri) networks created by the first migrants help the new comers to settle and find jobs in Istanbul. They either help the newcomers temporarily by preparing them to become the new Istanbulites or they provide permanent support to survive in the big city by preparing them to become the new ethnic group in the city (Erder 2000). In case the motive of the migration is to bypass the community pressure in the home city, Istanbul is claimed to offer a place to live different and / or alternative identities in a freer, stronger, and more individual level (Kentel et al 2009). Even though alternative identities may find freeer lives in Istanbul, there is still a certain pressure in the very local level. Conceptualized as the neighbourhood pressure by Mardin (2006), this is a local and communal pressure on people whose lifestyles do not conform to religious/conservative rules.45

An important identity of Istanbulites is family identity. Being the parent, sibling, or child of somebody is important both emotionally and at the level of responsibility. Family members are responsible to each other in good and bad days. Solidarity within families also manifests itself as a characteristic of the Turkish welfare system: “official social policy discourse still refers to the family as the central welfare institution and the role of the government is basically defined in terms of providing support to the family as the latter fulfils the task of assuring social protection to the individual” (Buğra and Keyder 2005). Thus traditionally, family comes before everything for Turkish people. Konda (2008) reported that family is the most important thing for citizens, and then comes the country, and then themselves. Individualism is not very widespread in the

42 It should be noted that there are many migrants who have turned back to their original cities over the years
43 The central government system permits citizens to keep their registrations in one city and live in another city
44 Pera was the non-Muslim business centre in Istanbul
45 The launch of the concept by the eminent sociologist incited a lively debate on conservatism and social pressures in Istanbul as well as in the rest of the country
society. As for Istanbul youth, for 36% of them (the biggest share), individual freedom is as important as life and material security (Kazgan 2007:69).

As for the interaction with the global, while earlier for some authors this meant that the global swallowed the local, and the new glocal presented serious threats to local cultural hierarchies (Öncü 2000), later, scholars started to refer to localization of modernity or to glocalization (Aytar & Keskin 2003; Ardıç 2009; Sandıkçı & Ömeraki 2007). New music spaces and genres in Istanbul is a very good example for the hybridization of identities. Aytar and Keskin (2003) present cases of hybrid music and glocal partnerships like Brooklyn Funk Essentials playing with Laço Tayfa, and Amsterdam Klezmer Band with Galata Gypsy. For them this is not homogenizing but glocalization and hybridization by localizing the global and in return offering something new and different to global. While local-global interaction in music create hybrid identities, Aytar and Keskin (2003:154) argue that spaces where this new music is consumed segregate the society and exclude the disadvantaged of the city that they name “undesirables” (see also Stokes 2000 on this subject).

Spaces where the urban poor(er) consumes the hybrid/glocalized identities, on the other hand, include the Western style chains of döner, simit or lahmacun, türkü cafés (Ardıç 2009) as well as the Internet cafés. More hybrid identities are present in the changing images of Ramadan in Istanbul. The Ramadan of 2010 offered interesting examples of hybridization. An op-ed article on the national newspaper Radikal reported the new Ramadan products that (young) Istanbulites are supplied with: alcohol free mojito at the Cuba bar; images of the centuries long traditional shadow theater figures Karagöz and Hacivat and the photo of Che Guevera stand next to each other at that bar; hurma cheesecakes; “free download Ramadan drum” for iPhone; and online mosque and cemetery visits (that permit diaspora to pay these visits) to name a few (Öğünç 2010). Sandıkçı and Ömeraki (2007:610) argue that the change in Ramadan practices and scenes in the city are due to commercialization: “Ramadan in Turkey and in many other Muslim countries has become a mix of local and global, old and contemporary, religious and secular artifacts, performances, and meanings”.

While some citizens develop new identities with the interaction of local and global, nationalism is claimed to be on the rise in Turkey. National identity is a complex and belated debate in Turkey where many ethnicities gained an umbrella (Turkish) identity in the switch from the Empire to the Nation-state. While this identity is safe for some, those who are not “originally” Turkish had to wait until recently to freely talk and debate about their ethnic identities. The revolutionary option of saying “from Turkey”

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46 Given their cases, it may also be called translocal – see the theoretical chapter for the difference between the terms
47 Before this kind of hybrid music was consumed by the intellectuals (with global identities), it was initiated/created by the undesirable in the streets of undesirable districts/neighbourhoods
48 The round bread with sesame
49 Known as Turkish pizza in the world
50 Folk music
51 They are also the traditional figures of Ramadan
52 A fruit on the date (iftar) table
53 Traditionally, at Ramadan time drummers in every neighbourhood wake people up for Sahur, when they eat for the last time right before the sunrise.
54 Originally Turkish is a very difficult identity to find because of the enormous mixture of ethnicities and (im)migration given the history of the country
(Türkiyeli) rather than “Turkish” has opened a lively debate which made nationalists restive. Özkırımlı (2008) however, argues that studying the votes of nationalist political parties is not enough to conclude that nationalism is on the rise. This method, according to him, would neglect/miss the nationalist acts during the periods when the nationalist political parties’ votes are lower or periods when these parties didn’t exist. Özkırımlı (2008) refers to several nationalist incidents in the history to showcase the fact that Turkish society has always been nationalist.

The larger public, on the other hand, does not seem to have a clear understanding of nationalism. Kentel et al (2009) argue that nationalism is a concept that has no solid definition and meaning for people. Following their national research (including Istanbul) they argue that people employ language and symbols of nationalism in different ways. Moreover, they argue that people attribute too many different meanings to nationalism that at the end it is no longer a comprehensive ideology. Another finding of their research is that even though the language of nationalism is more widely used, it is not a binding factor, but quite the opposite: it segments society with hostility among different identities. Laçiner (2005) analyses this hostility within society in terms of economic interest. He argues that nationalists accepted for a while that the important thing is the economic interest. This understanding made different groups within the society, such as Kurds or in a lower level on religious or gender minorities, a target for nationalism; nationalism, he argues, was practiced on these internal groups and not on the outsiders.

Hostility within the society is also manifest among the liberal nationalists who feel closer to the outsider and detach from the other of the nation. Called the “white Turks”, these are urban (predominantly Istanbulite) citizens who are modern (Arat-Koç 2007), pro-European, tied to globalization (İnseл 2006), who enjoy ICT and English language, and who aim to reach the Western civilization (Bora 2003). The best representatives of this profile also called the “new Turk” are the upper and middle class urban (İstanbulite) youth fully integrated into a modern and global lifestyle (Bora 2003). The hostility of white Turks is not towards a certain ethnic or religious group but more to the other Turks who create a negative image in Europe. İnseл (2006) argues that this causes a class hatred for the white Turks who see themselves superior to the other Turks who are peasants, from provincial, and with a different appearance. This hatred stems from the shame of the inappropriate presentation towards West, but also from the worry that the other Turks may threaten the Westernized lifestyles of the white Turks, in Istanbul.

While the white Turks identify more with a western/global outlook in Istanbul, the other Turks who define themselves nationalist seem to also be interested in opening up to the world. A quotation from Kentel et al (2009) research illustrates the financial priorities of the nationalists: “What do I care of Ankara? I want to do business with Russia” (İdemen 2010). Nationalist acts thus target different groups within Turkish

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55 There are different nationalisms in Turkey such as Turkist Radical Nationalism, Liberal Neo-nationalism, Kemalist Nationalism (ulusçuluk), and Official Nationalism: Atatürk Nationalism (Bora 2003) all with different and changing definitions depending on their origins, targets, and strenght. See Özkırımlı 2008 for details. Moreover, young people in Istanbul also perceive nationalism differently. The quantitative study Kazgan has conducted shows that nationalism means “to like one’s country and nation” for 60.2%; “to see Turkish nation superior to all nations” for 19.4%, “to fight for putting all Turks under the same roof” for 11.5%. 8.3% does not have any idea and 0.6% define it otherwise (Kazgan 2007:69). See also Oran 2011 for the objections to Türkiyeli
society more than the outsiders/foreigners. Online games, on the other hand, are claimed to be the spaces to foster xenophobia. Binark and Bayraktutan-Sütçü (2008) argue that Turkish clans created in online games proudly make wars with foreigners in the name of all the Turks. Toprak et al (2009) also argue that there is ethnicity based hate speech in cyberspace, especially on social networking sites.

3.5. Media and ICT in Turkey (and in Istanbul)

In Turkey, it is a constitutional right to publish opinions individually or collectively. The Press Law has been revised in 2004 to harmonize it with the European Convention on Human Rights. In practice, however, the media has always been under government and army pressure. Politically engaged journalists have been murdered. Their murderers were never condemned. Hundreds of journalists, authors, and intellectuals have been judged and condemned according to several articles of the penal code. The representatives of traditional media are under serious government pressure with public warnings that say that it is better to stay neutral if they don’t want to support the AKP government. The prime minister publicly asked the press not to oppose the government’s policies. The pressure is augmented to the extent that an unprinted draft of a book entitled “Army of the Imam” by the investigator journalist Ahmet Şık is deleted from his computer and the author is put in detention.

As the number of journalists in prison increases, various international organizations of journalism urge the Turkish government to release these detained/sentenced journalists. Several organizations co-founded the Platform for Freedom for Journalists to organize and to lobby for the freedom of journalists and journalism. The initiative and its demonstrations in different cities, however, were not successful in freeing the imprisoned/detained journalists. If not detained, several journalists and political cartoonists are sentenced to pay fines personally to the prime minister who sues them. Blogging seems to provide a certain freedom for (citizen) journalism even though according to Atikkan and Tunç (2011) bloggers do not want to be counted as journalists. The problem here is that many social media websites are banned due to the Internet censorship that will be explained shortly. In addition to government and military pressures, journalists also struggle with the political economy of the media in terms of media concentration, and conglomerations. Moreover, the readership is low due to economic, social, and cultural reasons. Consequently, television is the most popular medium with 3.6 hours viewing time per day (Leckner and Facht 2010). The public service broadcaster TRT transnationally broadcasts with its several channels but it cannot compete (on national viewers) with the private television channels introduced in

56 Article 26 of the constitution
57 While revising this chapter the murderer of Hrant Dink (the editor in chief of the Armenian newspaper Agos and the figure of Armenian – Turkish friendship) is condemned to 22 years in prison. The crucial question, who hired the murderer, however, is unanswered.
58 e.g. articles on insulting Turkey and Turkishness, and fight against terrorism
59 These conglomerations may also include partners from the government or from circles/people closely related to the government
60 Data in 2007
Part I Theoretical Framework

the beginning of 1990s. There currently are 250 television channels in national, regional, and local level together with more than 1000 private radio stations (BYEGM 2009). In recent years, Turkish television serials have become very popular in Western Asia and Greece. As for the ICT, the delayed information society policy is mainly stimulated and designed by the international organizations such as the World Bank or global processes such as the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS). The Internet penetration is growing fast but it is very much lower than the high penetration of mobile telephoning. The high costs of broadband and The Internet censorship are the biggest challenges for Turkish netizens.

Turkish people discovered world television with satellite dishes at the beginning of the 1990s. The introduction of private television in Turkey in the early 1990s has been claimed to play a significant role in developing or reactivating identities at the expense of national identity, as well as linking local and global in different dimensions (Şahin and Aksoy 1993). Even though satellite dishes were already widely used to watch European and American television, Magic Box channel Star 1 was the first Turkish private television channel viewers watched in 1991. The channel was Swiss based and broadcast from Germany. This situation permitted Star 1 to overcome the constraints of the official ideology and to offer viewers the opportunity to discuss such taboo subjects (never discussed before on the public broadcaster TRT) as the Kurdish issue, religion, Kemalism\(^{61}\), secularism, and sex (Şahin & Aksoy 1993). Viewers could watch the prominent figures in these subjects who previously never appeared on television. Şahin and Aksoy (1993) argue that this process dissolved the official dogmas, and fragmented the unitary (national) identity of Turkey. More channels followed Star 1, including channels of fundamentalist and nationalist entrepreneurs, which offered more spaces for expression. A freer environment for discussion is argued to have permitted people to reactivate their minority, religious, and gender identities (Şahin and Aksoy 1993).

As for linking local to global, the process worked on two levels. Şahin and Aksoy (1993) explain that firstly, the newly created smaller communities in Turkey could touch their counterparts in Europe over participation on television. Immigrants from Turkey could watch Turkish channels in Europe and participate by phone calls. This situation opened an interaction space between locals and the diaspora. Secondly, they explain that the public broadcaster TRT, which lost its audience at home to private channels, started to broadcast with several separate channels to Europe, Northern Africa, Middle East, and ex-Soviet Turkic countries to reach the Turkish speaking audiences and the diaspora. They argue that TRT has thus become one of the largest transnational broadcasters in the world (Şahin and Aksoy 1993).

It took 10 years for the Turkish government to initiate an information society policy. After the first use of the Internet in 1993, the prime ministry published a circular for the e-Transformation Turkey project in February 27, 2003. An Information Society Department was established within the state planning organization (DPT) for a coordinated and centralized policy (OECD 2008). During the first phase of the WSIS Turkish governmental delegations chose to be passive and to follow what the European Union had to suggest\(^{62}\). This passive profile slightly changed in the second phase of the

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61 The nation-state ideology of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk
62 Unlike the civil society representatives’ pro-active transnational profile in the civil society section
summit, with the visibility of the minister of transportation in Tunis in 2005. Adapting the information society policy to that of the European Union’s, however, remained the same.

The very first objective of the above mentioned circular on the e-Transformation Turkey project states: “Having regard to EU acquis, policies, laws, and regulations regarding ICT will be re-examined and changed if necessary. In this respect, eEurope+ Action Plan, initiated for the candidate countries, will be adapted to Turkey” (OECD 2008). Moreover, the state planning organization stated in the OECD’s IT Policy Questionnaire 2008 Turkey that they prepared the country’s information society strategy that covers 2006-2010 with an international consultancy company (OECD 2008). According to the same report, the Technology Development Project of 1991, and the Industrial Technology Project of 1999 have both been launched in Turkey by the World Bank. Clearly, the (information and communication) technology and information society policy of Turkey is designed by supranational and/or global organizations. The policy, however, does not include an attempt to benefit from the information society and from the ICT for a better democracy. The government online framework of the e-Transformation Turkey Project has rather a managerial approach with emphasis on better management and better public services. The framework does not include any reference to democracy, local government, or participation (OECD 2008).

The use of ICT by the public is rather limited. Istanbul is the city with the most the Internet cafés in Turkey (TIB 2009). There are 1866 cafés as of 2009 in the city with computers connected to The Internet, where it is possible to print documents out, and also buy snacks and soft drinks. The Internet cafés are places especially for young people who either don’t have access to ICT at home or whose parents limit the time and/or content of the Internet use. Online video games and chat are the very popular features of the Internet in those cafés. It is possible to observe that The Internet cafés differ from neighbourhood to neighbourhood; being more individual in upper middle class neighbourhoods with more secrecy and privacy, and more communitarian in lower class neighbourhoods with less privacy. The Internet cafés further provide spaces for urban youth to create new life spaces and new entertainment that could transform their lives (Cemgil 2003). While the consumption of ICT such as mobile phones and The Internet appeared to be tools of show off rather than better communication (Kocacık 2003), or symbols of the transformation of the middle class in Istanbul (Arduç 2009), the high penetration of mobile phones in the lower income groups in recent years shows that it is not a means of showing off anymore but a tool for communication. The public now believes that new ICT would develop their lives (Konda 2008). Konda (2007c) argues that citizens became more realist and cool-headed in politics with new ICT.

There is a shortage in ICT related statistics at the city level. Therefore, almost all the figures below are at national or regional levels. This situation makes it difficult to profile the ICT usage in Istanbul but for the reasons explained so far, figures are most likely to be much higher for Istanbul and they can still help to give an idea of how citizens use ICT.

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63 There are seven geographically divided regions in Turkey
Table 5: ICT Usage in Households and by Individuals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICT</th>
<th>Turkey %</th>
<th>Urban %</th>
<th>Rural %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desktop computer</td>
<td>30,7</td>
<td>37,1</td>
<td>15,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable computer (Laptop, Tablet PC)</td>
<td>11,2</td>
<td>14,3</td>
<td>3,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone</td>
<td>87,6</td>
<td>89,6</td>
<td>82,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game console</td>
<td>3,7</td>
<td>4,5</td>
<td>1,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handheld computer</td>
<td>0,6</td>
<td>0,8</td>
<td>0,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land line telephone</td>
<td>61,9</td>
<td>61,9</td>
<td>58,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>0,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>2,6</td>
<td>6,1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: TÜİK (Turkish Statistics Institution) 2009*

The most visible characteristic of ICT use in Turkey is that the mobile phone penetration is dominant. The difference between the urban and the rural population in terms of using a desktop or portable computer is very significant whereas the difference between the two groups in terms of mobile phone is very much lower.

Table 6: Computer and The Internet Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Computer %</th>
<th>The Internet %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 - 24</td>
<td>62,2</td>
<td>59,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 34</td>
<td>46,6</td>
<td>45,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 44</td>
<td>31,8</td>
<td>30,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 54</td>
<td>20,2</td>
<td>18,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 - 64</td>
<td>6,7</td>
<td>6,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 - 74</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate without a diploma</td>
<td>2,6</td>
<td>2,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>12,8</td>
<td>11,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary and vocational secondary school</td>
<td>55,3</td>
<td>52,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High and vocational high school</td>
<td>72,4</td>
<td>70,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education</td>
<td>88,5</td>
<td>87,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular employee and casual employee</td>
<td>58,6</td>
<td>56,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>67,8</td>
<td>66,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>21,5</td>
<td>21,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid family worker</td>
<td>16,3</td>
<td>15,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>43,7</td>
<td>41,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of labour force/ house work</td>
<td>14,2</td>
<td>12,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>17,1</td>
<td>15,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>91,5</td>
<td>88,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled</td>
<td>5,9</td>
<td>5,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who don't want to work</td>
<td>34,3</td>
<td>30,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>20,4</td>
<td>19,8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: TÜİK (Turkish Statistics Institution) 2009*
As noted earlier, Turkey is a very young nation with 34.58% of the population under 20 years old as of the end of 2009 (TÜİK 2009). This age group is the group that uses ICT the most. The use of ICT declines as citizens get older. We also see that the use of ICT is related to education; the higher the education, the higher is the use of ICT. Unsurprisingly students are the biggest groups who use ICT. Regular employees and employers follow them. The above table also clearly shows that not all computers are connected to the Internet.

We also find different results in the statistics by Intel (2009) that reports that 2 out of 3 households has a computer in urban areas. The overall rate, according to that report is 67.4% while it is 76.2% in the Marmara region (where Istanbul is situated). The Intel (2009) study claims that the development of the region has an influence on the age to start to use ICT; while the age to start to use ICT is 14 in the Black Sea region, the age drops to 11.10 in the Marmara region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search information on goods and services</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search health-related information</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for information on education, training or course offers</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching for job/ sending job application, CV</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to web radio/ watch web TV</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading news</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>travel and accommodation services</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online banking</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sending / receiving e-mails</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephoning</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>45.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posting messages to chat sites, newsgroups or on-line discussion forum</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploading user generated content</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloading software (other than games software)</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-to-peer file sharing</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling goods/services</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Re-arranged from TÜİK (Turkish Statistics Institution) 2009

As for the purposes of using ICT, communication is the most important reason to connect to the Internet. Sending and receiving e-mails is the biggest reason for citizens to go online. Reading online news is the second biggest reason. Most of the online versions of the daily newspapers are free of charge. Citizens may also access alternative information sources online. These may be the reasons why citizens who otherwise are not big newspapers buyers read news online. While searching for information on
goods and services is the third biggest reason for using the Internet, citizens seem to be reluctant to sell goods and services online which scores the least on the statistics. Deloitte (2009) reports that while the ICT infrastructure in Istanbul scored 57th among 133 countries in WEF report, the Turkish ICT sector is the second fastest growing market in the CEEMEA region with an annual growth of 15-20%.

As seen in the above tables, even though there is a fast growth of penetration, the majority of the population is still digitally divided. As in everywhere in the developing countries, young people constitute the group that use the technology the most. We can also see that university students or older people with university degrees use ICT and the Internet. It has to be remembered that these numbers represent the national statistics and not that of Istanbul where the Internet penetration is most likely to be the highest. Apart from the household subscribers, Istanbul is the city where the number of schools and the Internet cafés is the highest. 1866 the Internet cafés as of 2009 and facilities in schools make Istanbulites access the Internet with low or no cost. Yorulmaz (2008) suggests that software like Scratch should be used to diversify the activities in these places.

Mobile phones, on the other hand, have a much higher penetration with 88% as of 2009. 3G technology arrived in Turkey in July 2009 and as of the last quarter of the same year 7.1% of mobile subscribers started to use it (BTK 2010). The annual investment of three mobile operators grew by 66,4% in 2009 compared to the previous year (BTK 2010). Short messages (SMS) are very popular with 70,395 SMS/minute nationwide in 2009 (BTK 2010). The use of mobile phone is also among the highest in the OECD countries.

**Figure 2: Share of mobile revenue in total telecommunication revenue in OECD countries**

![Image](image.png)

*Source: OECD 2009*
Even though the tax over Internet has been lowered from 15% to 5% (European Commission 2009), the broadband price for a monthly subscription in Turkey is the highest among the OECD countries. This is a challenge for subscribers who end up choosing limited packages which prevent them from benefiting from broadband to fullest.

Choosing limited packages due to the high costs of broadband is a challenge for citizens in their use of Web 2.0 that facilitates large data exchange and interaction. The limited use of Web 2.0 cuts off citizens from all the advantages of that part of the technology.

The high cost of The Internet, however, is not the biggest challenge. The ultimate limitation for The Internet users is the Law number 5651, entitled Regulation of Publications on the Internet and Suppression of Crimes Committed by means of Such Publication, popularly named as the Internet law. The figure below is the image of the legal notice that the Internet users in Turkey see when they enter the URL of 6000 (as of July 2010) websites. The notice on the below figure appears when one types “sites.google.com” on the URL bar. The notice informs readers that the Telecommunication Communication Presidency applies the decision of the court(s) which decided to block the website for protection purposes. The notice, however, is not clear on what/who is protected from what/whom and the motive for this decision.

Figure 3: Range of broadband prices for a monthly subscription, September 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Price (USD PPP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>12.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>11.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>11.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>13.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>16.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>16.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>18.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>18.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>18.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>20.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>20.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>22.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>22.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>23.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>23.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>24.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>25.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>30.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>33.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD 2009

Video sharing website YouTube.com was also banned between May 2008 and 2010.
The Telecommunication Communication Presidency (TIB) is in charge of coordinating telecommunication regulations since 2006. Law bill number 5651 entered in force on 23 May 2007 to regulate the Internet in Turkey. It has two aims: firstly, it determines the tasks and responsibilities of providers of content, space, access, and public use. Secondly, it regulates the fight over providers of content, space, and access in case of crimes committed on the Internet. These crimes include encouraging suicide; sexually abusing children; facilitating drug use; providing dangerous substances for health, obscene material, prostitution, space for gambling, and games of chance for sports; crimes against Atatürk (TIB 2010).

The TIB declares on its website that the Internet information notification centre works on the “notice and take down” principle. It receives notifications by phone, e-mail, or on the website from citizens on online content that may be against law. Obscenity, sexual abuse of children, and prostitution constitute 80% of the notifications that in their turn constitute 14% of the overall online communication from citizens to the institution. According to TIB statistics, citizens prefer contacting the institution via its website by 89%. 8% send e-mails and 3% make a phone call (TIB 2010).

The mass blocking of the websites, however, is not limited with the above list of crimes. Politically engaged news websites or gay communities’ websites that have hundreds of thousands of members are also banned with this law (Akdeniz 2010). Cyber law expert Yaman Akdeniz (2010) who is also an activist for freedom of the Internet in Turkey emphasizes that the current application of this law is not only against freedom of speech and communication but it also is problematic in terms of the lack of judicial and administrative transparency. The law, moreover, is against European conventions. The study he has conducted for OCSE in 2010 shows that there are about 200 blocking cases that are outside the scope of the law and that TIB stopped publishing decisions as of May 2009. Akdeniz (2010) argues that the authorities should revise the law according to OSCE commitments and other international standards otherwise they should abolish it. In the framework of The Internet censorship, the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) has announced the creation of a state
sponsored Turkish search engine as an alternative to global search engines like Google. Even though young The Internet users have immediately mocked this announcement by immediately creating a fake National Engine (MilliMotor), according to Akdeniz, it is a more serious issue because it would mean more censorship in the near future. Finally, the OSCE report prepared by Akdeniz points out that the application of the law is biased since online hate speech and racist content towards minority groups is ignored by the authorities (Akdeniz 2010).

Netizens in Turkey are not without alternatives in the face of these limitations. They still access the blocked pages either via tunnels or by changing the DNS numbers if they wish to access international websites. Alternatively, they may set up their page with the same content under a new name. Among the answers to FAQ on its website, TIB comments on the alternative access to banned websites. TIB declares that the best solution to block the access to a given content is to delete this content; a part form this, all the measures they take are to complicate the access (TIB 2010).

Netizens use this very tool to organize and protest against this law. The protests included Istanbul’s and Turkey’s first virtual street march on Google map in February 2010 where thousands have tagged themselves on the street where normally street protests take place in the heart of Istanbul. Protesters have also gathered on the same street in person in June 2010. Apart from these reactions leading nowhere, censorship has become more severe. BTK announced that they are working on a new filtering policy. According to BTK’s press releases in spring 2011 all The Internet subscribers will be forced to choose a filter from the filter list that the institution will offer as of August 201166. Moreover TIB sent a list of forbidden words to service providers. The list included very ordinary words that are commonly and frequently used in daily language. Simultaneous demonstrations were organized in 31 cities to protest against this new law over some event pages opened on Facebook such as “don’t touch my Internet” that were joined by more than 600 thousands netizens. The TIB and its censorship policy placed Turkey, in 2009, on the partly-free countries list of Freedom House.

Figure 5: Comparison of Freedom on the Internet

![Figure 5: Comparison of Freedom on the Internet](image)

Source: Freedom on the Net: A Global Assessment of the Internet and Digital Media, March 30, 200967

66 BTK announced in August 2011 that they postponed the practice of this policy for 3 months
The censorship or prohibition of ICT is nothing new in Turkey. This situation does not only challenge citizens’ right to information but it also causes a conflict of identity for the institutional politicians at the highest level. In the late 1980s, Article 133 of the Turkish constitution about the monopoly of public broadcasting didn’t permit private television channels. President Turgut Özal, the highest figure in institutional politics in the country, told journalists that it was unconstitutional to establish private television in Turkey; broadcasting from abroad to Turkey, however, would not be illegal (Şahin and Aksoy 1993). The enormous audience of the private channels motivated entrepreneurs to set up more channels, including the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality’s company of cultural events (Kültür A.Ş.). The Metropolitan Municipality Radio and Television, BRT was on air between 1992 and 1994. Thus, even though some argued that government had to surrender to technology and public pressure (Keyder 2000), it in fact was the very initiator of the private television.

As explained earlier, private television channels offered spaces for identities that were not represented before in public broadcasting. A young politician in the Istanbul organization of the Islamist Welfare Party (RP) was among the Islamists who were enjoying this freedom. In 2008, it was his turn to have a conflict of identity. This young politician has first become the metropolitan mayor of Istanbul in 1994, and then Prime Minister of Turkey in 2002. In May 2008 the video sharing website youtube.com was blocked. The Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan told journalists: “I can access, so you can access too!” President Abdullah Gül, a devoted twitter user, stated that there was no need to be scared of YouTube and that Turkey should not join the league of countries that censor the Internet.

To sum up this contextual background, Istanbul is situated in a country where institutional politics, activism, identity, and media and ICT have several challenges and limitations at several levels. This is a relatively new and problematic (representative) democracy that tries to change its political tradition at home and its diplomatic policy abroad. The claimed changes in local and global, politics and the political, and ICT somehow inspire the (local) institutional politics, activism (civil society), and identity to make the changes they wish to see in the local, but they all struggle with limitations and challenges.

Local authorities seem to have a better law on paper but the practice looks different in terms of decentralization and local democracy. Activists and civil society in general is transforming with their access to and interaction with the global but they still are too weak to have power in politics and they still suffer from the abolition of civil society during the military coups. Even though different identities start to have a certain voice in the society, there are still many challenges for ethnic, religious, or alternative identities and lifestyles. The local — global interaction seems to bring in new identities but it at the same time feeds nationalism that seems to be an almost empty concept for the general public.

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68 In May 1990, the elder son of the president, Ahmet Özal set up a Swiss based company, Magic Box, which started to broadcast to Turkey from Germany (Şahin & Aksoy 1993).
69 ntvmsnbc.com 2008
Finally, the lack of democracy and participation reflects on the media and ICT environment. The press and broader media has never been free and currently they are going through a very difficult trend of government pressure and censorship - in a paradox of the democratic discourse of the current government. The information society policy of the state does not include a democratic perspective in the use of the ICT in public institutions. Moreover there is a severe Internet censorship that gives signals that it will be more severe in the near future. It is in this context that the interviewees answered the questions of the researcher.
4. METHODOLOGY


Strauss & Corbin (1998:11) suggest that the *experiences, preferences, and disciplines* of researchers are valid reasons to do a qualitative research. In my case, my experiences and preferences of communicating with people, my discipline that traditionally use the qualitative research methods, and my research questions are the reasons why I chose to meet people and discuss with them about their experiences, feelings, opinions, ideas, and proposals. That is why this is a qualitative research. The research also belongs to the fractured future period of qualitative research not only because it started its journey after 2005 but also because it critically analyses how citizens perceive the role of ICT in the supposedly changing social dimensions such as the institutional politics, activism, and identity and how these perceptions relate to democracy.

For this *how* chapter I consciously choose to employ the first singular person to avoid the dull, tiring but inevitable passive voice of methodology chapters. Inspired by Silverman’s (2000) *natural history format* I also choose to make this chapter a space where I can share my experience in addition to the explanations on the methodology, methods, data collection process, and the analysis. Silverman (2000) argues that the methodology chapters are the long, formal, and boring ones which readers are most likely to skip. Therefore he refers to Alasuutari (1995) who suggested that readers would be as interested in learning how the researcher coped with the difficulties throughout the research process. In my case, as a researcher who studied the perceived role of ICT by partly using the very technologies, my experience in coping with the challenges is particularly interesting and relevant for future research of this kind. The chapter continues by explaining the theoretical framework of the methodology of this research, data collection methods and process, data analysis, and finally the self-evaluation.

4.1. Grounded Theory

The grounded theory methodology, originally developed by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, permits theory to emerge from data (Strauss & Corbin 1998:9). This methodology has later been developed by Strauss and Juliet Corbin.

Grounded theory methodology requires systematic collection and analysis of the data. If the purpose of the researchers is to develop a new theory, this methodology
permits them to achieve this goal in a free and creative way. The freedom and creativity stem from the lack of a solid theoretical framework whose concepts, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998) would limit researchers in their development of a new theory. Thus researchers who use the grounded theory methodology find their concepts, which will later build the new theory, in their data and not in a chosen literature or theoretical framework. If, on the other hand, the purpose of the researchers is to extend an already existing theoretical framework, this methodology also permits these researchers to discover new concepts which will extend that theoretical framework because the unique data will be likely to tell them something new. This research aims at extending an already set theoretical framework. What is important in the grounded theory methodology is to let the data speak and to offer new concepts from concrete and original words. That is exactly what I did; I found the concept of fantasy grounded in my data, a concept that was not initially included in my theoretical framework.

Another significant aspect of the grounded theory methodology is the cyclical nature. Researchers make cycles between the concepts and the data, between the abstract and the concrete. They analyse the data within a theoretical framework, when they come across with a new concept in the data (a concept that they didn't initially include in the framework) they go back to the theoretical framework to theorise the new concept. After theorizing the new concept and developing the theoretical framework accordingly, researchers go back to the data to dig it in more to see the newly theorized and discussed concept. This is how the cyclical grounded theory methodology permits researchers to reach new concepts and develop them to further develop and feed the theoretical discussions based on empirical evidence.

The grounded theory methodology holds three phases: description; conceptual ordering; and theorizing. Description is the basis for theorizing. This is where researchers describe the meanings in their data to start to see the concepts emerging from there. Conceptual ordering is the second phase where researchers start to classify data in order to organize them into discrete categories. They classify arguments in the data according to their properties and dimensions. Strauss and Corbin (1998:20) argue that concepts defined according to their properties and dimensions would lead to well-developed theory. Theorizing, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998:22), is to present a set of concepts that researchers systematically develop to form a theoretical framework to explain a social phenomenon: “(theorizing is to) formulate concepts into a logical, systematic, and explanatory scheme. ... Once concepts are related through statements of relationship into an explanatory theoretical framework, the research findings move beyond conceptual ordering to theory. A theory is more than a set of findings; it offers an explanation about phenomena.” (Strauss & Corbin 1998:21, 22)

The purpose of grounded theory methodology is to develop a theory or to extend an existing theoretical framework. That is why the research questions need to permit researchers to study a phenomenon in depth but also in a flexible and free manner. For this research I first look at the theoretical concepts in the academic discussions on the claimed changes in local-global relation, politics and the political, and the ICT and at the interaction of these areas in what Manuel Castells conceptualizes as the network society, and then I look at the Lacanian fantasy to discuss and theorize the
empirical framework. I formulated the research questions of this study according to these concepts as follows:

**Research Question 1:** How do institutional politicians perceive the role of ICT in the changing institutional politics in Istanbul?

**Research Question 2:** How do activists perceive the role of ICT in the changing activism in Istanbul?

**Research Question 3:** How do ordinary citizens perceive the role of ICT in the changing identities in Istanbul?

**Research Question 4:** What fantasies come out of these perceptions in each of the dimensions?

### 4.2. Data Collection Methods

Qualitative researchers may gather data with several methods and approaches such as interviews, observations, documents in different formats (visual, audio, video) (Strauss & Corbin 1998), participatory inquiry, interpretive analysis, and case study research (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:3).

I used semi-structured in-depth interviews method to collect my data. This method permitted me to directly access the experiences by communicating directly with people, and learning about real and original experiences and knowledge. The semi structured in-depth interviews brought me data from three groups of people from the three dimensions of the research: interviews with institutional politicians provided me with data to answer the first research question on the institutional politics; interviews with activists provided me with data to answer the second research question on activism; and interviews with ordinary citizens provided me with data to answer the third research question on identity. I chose to interview these three groups because they belong to the three dimensions of the interaction of the three areas of claimed social change. I link the three dimensions (institutional politics, activism, and identity) in order to firstly reach a more complete picture of the network society dimensions and secondly to be able to cross check the concepts in different dimensions. Since this research analyses how people think that ICT change society, linking the governor and the governed (both activists and ordinary citizens) permits me to see the differences in the perceptions in the society.

For the institutional politics dimension I interviewed local politicians in municipalities. I interviewed politicians and bureaucrats in metropolitan and district levels, and a neighbourhood headwoman to include the lowest possible elected local authority. For the activism dimension, I interviewed activists. As I will shortly explain in the diversification criteria sub-section, these activists represent different ways of organizing and acting. For the identity dimension, I interviewed ordinary citizens.
who are not active or engaged in local political life. Each group primarily feeds its own dimension. There are, however, some concepts such as participation that repeats in all three dimensions. Equally, the institutional politics finds its place in the identity dimension. Envisaging this kind of situation, I included in the interviews with all three groups questions of the other dimensions as well. Throughout the process, I also conducted two exploratory focus groups that provided me with data that I used in the analysis. As for coding the interviewees’ quotes; when I quote the interviewees in the analysis, I code them with a fake name, real age, real gender, and shorten the dimensions names with the initials namely “ip” for institutional politicians, “a” for activists, and “oc” for ordinary citizens. The coding in the analysis thus looks like the following: “....” (Selim, 52, m, a).

Diversification of interviewees

Istanbul is a metropolis with about 13 million inhabitants. In order to include as many profiles as possible and to reach a higher validity and reliability of the findings, I diversified the interviewees with the following set of criteria: age, gender, education, income, social group, political views, level of activity (local/global), and use of ICT.

**Age:** as described in the previous chapter young people are the biggest group in society who use the ICT. The interviewees, however, also represent other age groups which permits me to reach comparative data. This is especially important for activists. Older activists who did not have (new) ICT in their days provide information on their working conditions. Among the older activists are the ones who continue in activism. These old and actual activists provide first hand comparison between the two ways of working and the consequences of integrating ICT in their work.

**Gender:** there is a gender balance among the interviewees.

**Education:** Interviewees are diversified according to their educational level ranging from primary school to doctoral degrees. The education criteria also cover different educational institution profiles such as foreign, private, and public educational institutions.

**Income:** Interviewees belong to all income groups. It is easy to reach income data on mass anonymous surveys. The face-to-face or on-line in-depth interview, on the other hand, goes against the local tradition of “you don’t ask a man how much he makes”. In today’s society this tradition also applies to women. Therefore, the interviewees stated which income group they feel/think they are without the amount of their income. The groups were simplified as lower, middle, and upper income groups.

**Social group:** This is an umbrella title that covers various sub-criteria that include: different religions; different sects in Islam; ethnicity; and migrants in accordance with the city’s cultural profile. Istanbul is a metropolis with considerable differences among its districts. As I mention in the contextual chapter, there are also new spatial reorganizations in the city such as the gated communities. Therefore, social group also covers the various districts and spatial profiles with location, socio-economic status, and population profile sub-criteria.
Political views: Interviewees represent diverse political views. Apart from the traditionally defined right, left, and centre, newer views such as glocalist, anti-globalist, or hybrid views such as Islamic feminist are also present in the data.

Level of activity (local/global): This applies mostly to activists and at a lower level to institutional politicians. Activists' levels of activity vary from the very local (neighbourhood) to global. As for local institutional politics, I added to my interviewees the representatives of foreign affairs in IMM.

Use of ICT: The differences in using ICT ensure that digitally divided members of society are represented in the data. The use of ICT also covers differences among the ICT users with a scale from those who can’t survive without the Internet to those who check e-mails once in a while. Moreover, the use of ICT diversified activists in terms of their use of ICT in their work. All three kinds of activism namely, only online, only offline, and blending online and offline are present in the data.

Selection of the interviewees

Activists: In addition to the above diversification criteria, I selected activists also according to their ways of activism: traditional frameworks such as associations, trade unions, and political parties’ youth branches; newer frameworks such as networks and platforms; and finally individual initiatives that mobilize thousands of citizens on social media – a category that is called sub-activists in the theoretical discussions. I interviewed 20 activists.

I benefited from my various local networks in reaching interviewees. Firstly, my pre-academic career in youth activism in Turkey helped me to reach various activists and provided me with background information. Secondly my pre-PhD academic career in Istanbul helped me to join a local academic network which also helped me to reach various people. I also asked my friends and family to introduce me to the profiles I needed to include in the data. Some interviewees also referred to some other activists’ names and one even introduced me to another activist whom I decided to interview. As for the online activists, I referred to Facebook. The social network site Facebook is, like in many other countries, very popular in Turkey. Following the opening up of the site to non college students and the launch of the Turkish version, millions started to actively use this website. It is because of this popularity that I chose this online tool to reach individual and collective activists.

Jones (1999: 18) suggests that Internet researchers should maybe be “sensitive to and aware of their own experiences online” if the Internet is a personalized mass media. In the selection of the activists in Facebook, I therefore first checked my own network. My academic and civil society experiences together with my approach to people permit me to have a diversified list of friends on this social network site. Therefore I first scanned groups and causes of my friends from different backgrounds in accordance of the above diversification criteria. Secondly, at the end of 2008, on the groups’ pages, Facebook used to provide links to a couple of other related groups. The

1 The popularity rose even higher after my data collection to reach 29.16 % of the whole population, meaning 22.6 million users, which placed the country fourth on the list of country traffic in October 2010 (http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25137077/)
2 The upcoming chapters analyze the political reasons of this phenomenon.
little corner on the bottom right permitted me to learn about more groups that linked
to even more groups endlessly. Thirdly, I used the search engine of the website and
entered key words like Istanbul, democracy, names of politicians, or political parties,
and words from the then current social and/or political issues. I then contacted the
administrators of groups or causes³ according to the diversification criteria.

The biggest challenge here was to receive replies from creators or administrators of
groups with such profiles as ultra-nationalist and Islamist. I shared this obstacle with
different academics⁴ and asked them advice. The advice included: check the text of your
message and make sure that there is no word that would offend the receiver; create a
new profile on Facebook without your photo (which probably says much about your
identity); try to reach these profiles offline through your local networks. I listened to
all advice and acted accordingly. The most successful advice was the last one. Facebook
also permitted me to contact activists who use the tool as complementary to their main
offline work. I also contacted one interviewee by landline telephone to request an
interview without the help of any network.

Ordinary citizens: My local networks that I described above were also very useful
in reaching the various ordinary citizens. Admittedly I was privileged to make orders of
profiles to my academic, civil society, and friendship networks to reach ordinary citizens
whom I could have hardly reached otherwise. Some of the ordinary citizens, on the other
hand, were neighbours or friends. I didn’t see any problem in interviewing these people
especially because we were not in touch in recent years due to my residence abroad and
because they had no idea about my research, and finally because their profiles are not
the easiest to reach. I interviewed 4 ordinary citizens on VoIP. I interviewed 14 ordinary
citizens. Besides, I added data from the exploratory phase (16 people) in this group
which augments the total number of the people who contributed to the data.

Institutional politicians: As explained in the contextual chapter, there are two
kinds of institutional politicians at the local level: elected municipality and assigned
provincial administration. I preferred interviewing the representatives of the elected
local authority and not the assigned local authority because of the democracy
component of the research. The selection of this third group was according to the level
within the local level namely metropolitan, district, and neighbourhood. I ensured the
diversification in political affiliation, age, gender, and location. There is obviously one
metropolitan municipality. I interviewed several representatives at the metropolitan
municipality level such as the CIO, the head of strategy department, two high level
officials in the international relations department, and the director of a unit on cultural
heritage management (because it is a UNESCO initiative). At the district municipality
level, I interviewed vice-mayors of two district municipalities; Kadıköy and Bağcılar,
one from each political party represented in the city, and one from each part of the city
(European and Asian). These two are also very different in terms of demographics and
socio-economics. I also included a female neighbourhood headman (muhtar) as the
closest elected local authority in the city. This was the group of interviewees for whom
I expected to need the most help from my local networks. The reality, however, was the

³ Some of them later converted to “pages” as Facebook developed more efficient tools
⁴ Colin Sparks and Katharine Sarikakis during their guest lectures at the University of Helsinki, and my
supervisors
I could meet high level municipality officials without a connection who would facilitate the access. I interviewed 9 institutional politicians.

I further interviewed the chairwoman of the Istanbul Centre in Brussels and the secretary-general of the Middle East West Asia section of the United Cities Local Governments (UCLG MEWA) in Istanbul who also is the national coordinator of the Local Agenda 21 Turkey program. Due to busy agendas, this latter interview happened online and by e-mail. This format permitted me to receive elaborated written answers. Data from these two (expert) interviews mainly feed the contextual chapter on Istanbul. I have nevertheless also tried to have an interview at the administration of province thinking that it could add a different perspective but I simply could not get an interview time from that institution despite numerous attempts by phone with several secretaries.

Data collection is a process. A challenge in this process was that I made a structural change in my research. This change however came after I already interviewed some activists. Therefore, I conducted second interviews with those activists. This situation first seemed to be waste of time but later during the interviews, it gave me the opportunity to check if what they said earlier was still valid. It also gave the interviewees the opportunity to add more to their answers. Some were very interested in the research and they admitted that they continued to think about it after the first meeting.

Other data
In order to help the reader to have a better understanding of the analysis, this study offers a contextual background about Turkey and Istanbul. The contextual chapter provides information on the three dimensions of the research together with the media and ICT context. For that chapter I used local literature as well as reports and studies from international organizations. As a qualitative research, this study answers the how question. The study, however, does not deny the value of quantitative data. Therefore it uses quantitative data such as statistical data to be analysed in qualitative research logic. The quantitative data derive from local, national, and global resources like the IMM, Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), EU, OECD, and UN.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Number of interviewees (57)</th>
<th>Date of interview</th>
<th>Place of interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional politicians/bureaucrats</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2008 2009 2010</td>
<td>Brussels 1 face-to-face, Istanbul 9 face-to-face, 1 online (e-mail)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activists</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2008 2009 2010</td>
<td>Istanbul all face-to-face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary citizens</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2008 2009 2010</td>
<td>Istanbul 22 face-to-face, 4 online (skype)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.3. Data Analysis

The grounded theory methodology analyses the data by coding them in different levels. The coding procedure permits the researchers to, in Strauss and Corbin’s words: “build rather than test theory, provide researchers with analytic tools for handling masses of raw data, help analysts to consider alternative meanings of phenomena, be systematic and creative simultaneously, and identify, develop, and relate concepts that are building blocks of theory” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:13). The purpose of coding the data is to allow researchers to look at the data closer and to listen to what interviewees say. Researchers thus can organize the data into categories and concepts. This categorization of the data takes researchers from the description level to the conceptualizing level which permits them to develop or extend a theoretical framework. As explained earlier, the grounded theory methodology is a cyclical methodology that makes researchers travel between the concepts and the data continuously. Concepts help the coding of the data and the coding of the data help to find new concepts that need to be further conceptualized in the theoretical framework that in turn send researchers back to data to find more about the concept.

The analysis starts with open coding. Open coding means coding the data to determine different categories that they contain. Researchers do the categorization by coding the data and discovering the groups of ideas which gather under the same category. There are three ways of doing open-coding: line-by-line; whole sentence or paragraph; peruse the entire document. (Strauss and Corbin 1998) The first way, line-by-line is the coding where researchers analyse words, sentences, or paragraphs. Especially the word by word coding permits the researchers to analyse the how in addition to
what. The second way of coding, whole sentence or paragraph, is when researchers analyse the major idea that the interviewee puts in a sentence or in a paragraph. This coding, according to Strauss and Corbin is very useful when researchers already have some categories even though this coding can be any time during the analysis. The final way, peruse the entire document, is when researchers scan the whole document and analyse what is going on and how that document is different or similar compare to other documents that they code. Researchers then analyse the similarities and differences. Whichever way of coding the researchers choose, they need to find their own system to record their codes (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

The next level of the analysis is axial coding. Axial coding is when researchers develop and relate categories systematically in order to regroup concepts that they found in the open coding. They thus reach a more complete and clear explanation to their overall question. Strauss and Corbin (1998:126) explain the tasks of axial coding as the following: “laying out the properties of a category and their dimensions, a task that begins during open coding; identifying the variety of conditions, actions/interactions, and consequences associated with a phenomenon; relating a category to its subcategories through statements denoting how they are related to each other; looking for cues in the data that denote how major categories might relate to each other”.

The last level of coding is selective coding. This is when researchers integrate categories/concepts by organizing them around one central concept. They then refine the theory that emerges from their data or extend the already existing theoretical framework that they used for their research.

What counted in my analysis is what the interviewees said and not how they said it. In Silverman’s (2000) terms it is a realist analysis where the given information is important and analysed. After fully transcribing the interviews, I started with an open coding to organize the answers. This phase permitted me to look at the data closer and to understand the different categories in the answers. This is a realist analysis, therefore I blended the second and the third ways of open coding (that I explained above). My purpose for this research, as I explained earlier, is to extend an already existing theoretical framework. That is why I already had in my mind some concepts of my theoretical framework to guide me in the analysis.

In regrouping and relating the categories phase, axial coding, the abstracting work was at first a challenge for me. I started the research in the abstract level with the literature review and the theoretical framework, and then I touched the very concrete with the interviews. Going then back to abstract was not an easy task. I therefore decided to take a little break from the data and worked on other parts of the research like for instance drafting the contextual chapter. When I restarted to work on the data, abstracting seemed easier. As for writing the codes, on the first reading I marked the relevant sentences and paragraphs. In that stage I color-coded the different dimensions of the research on the text. In the rest of the open coding I switched from paper to computer and I started to record my analysis on color-coded tables and I kept on working on these tables - except when I had to go back to the raw material.

Following the last coding, the one central concept that I came up with was fantasy. This was a new concept because it was not among the initial concepts that I used for
the analysis. I therefore went back to the theoretical level to conceptualize fantasy. I learnt from the literature how to link fantasy to the political framework. This learning process taught me how to use the concept as a critical tool. After redrafting the theoretical chapter by adding a new section on fantasy, its relation to the political, and the fantasies in the theoretical framework that I use, as the cyclical nature of grounded theory requires, I went back to my data to analyse more to see the different fantasies interviewees talk about or refer to without calling them fantasy. This phase was also challenging because the new concept that was grounded in the data comes from psychoanalysis, a discipline I was not familiar with. Even though I use the concept in a contemporary and more general framework, it was a challenge to learn a new concept and how to link it to politics and to the political. Following this process of learning in the theoretical level, again within the cyclical logic, I analysed the data more to see the various fantasies. This last phase was the most challenging yet the most interesting part of the process of the analysis.

Moreover, I analysed the data in two levels. Theoretically, I compared concepts in the theory and concepts in the data and analysed if there are absences, rejections, or reinterpretations of the concepts in the interviews. The cyclic grounded theory methodology helped me to do this comparison. Empirically, I compared the three groups and analysed who says what others don’t say or say differently. Therefore the analysis does not only present what is in the data but it also presents what is not there or what is there differently from the theoretical concept or differently from the other perspectives in the data.

Finally, instead of writing an analysis and a discussion chapter separately, I broke down the analysis in three chapters separately for each dimension and I included the discussions over the findings of the analysis at the end of each of these chapters. This way I avoided the physical distance between the analysis and the discussion and I could present shorter but more concise chapters. I could also reserve a separate space for the conclusions.

4.4. Advantages and Challenges

Even though I already explained above some of the challenges that I had to cope with in this research, I still add a self-evaluation below to explain further the advantages and the challenges in different phases of the research.

Data collection

In-depth semi-structured interviews take more time. This may appear as a challenge. This kind of difficult chat may be boring, tiring, or too long in the middle of the work of the interviewee. The longer time, however, also presents many advantages. The interview may turn into a very fruitful and insightful chat; the stress that interviewees may have in the beginning, because of for instance the voice recorder, disappears; the interviewees have enough time to remember examples; and to suggest other connections for interviews. The longer time also permits interviewees to understand the questions and think more in-depth before they answer. In southern/Mediterranean culture, about an hour chat in a cafe may be enough for the interviewees to start to
be more personal and to maybe become more open/honest in their answers. This communication between the researcher and the interviewee may permit interesting after-interview chat as well as creating social connections. I stayed in touch with couple of activists that I only contacted on Facebook for this research. This situation permits me to follow their work and provides me with concrete samples of the arguments they put forward during the interview, even though I don’t use them in the analysis.

Another challenge in the data collection, as explained earlier, was at the stage of contacting some activists on Facebook. While replying to a researcher’s message was interesting for some, some particular profiles did not reply at all to the invitation to an interview. It should be also noted that even though Facebook is a very popular tool, there are activists who do not use the tool. I covered that profile by reaching them through offline connections or by using more traditional ICT like landline phones.

Answers to the questions on scenarios or on the future cause another challenge in terms of verification. When I ask “would you participate....” or “would you vote...” referring to hypothetical situations, I know that interviewees answer hypothetically. Verifying the answers, however, is never possible in an in-depth interview. It is not even necessary because interviewees share their opinions, experiences, and feelings at a very individual level. What is important for the analysis is not to verify their answer but to understand their arguments on the issues. I nevertheless am careful in writing the arguments on the future or on a scenario by explaining that that argument of the interviewee(s) does not derive from past experience but from ideas on future stemming from past or present experiences.

Data analysis
Allocating too much time in the coding process may appear as a challenge. This amount of time, however, permits the researchers to go back and forth on the data and gain a deeper understanding of what people have to say. This exercise is an advantage for researchers who need to think in depth about the concepts. The interplay between concrete and abstract was a challenging phase that at the end taught me how to navigate between these levels (see above the challenges I shared on this level).

Validity and Reliability
Istanbul is an attractive big city that receives high levels of migration which gives the population an ever changing profile. It is also important to note that the lack of political and economic stability in the country\(^5\) unavoidably reflects on Istanbul and its population. In these circumstances it is hardly possible to accept that what interviewees said in the interviews for this research is what they will repeat in the future. Thus, researchers who would repeat this kind of study in the city may reach different findings in the future depending on the then current political and economic contexts and dynamics in the city, among the citizens, civil society, and institutional politics. This research, on the other hand, takes into consideration all the above challenges and cope with them with a) an extensive set of criteria to ensure diversity among the interviewees in an effort to ensure representation of as many profiles as possible; b)
conducting the interviews in three separate time periods to ensure that interviewees are free of influence of a certain political agenda; c) triangulates the findings by comparing them with earlier qualitative and quantitative studies. Moreover, as explained earlier in the introduction, this study positions itself as a critical constructivist one which recognizes that the meaning constructed in this study is but one meaning based on my interpretations of the interviewees’ words.

Feed-back
Throughout my research I used all the opportunities to discuss it and get feedback from various different backgrounds globally. Visiting professors in Helsinki, academics in various national and international conferences, seminars, European level communication students doctoral summer school, research stay in Brussels, discussions with academics in Istanbul, and alike have provided feedback and comments on my research. Presenting papers in international conferences and publishing some of them on the conference proceedings also provided me with reviews and feedbacks. I did not limit feedback with academia. I discussed my research with people from different professional and cultural backgrounds, policy-makers, ordinary citizens, and friends and family. These discussions were helpful in three ways. Firstly, they all gave me feedback in one way or another. This feedback was not always relevant; however, it permitted me to understand people’s reactions to this kind of subject. Secondly, I had to express my thoughts and ideas to many different profiles. Expressing the same ideas in different languages and with different jargon helped me to think over the same subject from different angles. Finally, the exercise of discussing the subject with others permitted me to feel more confident and articulate during the interviews.

In addition to the general feedback, I also used the feedback from local academics and researchers before finalizing my diversification criteria for data collection. Those discussions helped me to think about various profiles in the city and gave me ideas on how to reach them. Finally, I asked for feedback for the contextual chapter from a local sociologist who studied Istanbul’s population for another piece of research.

Objectivity and sensitivity
The objectivity and sensibility is in balance in the grounded theory methodology when researchers are able to make a distinction between their perceptions and the perceptions of the interviewees. What matters in the analysis is what the interviewees think and say. The same rule applies for experiences. Researchers could/should use their experiences while analysing, but it is very important that they don’t include their experience in the data. If careful with these rules, researchers may ensure that their objectivity would assure them about the impartial representation of the data, and their sensitivity would permit them to enjoy creativity to reveal new concepts (Strauss and Corbin 1998). I paid most attention to keeping this balance which was yet another challenge given my previous activist experience. It was very easy to identify right away with some of the interviewees, especially the activists, in some of their arguments. In order to make sure that I make the data talk (and not myself) I continuously turned back to the interviews while drafting the analysis chapters.
PART II: ANALYSIS
The second part of the study looks at the two other frameworks of making sense of the change: conceptualization of the role of ICT in change and the fantasies about change. The conceptualization of the role of ICT in change derives from the analysis of the empirical data. The fantasy about the change is the framework where I am discussing which fantasies come out of the perceptions of the different groups of people. The three chapters of the second part present this analysis and the discussions in the three dimensions namely institutional politics, activism, and identity in Istanbul.
5. INSTITUTIONAL POLITICS

The first chapter of the analysis focuses on the first dimension, institutional politics. Institutional politics, as discussed in the theoretical framework is claimed to change on two levels. The first wave of claims for change refers to expanding the space for political activity. New social movements and discussions of different approaches to democracy expanded the space of power beyond the traditional institutions. While State was the only power of politics before, new actors and new spaces started to gain power building the political as an overarching concept beyond the politics. The State, however, didn’t disappear. The institution is still there holding power. The second wave of claims for change concerns the state-citizen relations. The State is claimed to become more open to be accessed and to interact with citizens. The interactive nature of the ICT promises interaction between governors and governed with various online applications of government. Fantasies of harmony and political and technological power try to make sense out of these claims for changes.

This chapter analyses the empirical data by answering the research question: how do institutional politicians perceive the role of ICT in changing local institutional politics in Istanbul? The perceived change with ICT in the institutionalized politics is presented in the three areas of change with the order of ICT, local-global relation, and local politics and the political. Interviews with the institutional politicians provide arguments on how they think ICT change the institutional work, how they think ICT make a change in their relation to the global, and finally how they think ICT change local politics and the political in the city. The primary perspective of this chapter is that of the institutional politicians. There are, however, two concepts; namely the global city and participation that are also present in the interviews with activists and ordinary citizens. In order to avoid repetition and in order to present a concise analysis, the chapter combines all three perspectives for these two concepts. Finally, the last section of the chapter discusses the analysis and presents what digital-political fantasies come out of the changes that the interviewees think that happen in the three areas.

5.1. Institutional politics and ICT

The use of ICT by institutionalized politics with such applications as e-government and e-governance raised the hopes that this trend could lead to better democracy with better interaction between state and citizens with a facilitated access and communication between the two sides. There are different ways to qualify the change in this area. Castells (2000) argues that the use of ICT by governments would rearrange their organization and power relations. Other authors argue that the integration of ICT in the government work would increase transparency (Meeks 1997), (the quality of) consultations and accountability (Coleman 2004), and participation (Coleman 2001). The various applications of e-government on the other hand showcased the fact that the governmental use of ICT was rather limited in improving the management of the administrations and improving public services, or maybe even not that as
much as expected (Norris and Coursey 2008; Norris and Moon 2005). As discussed 
earlier, Chadwick and May (2003) present three models of e-governance according to 
the purposes of using the online tools. Among the three models namely managerial, 
consultative, and participatory, they argued that the most common model was the 
managerial model where governments/authorities use the technology for better 
management, for improved public services, and for one-way communication with 
citizens with the aim of informing them (including the media1) about governmental 
work.

They also argued that the lack of participatory model of e-governance is not a 
question of digital divide but a question of political elite that is not willing to involve 
citizens in decision-making. The emphasis on the interactive and participatory uses of 
e-government is also present on updated documents of international organizations such 
as the e-government reports of the UN. As the e-government applications develop in 
the world, the success criteria and the expectations from these applications also develop 
and urge governments that it is not enough to benefit from ICT for efficiency in their 
management, better services and transactions but that they should include more uses 
and tools to ensure citizen participation and ultimately to improve democracy. This 
section analyses institutional politicians’ perception of the role of ICT in the changing 
local institutional politics in Istanbul.

5.1.1. Efficiency

An argument in the interviews is that municipal work is now more efficient. 
Interviewees tell that ICT improve municipal work in several ways. They argue that 
there is a more efficient knowledge sharing among the different units within the 
municipal organization. Moreover, they think that ICT help certain coordination among 
different institutions. The address registration at the neighbourhood headmanship2, for 
instance, used to be done manually by opening a paper folder for each citizen. Now 
with ICT “when somebody comes to register the system connects automatically to the 
security department which approves it” (Sema, 59, f, ip). Another argument is that 
ICT permit less bureaucracy in municipal work. Municipal administrators are content 
with this change because it means that “the mistakes caused by the municipal staff are 
minimized after ICT” (Basri, 41, m, ip).

The argument on efficiency stretches over to public services. Interviewees suggest 
that ICT increase the quality of public services. The use of ICT in this area, with 
e-municipality applications, is claimed to improve the public services in Istanbul with 
electronic and mobile services. The first municipal website was launched in 1997: “It 
is one of the first public institution websites in Turkey. It was very new in Turkey. 
The website of the (metropolitan) municipality was significant in terms of its concept 
and services” (Hasan, 43, m, ip). The principle function of the website, according to 
the interviewee, is providing access to information; then come public services. When 
compared with the past, politicians think that the most important and beneficial change 
is that citizens don’t need to come to the municipal buildings for access to information or

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1 That is why it may also be commented that this model also uses ICT for propaganda. 
2 The lowest elected local authority in the city – see more in the contextual background
for public services, “they don’t even have to be in Istanbul for information and services. That is the biggest change” (Hasan, 43, m, ip). Interviews also indicate that after the e-municipality applications municipalities started to reach citizens whom they were not able to reach before. Smaller municipalities followed the trend of e-government in 1998. Municipalities benefit, for instance, from time efficiency with ICT: “the duration of public services is shortened” (Basri, 41, m, ip).

Online and mobile services, interviewees tell, include online (tax) payments, online application forms, online purchase of tickets (transportation or cultural events), online tracking of traffic jams, and so on. Politicians report that municipalities also offer services such as access to The Internet in municipal buildings, training of ICT for young citizens, ICT assistance, online preparation courses for university entrance exams3, and spaces allocated as alternatives to the Internet cafés for young citizens with filtered access to the Internet. Interviewees say that district municipalities started to provide online public services via the city knowledge system launched in 2003. They explain that smaller municipalities use ICT to provide access to information, online transactions, and tools for e-communication with citizens as well as tools for citizens to submit their complaints online. An interviewee tells that the smallest institution, the neighbourhood headmanship, may also use ICT informally to interact with citizens. A female neighbourhood headman (muhtar) tells that she adds the residents of the neighbourhood to her Facebook profile for access to information and for communication: “There are researchers (from the neighbourhood) who went to the UK. Their election registration cards were brought here (her office). I informed them on Facebook and told them to come here to vote” (Sema, 59, f, ip).

Interviews suggest at the same time that ICT may also cause new forms of inefficiency. Staff of political institutions especially the smaller institutions such as the neighbourhood headmanship are claimed to be digitally divided. They either do not have the skills or the interest in using ICT. Moreover interviewees report that they do not always receive financial assistance for their use of ICT: “I pay the Internet subscription fee myself” (Sema, 59, f, ip). Another challenge is the lack of local ICT statistics. Interviewees tell that there is a lack of statistics on the use of ICT among the citizenry: “…neither TÜİK4 nor other institutions provide local statistics. There are the general numbers but I need to know local statistics to see how much of my services I should convert to online. I need to know how many people (in the district) demand online services so that I can work on my infrastructure accordingly” (Hamdi, 49, m, ip).

Politicians argue that in-house measurement of skills and patterns of ICT usage help municipalities to see what kind of training the staff needs to improve their usage of and benefits from ICT. These measurements, however, require extra resources: “we try to support our staff with this kind of survey but this is not something municipalities may do alone with their own budget. There are the universities, and TÜİK; they should provide the necessary and reliable data” (Hamdi, 49, m, ip). Another point in the interviews is that ICT are not always low cost. Interviewees claim that technology that municipalities use needs to be upgraded every six months which means a high cost to the

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3 Citizens need to take central/national exams to enter the university. This system developed the business of private courses/schools that may be too costly for citizens.

4 TÜİK: Turkish Institute of Statistics
municipal budget. The commercialization of technology, according to the interviews, would leave the institution out of the game if they didn’t upgrade their technology on time. Interviewees also tell that municipalities don’t make an effort to promote the use of the municipal websites to channel citizens to e-municipality. Trainings and assistance of ICT for citizens, for instance, the interviewees tell, do not include trainings on how to use the municipal website for access to municipal information, e-services, or e-communication with the municipality.

Inefficiency may also stem from the citizens side. An argument in the interviews is that citizens are impatient and they lack trust in e-public services. Interviewees think that this situation causes some duplication in the work. An interviewee gives the example of citizens who come to the counter at the municipality building after submitting an application form online on the municipal website. That is because, according to the interviewee, citizens are not patient enough to wait for the results or they don’t rely on online transactions. Therefore, they consult the related unit in person to confirm that their applications found their way to the municipality: “They (citizens) are not reluctant to come all the way here to apply again. They say they do not rely on the online transactions. That is because they don’t have a written proof. It is maybe also the fault of our website. If we provide an option to print out a document with a registration number on it, maybe we can avoid duplication” (Yasin, 49, m, ip).

Interviewees argue that if citizens do not trust the online public services they also are reluctant to make online payments due to security concerns in general: “they may do all the payments online on our website with their credit cards but they do have security questions. Our site is secured and checked regularly but citizens still prefer coming to the municipality for payments. That part of the services is not used by the citizens as widely as we wish” (Hamdi, 49, m, ip).

5.1.2. Reorganization of municipalities

Politicians argue that ICT make them reorganize the municipal work. Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, for instance, started to use ICT in its administrative work in 1983. According to the interviews, since then they reorganized directorates, departments, and the whole organizational chart. Some of these changes are explained to be directly related to the ICT strategy of the municipality. An interviewee tells that there was in the 1980s the department of informatics with two directorates. One directorate, directorate of informatics, worked for the hardware, software, and network matters; and the other one, directorate of coordination, worked on the graphic based geographic data systems. In 2004, the name of the latter changed to directorate of geographic data systems.

In 2006, as the need for electronic communication and electronic systems increased, the municipality created a third directorate named directorate of electronic systems: “we then changed the name of the department from department of informatics to department of information technologies since we now have a structure integrated with the world models” (Hasan, 43, m, ip). The interviewee says that when there is a change in the name of a unit, the concept of the unit also changes: “the concept
of the department is expanded. Before, it was only intended to work for the inner administration of the municipality. After the reorganization, the department has now a structure that is closer to citizens with more online and youthful services” (Hasan, 43, m, ip). The interviewee adds that the adoption of ICT use in the municipality improved the quality of the administrative work: “we are very content with a dynamic organizational chart which permits us to provide better services” (Hasan, 43, m, ip).

Another argument is that ICT facilitate governance. According to the interviews, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, for instance, uses ICT to manage its three dimension governance model. These dimensions include administration of the municipality; communication between the municipality, its institutions, and its companies; and communication with citizens: “the (metropolitan) municipality, its institutions\footnote{The Metropolitan municipality holds institutions on transportation and water distribution}, and its companies\footnote{The Metropolitan municipality holds 24 companies in many sectors from city furniture to energy for more information seehttp://www.ibb.gov.tr/en-US/Organization/Companies/Pages/AnaSayfa.aspx}, they all have their own ICT applications addressed to citizens. The Municipality has a coordination board that manages the infrastructure for all of them. We gather them and tell them about the strategy of the municipality and everybody offers its own service according to this strategy” (Hasan, 43, m, ip).

5.1.3. Democracy

Interviews, however, lack information on current practices or any future plans for a reorganization/coordination of the different local authorities present in Istanbul. Despite the lesser case of the coordination between the neighbourhood headmanship and the security department (which is under the provincial administration) concerning the address registration, a broader coordination is absent. If this administrative coordination is lacking between the different institutions, coordination of their public services are also absent. Even though public services are increasingly available online, interviews do not provide any information on a one stop shop model of public services for residents of Istanbul. Secondly, a democratic use of ICT by the institutions is also absent. Interviewees do not refer to any current or future application of ICT for a better interaction\footnote{Participation will follow in the third section of the chapter} with citizens.

Clearly, institutionalized politics do not use ICT for better democracy. This lack occurs at two levels. Firstly, the coordination of the elected and the assigned local authorities is still absent in the city. Integrating ICT in the local authorities work does not provide any democratic transformation in the relations of different institutions. Secondly, the governor-governed relation is still limited. As suggested in the literature, the purpose of using ICT is based on offering better public services and on developing management. The online tools such as the websites and the mobile applications are not employed for better communication or for interaction with citizens. At least this component is not a priority since it is absent in the interviews - except for one case of using Facebook. This case however is not institutionalized and is based on a personal practice of a neighbourhood headwoman.
5.2 Linking local and global in institutional politics with ICT

What is significant in the network structure is that within a network the distance between the nodes of the network is very much shorter and with same length to each other (Castells 2000). Thus access to networks permits easier access to nodes within the networks. The logic also suggests that ICT help to sustain the membership within the network in the cyberspace. Networking online presents advantages to overcome the time and space constraints, which according to the concept, facilitates the local-global interaction. The ICT-facilitated local-global interaction over online networks in different levels, use of ICT by local governments, knowledge society, technological innovations in the cities, changes in the politics such as the augmenting power in the local with decentralization and decreasing power of the nation-state with globalization are claimed to foster the concept of the global city (Sassen 2001). The global city is a clear case of local-global interaction since it is about the local that becomes more and more connected to global. The following is the analysis of the interviews with politicians where they tell how they think ICT change this local-global linking in institutional politics in Istanbul. Since the concept of global city may not be detached from the residents/citizens of the city, the analysis of that concept also includes the perspectives of citizens with the arguments of activists and ordinary citizens.

5.2.1. Access

An argument used in the interviews is that ICT permit/increase access to global information. Politicians tell that ICT link them to the global with access to news and relevant information at the global level: “The Internet is crucial. We access information, say on companies, instantly on the Internet” (Nesrin, 40, f, ip). Politicians claim that they also use ICT to access global know-how in local government, and policy processes. Politicians tell that they visit the websites of world cities when they wish to develop their own websites or when they wish to compare their websites with the websites of other cities in the world. They say that ICT also permit access to the networks of Turkish diaspora. Politicians use these networks to contact members of diaspora, for instance, before a study visit to a certain foreign city: “We visited St. Petersburg and Helsinki last July. We contacted the association founded by the Helsinki Turks through the Internet and we met them there” (Yasin, 49, m, ip). They say that they surf on global websites for their personal/private use for online shopping or for online entertainment.

Interviewees tell that access also includes being accessed. Some municipalities gain visibility in the global level with their local best practices: “we provide dental care and consultation for students between 6-13 years old in all the schools within our district. International researchers presented this project in international conferences in Brazil and in Berlin” (Hamdi, 49, m, ip). Politicians tell that their websites provide opportunities for citizens in the local to link to people in the world: “let’s say you are in Helsinki and your friend has a wedding in Istanbul. You can watch the ceremony online on our website” (Hamdi, 49, m, ip). Being accessed also covers certain web
applications targeted to market the city to potential tourists: “we broadcast Istanbul from city cameras in different points in the city. Someone from abroad can for instance watch the Bosphorus on our website” (Hasan, 43, m, ip). While ICT appear to be “indispensable for access to communication and information” (Hayrettin, 37, m, ip) especially for networking there are cases where institutions use the technology only for their inner communication: “we use ICT at an individual level between me and my colleagues” (Ibrahim, X, m, ip).

5.2.2. Online networking

Interviews suggest that ICT help institutions in online networking. Politicians claim that ICT increase access to information on various networks on cities, municipalities, or any other relevant subject/entity. An argument in the interviews is that ICT help municipalities to sustain their communication with their various kinds of partnerships such as the sister/twin cities, decentralized cooperation, and cooperation among cities. This communication is claimed to be more efficient with new ICT: “we hardly use fax, all the information flow and communication with our international networks is done via e-mails or by e-mailing scanned documents (instead of fax)” (Hayrettin, 37, m, ip). Apart from information flow and communication, municipal staff also uses ICT for more activities, such as online courses: “some international networks provide online courses. I am registered on one of these courses” (Hayrettin, 37, m, ip). They say that ICT further help local institutional politicians to participate in discussions and processes of global networks.

Politicians argue that local political institutions use ICT to network in different levels starting from local to global. Some are active members in these networks: “the (metropolitan) municipality is the founder of UCLG’s middle east-west Asia office in Istanbul and it co-chairs the Alliance of civilizations with Barcelona” (Hayrettin, 37, m, ip). Apparently, some networks are project based and others are more active politically. The Metropolitan municipality is explained to be more interested in project based networks in Europe. Municipalities are claimed to network globally in order to further create partnerships and collaborations with world cities, as well as global organizations and global companies. Global/translocal networking and possible partnerships also means for politicians improvement in local governance in terms of policies, participation, and decentralization in Istanbul. Translocal partnerships of Istanbul do not always take place in Istanbul. Interviewees explain that metropolitan municipality is involved in global decentralization network through which it provides development aid abroad: “Millennium Development Goals probably won’t be reached by 2015 but it is important for local authorities to contribute to the process. Access to clean water is one of the goals. Following a demand from Ethiopia, the municipality built a water shaft there” (Hayrettin, 37, m, ip).

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9 According to the interviewee, the sister city is an American model of bilateral agreement which is not time bound and the twin city is a European model of project based bilateral agreement.

10 Also because Turkey is not a member of European Union which prevents at least full membership in some organizations such as Eurocities – information reached in an interview with Eurocities in 2008.
Interviews, however, reveal several limitations and challenges in this area. Lack of language skills appears as a challenge for local institutional politicians to network globally: “I don’t have a chance to check the foreign websites because I don’t speak foreign languages” (Yasin, 49, m, ip). Digital divide is another reason why online networking is limited among the institutional politicians: “we are about 900 neighbourhood headmen in Istanbul but only 3 or 4 of us like The Internet as much as I do” (Sema, 59, f, ip). Another argument in the interviews is that officials do not sustain communication with their counterparts online but they meet them in person in global processes. They say that meeting global counterparts in those meetings is enough to keep in touch. Interviews also suggest that there is a lack of interest in global networking. A member of staff of a local node of a global institutional city project, for instance, says that he prefers to work on his own without networking with the member cities of the same project in other countries. Local institutional politics in Istanbul do further have legal limitations.

Interviewees explain that local authorities’ global activity is regulated by the central government. It is Ankara who makes the final decisions on Istanbul’s global networking: “The process has to be approved by the ministry of home affairs. The municipality does not have the chance to say I want to join x organization” (Mahmut, 37, m, ip). Even though municipalities at different levels partner with international or regional organizations for their local work, they say that their networking is rather limited at a national level. If global networking is limited by law, local networking of the smaller local institutions such as the neighbourhood headmen is also claimed to be challenged by the central government: “We want a neighbourhood headmen network but the (central) government does not accept it. They know that they cannot have that much power on us if we unite; that is why they ignore our proposal” (Sema, 59, f, ip). Finally, interviews indicate that institutions do not necessarily need ICT for global partnerships and networking. Municipalities used to partner, even though less efficiently, before using the ICT. The metropolitan municipality signed its first sister city agreement with Rio de Janerio in 1964.

5.2.3. Global city

Interviews with institutional politicians suggest several arguments as to why Istanbul is a global city. Politicians argue that Istanbul is a global city because it is influenced by global values. The city is not only influenced by such values but, according to interviews, it tries to create global value: “it is globalizing, we’ll be able to call it a global city when it starts to create global value” (Mahmut, 37, m, ip). An argument on the economics tells that the city’s capacity of the capital, its partnerships with global companies including the global ICT companies, and the international activity of its own companies make the city global. According to the interviews, the companies of the municipality also operate abroad, for instance, in the Balkan countries. Politicians argue that the world renowned beauty and, cultural and historical heritage are reasons for Istanbul to be a global city. A criterion for politicians to call Istanbul global is the global familiarity: “they (world
people) may not know about Turkey but they would know Istanbul, which means that the city is global” (Mahmut, 37, m, ip).

Citizens have their own perceptions concerning the global city. Activists think that the city is globalizing in terms of cultural events. They refer to festivals and cultural events that increase in number and that develop in global content. The cosmopolitan identity of the city is another argument from the interviews to think that this is a global city. Flow of global information, and the flow of people, according to the interviews, makes Istanbul a global city. Ordinary citizens think that they attain everything they are looking for in Istanbul and therefore it is global. The history, location, and size of the city are other reasons for ordinary citizens to call the city global. Another argument is that access to the Internet and digital opportunities make the city global. In interviews with ordinary citizens, the argument of global cultural events is coupled with international business events: “someone who lives in Istanbul can easily be part of the global with international events” (Tahsin, 43, m, oc). Another argument is rather wishful; it says that Istanbul and the particularities of its local life should belong to everyone in the world: “from the point of view of who lives and what is lived, it is too precious and special to belong to just one country” (Gözde, 25, f, a).

Interviews with three different groups present, on the other hand, various challenges and limitations. Both activists and ordinary citizens are critical towards the local authorities. Interviews with activists suggest that they are not satisfied with local policies. They think that “the city needs to be urbanized first” (Selim, 52, m, a). The arguments challenging the global city idea are that the city is not global in terms of infrastructure, education, urbanization, and quality of life. Local transportation, for instance, regularly occurs in the interviews as badly organized for locals and as very challenging for world visitors to use without signs in English. In the interviews there is the worry of activists about the lack of social development, poverty, and about the uneven globalization in the city: “there is a part of the city that will never globalize, and another part that is too global. I think the divide is very dangerous. The never-to-be-globalized group envy the globalized group and that causes crime” (Halim, 36, m, a).

The divide, on the other hand, also appears as an indicator of global city: “I guess it is like that (uneven) in the world too, in that sense yes we can say it is a global city” (Esra, 27, f, a). Another critique to local authorities is that local authorities lack global understanding; from the urbanization point of view “I don’t know if building hotels on the ruins in Sultanahmet (the old city) is globalization” (Ceylan, 60, f, a) and from democratic point of view “they address the public as if they are issuing a fatwa” (Ferda, 42, f, a). The idea of a global city is, according to activists, an illusion of local authorities.

Interviews with citizens also reveal critiques for local authorities. Citizens tell that they consider the global city policies of local authorities as posturing to attract global capital: “that is all targeted to abroad (global capital); there is nothing for citizens” (Karolin, 34, f, oc). A related argument is that local authorities have their own agenda of the global city and that they impose this agenda to citizens: “There is a part of Istanbul that is being pushed into turning global. I think there is a kind of dictating the globalization. They (authorities) say ‘we’ll be part of it (globalization) and you have
to live your life like that” (Meyda, 21, f, oc). Citizens don’t think a city can be global if it lacks cultural centres. They also argue that the city needs global style entertainment and recreation to be global.

Ordinary citizens think that the current infrastructure of the city is not at a global city level. An argument common with activists is the worry of the globalization divide in the city. Ordinary citizens further criticize local authorities for bad planning, arguing that it is the most global city in Turkey but not well planned. They at the same time recognize the development and that “it (Istanbul) has advanced a lot but not global yet” (Derin, 34, f, oc) or they think that given the divide among the districts, the city is not global but stuck between the local and the global: “I find it very funny how everything happened in one night when Istanbul became the Capital of Culture 11. All these urban transformation projects and everything, I can clearly see that it (Istanbul) is between the local and the global” (Meyda, 21, f, oc).

Another common argument against the global city is the local culture. Activists think that there is no global tissue in the local culture. This argument is further elaborated as: “The city increasingly hosts International conferences due to location, transportation, and visa advantages but its culture is not globalizing” (Bilge, 29, f, a). Activists are also reluctant to the “intersection of cultures” discourse which they think fails in practice in Istanbul. Activists argue that the people of the city become more Turkish and more nationalist closing themselves to diversity. Another challenge found in the interviews with activists is the lower social peace in the city. Activists argue that the residents of the city lack urban identity and that they are not able to sustain historical cosmopolitanism of the city. Ordinary citizens complain about the demography of the city, they think that “the wrong people live here” (Milo, 32, m, oc). Citizens also defend the locality “it is perceived as if you have to kill the local to reach the global. It may sound banal, but I think we should take that (globalization) from the West but we shouldn’t forget about our localness” (Meyda, 21, f, oc).

The interviews with activists include criticism towards the global city as well. According to the critical argument, Istanbul is a global city in the sense that it is losing some of its originality and becoming like any other big (global) city. Another critical argument tells that the city is global because “I know that about 70% of the municipal services are commercialized. They open tenders and they work with global companies. Even the most basic municipal services are not provided by the municipality, in that sense it is much globalized” (Güneş, 50, f, a). Besides, activists argue that if the city is global “it is because of history and location not because of the Internet or the EU” (Gökhan, 29, m, a). A critical argument from the ordinary citizens tells us that the local policy is not made independently by the local politicians. The argument is based on ordinary citizens’ assumptions: “I didn’t see it myself but we hear from different sources that local policies are made dependent on some (foreign)places, but I don’t know if it means global city” (Nesrin, 33, f, oc).

Politicians equally include in the interviews criticism toward globalization, toward political institutions themselves, and toward citizens. An argument against globalization is that globalization is not a fair and even process: “there is the globalizer and the
globalized. We cannot evaluate our district independent from Turkey. Turkey is unfortunately increasingly on the globalized side. We don’t want to be the globalized. Our district is at such a level to compete with global towns but politically we are against the master-slave division” (Hamdi, 49, m, ip). Politicians criticize different political institutions. An argument is that there is a lack of integrated strategies to make Istanbul a global city. They argue that there is a need for focused policies. Moreover, they think that local politics ignore or do not respect the environment which they think is a challenge in terms of global city. Finally, politicians are critical towards citizens. They think that the citizens of Istanbul lack the feeling for the city. One argument on that refers to the cosmopolitan past of the city. It compares the neighbourhood demography of the past and that of the present and concludes that people are diverged and that they have lost the cosmopolitan tissue.

5.3. Interaction of politics and the political with ICT

As explained above, the network society concept is based on the argument that ICT permit the network structure in society. Castells argues that this structure brings about changes in the power relations. (Online) Interaction of the nodes of one network and/or interaction between several networks make different actors at different levels (from local to global) exchange knowledge and experiences. The flow of knowledge and experiences are claimed to have an impact on and/or challenge the actors involved in these flows including institutional politics.

The introduction of the political and the models of pluralist, deliberative, and participatory democracy, as discussed in the theoretical framework, also challenge politics which traditionally have reserved power to the State. The inclusion of new actors, new processes, new approaches, new subjects open up a larger space for political activity challenging the power of institutionalized politics. Access to and interaction with state (and other traditional institutions) in this larger space are claimed to permit citizens (whether engaged or not) to participate. Access and interaction, however, are parts of the process but are not participation (Carpentier 2011). Even though there are different definitions and approaches, there still is one simple aim of participation; meaningfully taking part in the decision-making process of politics.

The following is the analysis of what politicians think about the change in local politics with their ICT-enabled local networking, and how they see the change in politics- the political relation with ICT in terms of participation. The analysis of the concept of participation unavoidably combines the perspectives of politicians and that of citizens.

5.3.1. Influence on local politics

Politicians argue that local – global partnership facilitated with ICT has a direct impact on local politics in terms of local policy making. The public transportation company (of the metropolitan municipality), for instance, is argued to follow actively the processes
of the International Association of Public Transportation for its local policies. The establishment of a site management unit is also reported to be initiated by a global project of UNESCO. Interviews suggest that while some of the local policies are influenced by the global networking, others happen at the inspirational level. The case of importing the metrobus\textsuperscript{12} from Seoul, for instance, illustrates this argument: “the metrobus project is not born out of know-how or anything from a network. The bureaucracy was researching about alternative transportation solutions and during their visit to Korea in the framework of the sister city partnership, they saw the metrobus, and they wanted to bring it to Istanbul” (Mahmut, 37, m, ip). Politicians argue that the local-global linking with ICT at the institutional level increases the quality of municipal services including better public documentation of municipal work.

Politicians list, however, arguments that challenge and limit the interaction of the local and the global in local policy making. The link and its influence may be absent in their mind: “I didn’t think about it but I don’t think it (the link) has an influence on local authorities” (Mahmut, 37, m, ip). An argument is that this link does not bring any change. Politicians say that the European Union funds, for instance, require multi-stakeholderism but that they “we already had multi-stakeholder projects before the EU funded projects” (Yasin, 49, m, ip). Another argument is about the limitations of centralized politics. Politicians say that the lack of decentralization is a major challenge in making local policies, let alone connecting the process to global networks or partnerships: “Central government should give some of the power to local authorities. International local authorities cooperation is also needed for decentralization” (Hayrettin, 37, m, ip). The dependence on the central government is also present in the financial level: “Financial and political decentralization is needed” (Hayrettin, 37, m, ip). Interviewees argue that local authorities in Istanbul have weak interactive capacity. They say that there is a lack of local governance that embraces all the political institutions: “your institution may work very well but if the interactive capacity is low the cooperation expectation is also low, that is why the inner structure and coordination of units that work with other institutions is very important” (Hayrettin, 37, m, ip).

Besides centralized politics, another argument is the lack of local democratic policy making. Interviews suggest that the small part of local policies that can be made by the local institutions is pre-decided as part of the election campaign: “the mayor declares his policies and work plan before the elections; we are here to implement these policies and projects” (Yasin, 49, m, ip). Another argument in the interviews is that local-global linking should not have any influence in local politics. A unit that was established because an international organization asked for it may sound to be at certain level an influence from the global to local politics. The director of the unit, however, denies this influence: “it is not right to call it a directive\textsuperscript{13} because it is a partnership; if you contribute to the budget of the project you should be (equal) partners in decision-making” (Ibrahim, x, m, ip) The importance of locality also appears in the interviews: “The end product has

\textsuperscript{12}Metrobus: a longer and faster bus that has its own path on the route; a cheaper alternative to the metro.

\textsuperscript{13}The interviewee translates “influence” into “directive” in his answer – which tells about his position in the subject
the same name everywhere: management plan. But the content should be adapted to the local. This is a localized issue; there are no globally acceptable solutions yet” (Ibrahim, x, m, ip).

5.3.2. (e-) Participation

Politicians are aware of the global processes concerning participation. They tell that they know that the UN Habitat City Summit (held in Istanbul in 1996) has recognized local authorities as the most important actors in implementing the Local Agenda 21 project: “it is about networking, partnering, and participation. But municipalities in Turkey are not at that level yet” (Hayrettin, 37, m, ip). Interviewees explain that the lack of participation in local politics in Istanbul stems from legislation: “after all this mechanism is designed by law. It means that you need to work in the framework of the law and regulations. The decision-making body is the municipal council. Let’s say there is work to do concerning a change in the reconstruction planning; this is a technical issue, the technical study is being done and presented to the council and the council approves it. I mean you don’t have the chance to say ‘I asked the citizens, the citizens accepted it’ because this is how the regulation is in Turkey. It may be logical to work through that kind of processes by informing and including the citizens but there is no such practice” (Hasan, 43, m, ip).

As for the other stakeholders such as the civil society, private sector, and academia, they state “you need to consult them and the municipality does that” (Hasan, 43, m, ip). Interviews with activists, however, indicate a problem at that level: “so many things happen without informing us. I check the metropolitan municipality’s website about the Galataport14, for instance; it says that they invited civil society organizations, when you check the list of the attendants of the meeting, it is so irrelevant. We are here (in the district of the project), we have the association status, we are included in the protocol of the city, it is impossible not to know of us or not to invite us, but they don’t invite us, we don’t know the process” (Kaan, 30, m, a). Even though certain consultation takes place between the institutions and other stakeholders, this consultation, politicians say, may not happen online on the website, because “due to legislation, it has to be written” (Hasan, 43, m, ip). Politicians claim that the lack of participation does not only leave citizens outside of the process; smaller institutions, such as the neighbourhood headmen, may not participate in local decision-making processes either because: “direct connection to citizens becomes a challenge for the central government” (Sema, 59, f, ip). At a narrower level, there is an argument in the interviews with politicians that accuse citizens of not participating. According to the argument, if there was no success in some policies it is because of the lack of participation. The argument says that even though local authorities do not provide tools for citizen participation, citizens should still insist and participate: “why don’t citizens say what they know anyway” (Ibrahim, x, m, ip).

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14 A project of the metropolitan municipality by the coast in the Asian side of the city, that was criticized by the experts of urban planning and by environmentalists.

15 The tone of the interviewee is rather arrogant/mocking than fighting for citizen participation right.
The interviews with politicians thus suggest that the lack of participation is a major challenge. ICT, on the other hand, seems to challenge this challenge. Both activists and ordinary citizens tell that they use ICT in their communication with municipalities. Sending e-mails appears as the most popular way of interacting or hoping to interact with municipal officials. Interviewees say that some municipal bureaucrats have regularly used this technology in their work for the past 5 years. This practice, according to interviews, facilitates the work of activists: “it is promising to see that the public sector is now using e-communication. It saves time and eliminates bureaucracy” (Kaan, 30, m, a). Instant messaging also appears among the interviews with ordinary citizens as a way of communicating with municipal officials on an occasional basis. Even in cases where citizens do not have the interest or need to communicate with municipalities, they may still do so indirectly. Activists’ e-mail lists and e-groups, for instance, may include the e-mails of municipal officials. In this case, even if those activists do not have a direct online communication with municipalities, there may still be an information flow from activists towards municipalities.

This way of communication, however, is claimed to be very limited. Lack of interest in communicating with municipalities appears to be a minor reason for this limitation. The interviews suggest that the biggest limit is receiving replies. In general, citizens (who use ICT) say that they are willing to communicate with local authorities, preferably by e-mail. They complain, however, that they hardly ever receive replies from the officials. This broken communication either kills their appetite to try again or citizens go back to more traditional means like land line telephone. An observation in the interviews is that municipalities reply to e-mails from activists more regularly than the e-mails from ordinary citizens. Even though municipal bureaucrats use e-mail in their work, activists say that mayors still prefer telephone calls: “… but I always call the mayors when I need to speak to them” (Selim, 52, m, a).

The “Come on Istanbul chose your boat!” campaign is what citizens remember about e-participation during the interviews. This is the only time16 they were asked to make a decision about their own city and on something concrete in their daily life. Briefly, new boats were to be bought in Istanbul in 2006 for public sea transportation. Those boats with their modern design, looked very different than the old boats. Therefore most citizens opposed to losing the romantic old boats arguing that they were the symbols of Bosphorus and the city. There have been counter campaigns such as “Give my boat back” or “I want my boat”. Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality website has then hosted a poll on the choice of the model of the new boats. Pictures of several different models of boats were published and citizens were invited to choose the one they liked. At the end, the metropolitan municipality bought the most popular model: “citizens of Istanbul have chosen the model that reminds them the most of the old boats. That model has been bought even though it was not our favourite” (Hasan, 43, m, ip). Some district municipalities organize logo competitions or open e-consultations such as “what is the biggest problem in your street?” at a narrower level. According to the interviews some citizens wish to participate especially on the very local issues and/or if it is an issue of interest for their daily life. Proposing alternatives to inappropriate lightening

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16 A minor survey was organized on the color of the public buses in 2011.
of historical buildings, for instance, appears in the interviews as a very good reason for some citizens to contact the municipality. Given the examples provided by citizens in the interviews, e-participation is rather used for complaining despite some cases of also sending proposals for more parks, for changing the traffic lights frequencies, and for more cultural activities.

Interviews suggest, on the other hand, that online participation is seen as very limited. The municipal websites are claimed to not really offer e-participation tools: “ICT offers equal opportunities for participation for the first time in world history. The private sector has discovered it. They use it efficiently for their web conferences. They do serious board meetings where they take decisions in a participatory way. ICT should be used in the same way for citizen participation by local authorities” (Ferda, 42, f, a). The lack of e-participation applications, according to interviews with activists, is due to the lack of a participatory mentality of the local authorities and the lack of local democracy. Activists argue that ICT are alien to regulators. Regulators and law makers, according to this argument, are not familiar with this technology and its characteristics. That is why they make the use of ICT very difficult: “Regulators do not understand the mentality of social media” (Tolga, 39, m, a). Activists think that the limited online participation fails because “It does not go beyond what is the most important problem in your street; parking lot or garbage” (Bilge, 29, f, a).

Similarly, another argument is that ICT help pretending. This argument says that not all participatory looking activity is really participatory: “(online) surveys are not enough. I am talking about thinking and participating meaningfully” (Ferda, 42, f, a). When asked hypothetically, citizens state that they would participate online if e-participation was available. A former activist says: “offline participation has time and space limits. This makes people not participate. I have sent my complaint to the press instead” (Selin, 53, f, a). An argument in the interviews is that the condition for (e-) participation is the interest: “Yes, I would participate but only if it is an issue of interest for me, if it is part of my life”. Citizens tell that if available, they would participate because it would feel like local authorities listen a little bit to citizens.

They also argue that online participation would be very interesting for young people: “it would be very beneficial for local authorities to include the opinions of the young people in decision making processes” (Hayri, 21, m, oc). That is why the lack of interaction or concrete results after interaction are claimed to make them lose faith in democracy and lose hope that citizens would ever be involved in local decision-making: “you don't feel like participating thinking that they (municipalities) do not read what you write anyway” (Karolin, 33, f, oc). Citizens complain that they are the last to hear about local policies or that they have no voice: “all the online forums etc. we participated and discussed in meant nothing at the end” (Meyda, 21, f, oc). While some of them say they already have given up on local democracy, others are digitally divided and they anyway cannot participate or they are not interested in online participation.

Challenges of e-participation are not limited to the lack of e-participation. Interviews with activists present a number of arguments criticizing the e-participation. One argument is that e-participation is not always desirable. This anti-e-participation argument says that e-participating would help municipalities to pretend to be
democratic. According to an interviewee, citizen participation on the website would look democratic even though municipalities do not take decisions nor make policies in a democratic way. Moreover (e)-participating would legitimize the illegal acts of municipalities: “I wouldn’t participate in order not to give municipalities a reason to pretend to be democratic” (Güneş, 50, f, a). Closer to this argument, activists tell that even if in the future municipalities introduce e-participation they would first question if it is for real or if it uses citizens as window-dressing.

Activists also tell that they lack trust in anything that would be limited to virtual communication: “citizen participation should absolutely be in the street, offline, and concrete” (Tolga, 39, m, a). Interviewees also argue that the same participative technology may also be used to prevent citizens from participating. Another argument against e-participation says that citizens do not need to participate in everything: “there are law; regulations, and agreements, citizens can’t be asked opinion for every issue” (Doruk, 14, m, oc). Finally, citizens are worried about the digital divide. They think that if participation is only online then citizens without ICT would be excluded: “I think both online and offline participation should be available to include all citizens” (Hayri, 21, m, oc).

Finally, when compared with theory, this part of the use of ICT by institutionalized politics relatively/coherently includes the concept of participation. The empirical comparison of the interviews, on the other hand, suggests that there is a difference between the perceptions. Different groups of interviewees perceive the concept differently. For politicians, allowing citizens to send e-mails to politicians or making online surveys on the biggest problems of the neighbourhood may mean participation. This perception includes the access and (limited) interaction that are the two conditions/steps of participation. The perception of the politicians is thus limited to only start the participation process. Activists, on the other hand, perceive it as a process to participate meaningfully in decision-making. That is why they are critical to local authorities who do not see the process the same way. Interviews with activists indicate that they are dissatisfied with local authorities’ use of ICT. They say that other stakeholders such as the private sector may very well make use of these technologies for participatory decision-making.

For activists, as for the literature on participation such as the access-interaction-participation model (Carpentier 2011), access and interaction are just the beginning of the process that should continue as taking part in the decision-making process of local politics. Activists, since they are part of the political to fight to raise their voice, express in the interviews their dissatisfaction and they define how they see participation should be. Citizens, however, sound calmer and they seem to already have given up on local democracy. They claim that they would (e-)participate if it is ever possible in the future but they say that they don’t feel like participating as it is today because they say that they know that the authorities won’t read/listen to what they say. For citizens, participation seems more like a vain effort to ever reach the politicians.
5.4 Fantasies of institutional politics

Institutional politics create fantasies of harmony, political power, and technological power in the three areas of social change. Using ICT in politics and (local) governmental work provides the imaginaries of creating a fantasy of technological power. E-government for instance is an idea of this fantasy. The idea of the global city where the local and global interact and where politics form a harmonious interaction of these two levels is a scenario of the fantasy of harmony. The fantasies of harmony and technological power also help the fantasy of political power in local politics and the local political. This section discusses what fantasies politicians of Istanbul create based on their perception of the role of ICT in the changing local politics in the city.

5.4.1. Fantasy 1: ICT make local institutional politics more efficient

The analysis of the perceived role of using ICT by politicians suggests arguments of efficiency in and reorganization of local politics. The increased efficiency and reorganization of local politics with ICT provide the imaginary to create the fantasy that ICT make local institutional politics more efficient. Various representatives of institutional politics argued in the interviews that the use of ICT increases efficiency. The desire to increase efficiency is seen at different levels. The administrative work within institutions is claimed to be more efficient not only with time efficiency but the use of ICT is also said to permit a better knowledge sharing among the different units of the institutions. The municipalities of Istanbul are told be the pioneers of e-government in Turkey. Since its launch in 1997, the website of the metropolitan municipality is claimed to inspire many other public websites in the country.

The online public services apparently are not only practical for citizens but municipalities may also reach citizens whom they could not reach before. It may then be safe to comment that ICT is seen to have increased the link between the citizens and the political institutions. This argument links to the fantasy of technological power that will later link to political power. Interviews indicate that websites and mobile technology are not the only venues for public services. We see that several projects for training and assistance with ICT and several spaces to provide access to Internet for citizens are efforts of municipalities to increase the use of ICT by citizens and to increase the efficiency of public services. The efficiency argument of the politicians, however, excludes better interaction with citizens. The increased efficiency argument of politicians thus indicates the fantasy of technological power. They see ICT as facilitators for them for exercising more power over citizens. The smallest local political institution, the institution that is the closest to citizens, neighbourhood headmen, may use popular social networking sites like Facebook to interact and to inform citizens at an informal level. The example given by the intervieweed politician is still imperative: “come and vote”.

Another argument is the reorganization of political institutions. Politicians say that institutions change their organizational charts according to the needs and trends in ICT. ICT related departments and directorates change their work and their names. It
is claimed that the change is not limited to names or even to the work. When the name of a unit changes, it also means, the interviewees say, a change in the strategy and in the content of the work. It is reported that as the use of ICT grew, the municipalities started to use ICT for their communication with citizens and for public services. The reorganization is seen as a positive impact on the quality of the municipal work. ICT are also argued to facilitate governance in local political institutions. We see in the interviews that the metropolitan municipality for instance uses ICT to facilitate its three dimension governance which includes the administration of the municipality; communication between municipalities, its institutions, and its companies; and communication with citizens. This situation also indicates a new working mentality that comes alongside the practical changes with ICT and that provides the imaginary for the fantasy of institutional power.

This idea of ICT making institutional politics more efficient, however, is frustrated by the arguments of challenges and limitations found in the interviews. The digital divide is one argument that challenges the changes ICT may bring. Lack of ICT skills may be rectified by training but the digital divide is also argued to refer to as a lack of interest. The high costs of ICT and the lack of financial assistance are other arguments in the interviews that challenge efficiency. Politicians think that ICT are not as low cost as they are expected to be; that is because interviewees say that they need to be upgraded and maintained regularly. That is already a challenge for political institutions and more so if the institution does not receive any financial assistance for ICT. Online services and e-municipality could be efficient but interviewees tell that there is a lack of local statistics on the user patterns and trends which makes it difficult to set strategies for online municipality.

This is a frustration for the fantasy of technological power since the local authority cannot access this crucial data. They say that they cannot decide which services/information to provide online based on statistical data. Beside the limitations within the institutions, interviews suggest more arguments on inefficiency that stems from the citizens. Citizens are told to be hesitant to use some applications due to security concerns. Online payment applications, for instance, are said to be unpopular because citizens are reluctant to enter their credit card information online. Politicians argue that citizens are also impatient or suspicious towards other transactions such as online application forms. Politicians say that this situation makes them duplicate their transactions with municipalities. The municipalities thus end up working twice on the same transaction. As for the reorganization, the interviews lack information on reorganization of the relations of different local authorities in Istanbul. As explained in the context chapter, the biggest challenge of the local institutional politics in Istanbul is the lack of coordination between the different local authorities. Despite one minor case of address registration, none of the interviewees mention a current or future use of ICT for coordinating the different institutions.

Even though ICT technically may facilitate one-stop shop public service, local political institutions do not seem to work on using ICT for this kind of change. This situation also refers to the fantasy of technological power because apparently the lack of interaction with citizens in the efficiency argument and the lack of coordination of
different institutions in the rearrangement of organization argument indicate the lack of democratic component in the efficiency with ICT. The fantasy, however, is frustrated because the Other, the central government, has taken away the enjoyment of power. Some partial enjoyment in some cases enabled with ICT, however, still provides the imaginary for the fantasy of power.

5.4.2. Fantasy 2: ICT make cities global

The second fantasy in this area is that ICT make cities global. As discussed earlier in the theoretical chapter, the global city is an example for the fantasy of harmony. It is about the idea that the more cities use ICT to be present online the more they will become global. ICT may provide some reasons to create this fantasy. They permit access to information and communication with the world cities and global city organizations, as well as prospective partners such as international organizations and global companies.

This fantasy is also present in the interviews. Politicians in Istanbul think that ICT are indispensible for access and communication in linking the local and the global. They say that they can, with ICT, access global know-how and global policy processes. They say that ICT also link them to the global privately when they access global websites for shopping or entertainment. If politicians can access the global more easily with ICT they claim that they are also accessed more easily. We see in the interviews that institutions use various ICT applications on their websites that target audiences that are outside of the city. This audience may be the citizens of Istanbul who happen to be outside of the country but it may also be the diaspora or potential tourists. Interviewees say that they are also accessed by global researchers who link their local work to the global by presenting the best practices in global conferences. These examples, again, present the imaginary and the partial enjoyment of becoming a global city.

Interviewees argue that another way of linking local and global is using ICT for online networking. Politicians say that institutions join various networks where they benefit from ICT to sustain their communication and to be active within the network. They claim to participate in discussions and join online training that some of the global networks offer. Politicians thus do not only access information and participate in discussions but they may also explore new concepts, models, and practices of local governing with e-training. The fantasy of harmony here feeds the fantasy of political and technological power of institutionalized politics that learn new models of (local) politics. Interviews suggest that institutions wish to learn from the local-global link about how they may improve local governance with policies, participation, and decentralization. Practices or strategies to make this wish come true however are absent in the interviews. Decentralization here is another fantasy of political power at the local level. Networking and partnering with global organizations are argued to activate political institutions for projects abroad. The development aid for Ethiopia is an example for the translocal activity of the metropolitan municipality. The hidden agenda of this aid seems to be placing Istanbul among the cities that contribute to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals which would then mean global

\[17\] See more on Millennium Development Goals MDG on http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/
visibility and appreciation. Development aid is not the only translocal activity of the metropolitan municipality. Interviewees tell that various companies of the municipality operate in the Balkan region. Interviews didn’t indicate a political agenda concerning these activities; nevertheless they make the name of the city visible across borders. The local-global link thus does not occur only in the city but also elsewhere, which makes politicians create the fantasy of harmony and relatedly the fantasy of political power.

As for the global city discussion, politicians think that Istanbul is a global or a globalizing city because of the influence of global values, the capacity of capital, global partnerships and cooperation, as well as the location, history, cultural heritage, beauty, and the assumption that the world knows Istanbul more than it knows Turkey. The analysis also includes the arguments of the citizens. Both activists and ordinary citizens argue that the international festivals and international business events, global flow of information and people, digital opportunities, outreach, cosmopolitan identity, as well as, again, the location, history, cultural heritage, and the particular local life make the city “too precious and special to belong to just one country”. These arguments feed the fantasy of harmony by linking the local and the global in Istanbul.

The above imaginaries of access, online networking, and global city sustain the fantasy of harmony. This fantasy, however, is frustrated by the local challenges. Activists and ordinary citizens provide arguments which broaden the lack in the enjoyment of harmony but also power – as a global city is perceived to have financial and thus political power. Lack of language skills and the digital divide appear as the technical challenges for politicians to link to the global. They cannot benefit from the ICT to access the global because they say that they do not speak foreign languages. In this case they limit access to information flow and discussions at the local or sometimes at national level. The digital divide is another challenge in the interviews. This divide however does not seem to be technical only. Interviews suggest that the divide is rather cultural. Another non-technical challenge is more related to the mentality of the politicians that manifests as the lack of interest. They say that they are not always interested in accessing the global even though they have ICT skills and the necessary infrastructure. There are cases where politicians do communicate with their global counterparts but they say that they do so only when they meet them in person at global events.

The interviews also suggest another major challenge that frustrates this fantasy. Institutionalized politics in Istanbul are said to suffer from centralized politics and national legislation. Politicians explain that municipalities, the elected local authorities, do not have the power to decide on their own which network to join, which organization to partner with, and which city to cooperate with. They say that the central government, more precisely the Ministry of Interior has to approve the international actions of the local authorities. Interviewees say that municipalities are not only politically but also financially dependent on the central government. Even though the metropolitan municipality has its own companies it still depends on the budget that comes from the central government. The political and financial dependence on the central government thus frustrates the fantasy of harmony. If the central government limits the global networking of municipalities, it is claimed that it also limits the local/national networking of the smallest local political institutions, namely the neighbourhood
headmen. Neighbourhood headmen are elected and they are the closest to the citizens. That is, according to the interviews, the very reason for the central government to ignore their demand for a local or national network. The fantasy of harmony and fantasy of political power are thus frustrated once again by the central politics, even though ICT may technically facilitate networking both in the local and between local and global.

The three perspectives further present arguments to challenge the global city. Activists and citizens are critical to local authorities. Citizens think that Istanbul has problems of urbanization and that it does not match up with other global cities in terms of public services, education, and infrastructure. They worry about the uneven globalization of the city, poverty, and the lack of social development. Citizens do not think that the local authorities have a right understanding of the global and they argue that the global city is an illusion of local authorities. An argument is that the city has advanced a lot but it is not global yet. Activists think that the global events that are held in the city do not bring in a global culture for the city and its people. Interviews suggest that the population in Istanbul is becoming more nationalist and Turkish, let alone global. The lower social peace (between the different ethnic/socio-economic groups) and the divergence of people are argued to challenge the once cosmopolitan Istanbul.

The global city, on the other hand, does not seem to be desirable for everybody. The sameness, the lost originality and the lost local culture are the arguments in the interviews against the concept. Politicians self-criticize on this subject, arguing that there is the lack of integrated strategies in the city. They also think that citizens lack the feeling for the city and do not respect the cosmopolitan past. Politicians may also be critical about globalization, arguing that it is not a fair and even process. These arguments suggest variations in the fantasy. While previously the global city appears as globalization in the fantasy of harmony, the latter arguments rather suggest localization, a variation of this fantasy. As discussed in the theoretical chapter, protecting the local from the globalization is a variation of the fantasy of harmony.

Except from a minor argument on digital opportunities, the arguments in the interviews ignore the ICT. All three perspectives take for instance the cultural heritage of the city and location as reasons to be a global city. These arguments are by no means related to ICT in the interviews. Arguments do not for instance say anything about virtual museums. The counter arguments, equally clearly demonstrate that if Istanbul is not a global city it is not because of any ICT related challenge. Arguments from the three perspectives are concentrated over the challenges in local politics or local culture. Some of the criteria in the interviews like “attaining everything you want” and “beauty of the city” are irrelevant to the concept of global city, at least to its definition in the urban studies literature. We may then comment that citizens (including some of the politicians) don’t seem to have a clear definition or idea of what a global city is.

The analysis also makes it clear that the social divide concerning the global city does not only occur between the districts and between the different socio-economic groups; there is apparently also a divide between the institutions, their global city policies, and the citizens. The analysis in this area then suggests that ICT, despite some technical facilitation at some level, are not seen very significant in linking local and global in institutional politics in Istanbul. The use of ICT in limited networking, marketing of
the city, and attendance in some online activities seem to only help to create the fantasy that ICT make the city global. This enjoyment however is stolen by the central politics, legislation, and local challenges. The irony here is that, as explained in the contextual chapter, the central government sees Istanbul as the window of the country that opens onto the world and it has strategies to make it a global city. What the interviews suggests, on the other hand, is that the central government wishes to make it a global city by itself and does not plan to delegate the decision/strategy making to local politics.

5.4.3. Fantasy 3: ICT make local politics more democratic

A third fantasy in this dimension is that ICT make local politics mode democratic. This fantasy relates to the overarching fantasy of political power. One unique case of the metropolitan municipality (and other limited cases at district level) of online participation provides the imaginary for this fantasy. This fantasy, however, is also frustrated throughout the interviews.

Politicians do not only openly admit the lack of participation in the interviews but they also claim that the lack of participation does not only touch citizens but also the institutional politicians themselves. Local authorities are claimed to follow the global policy processes that value local participation but then they argue that “municipalities in Turkey are not at that level”. As in the above case, participation in local politics is explained as being designed by central legislation. Interviewees say that the decision-making process at the local level depends on the legislation that limits it to the municipal councils. While politicians say that they consult some stakeholders in some decisions, activists argue that that may be for show because of the irrelevance of the consulted actors. According to the arguments in the interviews, citizens are left out of the process.

An argument of the politicians says that citizens should anyway say what they know. That argument, however, does not provide any idea on how citizens may do so. The lack of participation interestingly also seem to exclude the smallest institutions. Politicians claim that neighbourhood headmen equally may not participate in decision-making processes at the local level. This argument indicates that the challenge is not limited to the political, but politics itself has democratic challenges. It may be then commented that there are two Others, one within the other. While the Other (in this case the central government) steals the enjoyment of participation from the citizens by giving the (very limited) decision making power to the local authorities, the Other within the local authorities steals the same enjoyment from the smallest local authorities.

Interviews suggest, on the other hand, that ICT may help for some exceptions. Interviews with activists and citizens indicate that citizens wish to access and interact with municipalities with ICT. They prefer sending e-mails. Activists find it promising that politicians use e-mails in their communication even though mayors still prefer phone calls. Online communication, however, is claimed to be very limited. That is not only because of the lack of interest by citizens but mostly because politicians are said to hardly ever sustain this communication. In the interviews municipalities seem to take e-mails from activists more seriously. It is promising to see that municipalities regularly reply to e-mails from civil society. This indicates that the two groups are in
regular communication which is potentially good news for local democracy. Citizens, on the other hand, say that they start losing hopes for local democracy when their e-mails remain unanswered. As for participating in local decision-making with ICT, both activists and ordinary citizens vividly remember the campaign of “Come on Istanbul chose your boat!” The sharp memory of the one and only meaningful (e-) participation case is a sign of the will of citizens to participate when they are given the opportunity.

This participation was about a decision of a concrete matter in citizens’ daily lives which appears in the interviews as a prerequisite for participation. Citizens, however, think that local authorities do not use ICT for participatory process. They recognize that this is due to the lack of local democracy. Citizens, especially activists, are suspicious towards the online surveys and consultations on municipal websites. They are critical about online tools that pretend participation but do not really involve citizens in decision-making. Ordinary citizens complain that they are the last to hear about local policies, and they say they would participate online on issues that are of interest for them. A minor argument among the ordinary citizens says that “citizens can’t be asked their opinion on every issue”. Activists, on the other hand, list a number of arguments why e-participation is not desirable. Activists may be reluctant about e-participation because they find the application as an approval of the illegal acts of the local authorities. They worry that e-participation would leave traces of citizens on the website which would help the institutions to look democratic even though they would make decisions without citizens’ input. They argue that e-participation would help local authorities to pretend they are being democratic whereas there is no meaningful participation. Another reservation is concerning the virtual politics says that participation should be offline to be meaningful.

As for local politics, the local-global partnership and networking enabled with ICT seem to have some impact on some local policies such as public transportation and the establishment of some working units in the framework of some global projects. The change seems to happen rather in the public services and in the overall local economics in the city. This impact, however, seems to be very limited. They make either no change at all (as in the case of a district municipality that had multi-stakeholder projects before the European Union project funds required this model of projects), or institutions deny the change or the impact, arguing that the local issues do not have global solutions. Interviewees argue that central politics, here again, prevents local policy making by local authorities, and consequently, connecting the local processes to global processes becomes impossible. The lack of interactive capacity and the lack of local democracy are other arguments against the impact of global on local politics. The different political institutions are said to lack capacity to interact with other stakeholders. More importantly, the limited parts of the local policies that may be made by the local institutions are claimed to be pre-made during the elections by the candidates. Once they are elected, the rest of the politicians in the institutions only implement what was pre-decided by one person. This situation is yet another reason to frustrate the fantasy of a more democratic local politics.

The analysis suggests that the major challenge to local politics is centralized politics, and the major challenge to the political is the lack of participation. The analysis also
suggests that besides the lack of participation, another challenge in local political life is the disconnection between institutional politics and the citizens. The irrelevance of the civil society organizations invited to consultations by the institutions, and the reluctance of activists to use e-tools to prevent institutions from pretending being democratic indicate a certain lack of trust and suspicion on both sides. The ordinary citizens, on the other hand, seem to be almost absent in the local political life. The analysis further suggests that ICT are not perceived as having a changing role in these challenges. A promising case of e-participation on a local decision might showcase that ICT might help to overcome the lack of participation if it was only a technical problem. The lack of participation, however, seems to be more than that in Istanbul. As previously, here again, the Other is too powerful to let ICT fill the lack.

Following the analysis of the perceived role of ICT in the changing institutional politics, the analysis moves from politics to a broader political site by analysing how activists of various kinds see the role of ICT in changing activism in Istanbul.
6. **ACTIVISM**

As discussed in the theoretical framework, the State is no longer the only site of power. Pluralist, deliberative, and participatory models of democracy bring about new sites where other actors also play a role in the broader political scene. Activism is one of the ways of participating in this scene. New social movements that emerged at the end of 1960s introduced new actors in society. They were independent and different from the then civil society organizations in their agenda and in their methods of activism. That era was marked by the feminist, environmentalist, and student movements that were focused on culture and individual blurring the divide between the public and private spheres (Touraine 1985; Melucci 1985; della Porta and Diani 2006) and creating what Melucci (1985:815) names *intermediate public space*. Activists could use this space to raise their voice on issues to be included in decision-making while at the same keeping their independence from any forms of institutionalization. They thus became new actors in the social and political life.

As one of the dimensions of the network society, activism is yet another site for the interaction of the three areas of social change that are the local-global relation; politics-the political; and ICT. Castells (2000) suggests that as ICT and media become the primary sites of political activity, image based *symbolic politics* will emerge with international non-governmental organizations. Castells (2008) also argues that the global public sphere created by the international non-governmental actors would reorganize the power relations by empowering the new political actors vis-à-vis institutional politics. The changing relation of the local-global opens up new spaces for global as well translocal activism. The empowerment of activists with alternative politics, (supposedly) increased participation in the political, and the creation of a global public sphere is according to Castells an outcome of the network society. Castells (1997) claims that as cultural expressions occur on e-communication networks with diverse values, they detach from local history and geography which will change political actors and processes and opens up room for alternative/new politics. This current (or wishful) change also provides imaginaries for fantasies in this dimension. The global public sphere or global activism with the local-global interaction is for instance a fantasy of harmony for a harmonious world society.

The second chapter answers the research question: *how do activists perceive the role of ICT in changing activism in Istanbul?* The analysis, in consistence with the previous analysis, focuses on the three areas of social change namely the ICT, local-global relation, and politics-the political and looks at how activists see that ICT change activism in these areas. The chapter concludes by discussing the analysis in the framework of fantasies that come out of these perceptions.
6.1. Activism and ICT

The political struggle of activists is claimed to be increasingly mediated by the ICT (Khan and Kellner 2004) and the Internet is argued to be a necessity for activism (Chadwick 2006). Access is a crucial component of the use of ICT by activists. Castells (1997) argues that access to activists and to alternative politics on online media and on virtual communities permit a more decentralised and participatory political scene. Access to and diffusion of alternative information on/with ICT also permits different/alternative political actors to raise their voice (Bennett 2005). Besides, computer-mediated communication and the interactive structure of ICT permit the many-to-many communication which fosters interaction among their users. Castells (1997) argues that the increased interaction in society is another reason for more participation. Many technical advantages like the low cost, ubiquity, and speed are also the reasons that make ICT necessary tools for the efficiency of the activist work. Below is the analysis of the perceptions of activists on how ICT change their work based on the interviews done with various kinds of activists.

6.1.1. Access

The first argument used in the interviews is that ICT permit better access to information and to people. Older activists explain that they used to have limited access to information. They accessed information outside of their organization on traditional media: “foreign radio stations were our The Internet” (Ceylan, 60, f, a). Activists say that they may access mainstream information but they say that what makes ICT special is the possibility of accessing alternative information: “Now on Facebook there are the videos that are broadcast nowhere else; videos of policemen killing a person. (Mainstream) Media don’t broadcast this, it is on Facebook” (Ali, 29, m, a).

Access to information with ICT is also claimed to permit more thorough investigation. Activists report that they benefit from online access to investigate, for instance, multinational companies, their partnerships, theirs and their clients’ codes of conducts to use these clients later to pressure the company which violates workers’ rights in the local. Online access also means more up-to-date information for activists. If access to up-to-date information is very important for activism, activists say that they may also need to access archives. This access, activists find, is easier and better with ICT. Activists say that ICT also provide access to information at the global level. Activists use this opportunity to understand the world. They tell that this access gives them the possibility to read the world from their local perspective. Interviewees claim that it is in cyberspace that activists share their opinions and agendas with people in direct or indirect communication. In the interviews activists say that they benefit from the various forms and applications of social media to reach citizens, to organize and engage them.

Another argument used is that the use of social networking sites, especially Facebook, increased enormously after the Turkish version was introduced: “Those (citizens) who have a Facebook account, login to Facebook before they login to their
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e-mail accounts. That is why we try to use it intensively” (Tarık, 36, m, a). These online or mobile tools are claimed to help activists accessing people more easily with the chain effect and especially with the forwarding phenomenon. This argument recognizes that ICT may not be the best tools to reach all age groups in society but it says that they are definitely the best tools to reach young people. A service of social networking sites and other social media mentioned as important in the interviews is the regular statistics reports. This is how activists say that they may track the behaviour and activities of their audience concerning the cause. That is why social media, or more precisely social networking sites, are argued to be more efficient than websites. A certain pressure to use these tools is also present in the interviews: “we use them (social media) to be visible on all the tools available even though we don’t find all of them meaningful” (Tarık, 36, m, a).

Access to ICT, however, is argued to be open to all different political views and to all the actors in political life. Activists say in the interviews that it is therefore very easy to create counter content, for instance, counter-blogs by authorities if activists work against a policy of a local authority: “We created a blog, and then the municipality created a counter-blog. We commented on that one from time to time but then our blog started to receive comments against us, not from the people of the neighbourhood, but from some other people from somewhere, they started to post comments saying ‘yes the neighbourhood should disappear’ and so on” (Ferda, 42, f, a). This argument also says that ICT can be used for threatening or for damaging a reputation. Activists feel like losing control on the Internet. According to this idea, they lose control over their image on the Internet because it is very easy to misuse it to distort organizations’ opinions: “When one out of your ten opinions are represented wrongly on the Internet, it takes a long time to correct it, and by that time of correction the miscommunication may create a wrong conscience” (Gökhan, 27, m, a).

6.1.2. Interaction

The interviews indicate that using ICT improves activists’ interaction among activists and with other actors. Activists argue that the lack of interaction in the past challenged the organization of activities. They say that diffusion and flow of information was very limited before because information was kept secret by the hierarchy within the same organization. An old /retired activist explains that the executives of her organization were not sharing information with the members: “we couldn’t go into details in our discussions or strategy planning because information was blocked. We didn’t know everything” (Ceylan, 60, f, a). Increased interaction is deemed to open the minds of activists: “before people’s (activists’) opinions and reactions were more absolute and consisted more of their own narrow points-of-view” (Selim, 52, m, a).

The higher interaction is argued to help activists to see their rights and wrongs quicker, and act together. According to this argument, activists can now also introduce different stakeholders to each other at different levels with ICT. Activists claim that increased interaction makes them learn, research, and question more than before.

1 This is an activist who worked in a neighbourhood specific cause against the urban transformation policy
Interviewees say that interaction among the activists and between the activists and other stakeholders in society is better online because The Internet presents a democratic space for debate: “that is why the state which is aware of that bans opinion sharing websites more often than sex and gambling sites” (Tarik, 36, m, a).

This idea of the Internet being a democratic space is also picked up by others when referring to mediated debate as smoother communication. Apparently, activists from different political views may gather for a common cause. These differences may evoke some tensions. Women’s rights, for instance, is a cause which includes several different profiles of women. Activists argue that these differences make face-to-face interaction difficult especially if the differences reflect on the appearances of the activists which may provoke other women activists. That is why for this kind of cases, online mediated interaction is tested to be smoother and more efficient for the overall cause: “the flow of information is over the Internet, nobody hurts anybody because we are not face-to-face. On women’s rights, we work online with women from different backgrounds” (Feride, 36, f, a). Moreover, features of Facebook such as the wall of the group pages are stated as spaces where activists provoke discussions among the members/supporters. Activists claim that online presence and online interaction with citizens who support causes increase their self-confidence.

They also think that ICT serve as a binding factor. E-mail groups, for instance, are told to be the only binding tools for platforms that are not formal organizations. Activists argue that ICT entice interaction among the citizens over their online political expression: “Everybody has something to say but they are not given voice. That is why Facebook is so widely used. People can finally express themselves” (Ali, 29, m, a). A critical argument in the interviews is that ICT and especially social networking sites, challenge privacy. Activists who are concerned with privacy are reluctant to use these websites: “I know so many people from so many different backgrounds. I don’t find it right to connect them online. Maybe they won’t want to be seen by the others” (Feride, 36, f, a).

6.1.3. Efficiency

An argument in the interviews with activists is that ICT provide higher efficiency. Older activists say that communication among the activists or activists and other stakeholders was limited in the past. Not all activists had landline phones at home. That is why they say that they had to choose common points or offices and decide on some time frames to make calls; they used people as couriers in cases when they had to communicate outside office hours; for non-urgent matters they used letters to be sent by mail; they used time-consuming primitive copying machines. Activists tell that it used to take months to organize an event by mail. They claim that online communication today has overcome the time problem. Interviewees argue that activists today manage their office work and their relations with other stakeholders better with ICT. This argument also tells us about mobility. Mobility translates as communicating information and services all day every day. Activists say that better communication with ICT help them
to manage the relations traffic if they work with different stakeholders at different levels and capacities.

Another argument in the interviews is that ICT offer financial advantages compared to previous times: “we don’t need to travel for every meeting anymore. We use tools such as the web conferences etc.” (Selim, 52, m, a). Before, when activists used landline phones, they say that it was not always possible to reach people. Activists tell that mail took too a long time or sometimes letters vanished on the way.² This poor communication, this argument says, didn’t help motivation: “What feeds an activist the most is to be in touch with his target group regularly, and fast. Now that is possible with the Internet” (Selim, 52, m, a).

Activists report that using ICT increased the number of campaigns. Activists in Istanbul now seem to work more on campaigning than before. As the integration of ICT gives good results, they say that more activists start to understand the benefits of ICT and add that they are more motivated to improve their work with ICT. Activists argue that time and space flexibility is most important for today’s activism. Activists say that they need to reach as many people as possible in as little time as possible. For activists, especially in big and poorly organized cities like Istanbul communication with ICT is of big advantage because they say, they need to be quick in spreading the word and in reacting. Activists argue that low or no cost online tools help financially challenged activists.

Using ICT does not only lower the office and mostly communication costs, but it also argued that they introduce various ways of fundraising. Activists tell that online fundraising tools help them to mobilize their audience more efficiently to financially support the cause: “We fund-raised the 5 billion³ only from the supporters. That group (on Facebook) helped us with this” (Kaan, 30, m, a). Moreover, they say that their presence on the Web increases their visibility. They explain that using online tools makes their work more visible by the rest of the society and the world. This argument claims that as social media become an online information source for mainstream media, the latter access information on activists’ work more regularly and they cover more stories on activists who use these tools efficiently.

Activists say that coverage on traditional media brings invitations to produce content: “The “cause”⁴ on Facebook received many very interesting comments. I was invited to the Business Channel to talk. Then Geveze⁵ invited me to make a show together. We made 8 episodes. One thing followed the other and in 2 years I have been in many programs. I didn’t know that they (the social media) were so powerful. I, however, don’t know how much it served our cause” (Halim, 36, m, a). Activists think that the social media is a more entertaining alternative to traditional media. Besides, they say that user-friendly applications help the maintenance of the work. They think that these applications help for faster mobilization of passive citizens, easier awareness raising, and easier lobbying.

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² The postal service has limitations in Turkey
³ The old Turkish lira had extra 6 zeros. The interviewee says billion with the old habit. He means 5 thousands (app. 2.500 euros as of 2010)
⁴ That was before the “page” feature was introduced on Facebook; when the “causes” were much more popular than they currently (Spring 2011) are.
⁵ A famous radio producer
Activists list, at the same time, a number of reasons why ICT may also be inefficient. There is in the interviews the concern about the reliability of online information: “Those who know how to access the right information and who know how to use it properly win and those who don’t know that lose” (Selim, 52, m, a). Activists argue that ICT and social media require extra time, budget as well as technical skills to use the applications meaningfully. This argument also says that the hypertext and social media are distracting: “Some organizations spend too much time on social networking sites so that they miss the good and useful websites of very important global networks” (Esra, 27, f, a).

Activists complain that the unreal, virtual support challenges organizing events. The argument tells that the “event” on Facebook looks like an efficient tool but that in reality it is not: “People accept invitations to events because they like to display this information on their profile for their network or they feel good that they supported a cause but they don’t come to the actual event. You may have 200 people who confirm attending but you may end up with 4 of them at the event” (Gözde, 25, f, a). The digital divide appears as another reason for the inefficiency. This argument underlines that activists should not forget about the digital divide in society, thus among their target groups. In the case of activists working in the Roma neighbourhood, for instance, “only one of them had access to the Internet. They normally are an undereducated, low income, and digitally divided population. That is why we had to go the neighbourhood; we had to be physically there to fight against the municipality. This is how activism should be anyway” (Ferda, 42, f, a).

Interviewees argue that the digital divide also manifests itself at a cultural level: “Roma people have a bohemian lifestyle. They don’t have the habit of recording their lives. They don’t take photos and they don’t write diaries. That is why for most of them the blog of the movement was not interesting. Only for a few young people being photographed and seeing their photos online was interesting” (Ferda, 42, f, a). Another challenge found in the interviews is that activists take online access for granted. Activists say that activists do use only ICT to spread the word among the overall activist community: “I have such a big network, and nobody called me about this really important demonstration. I learnt it through an e-mail. Maybe people don’t feel like informing others in person about events anymore thinking that they learn about them anyway online” (Güneş, 50, f, a). Finally, activists think that they need trust to work together and that they cannot build it online: “It (the Internet) helps communication but you need trust within the group of activists to develop strategies. The group can easily and quickly divide into camps. Time and energy can easily be spent on conflicts and discussions within the group” (Ferda, 42, f, a).

An empirical comparison here between the interviews with politicians and interviews with activists indicates that the two groups perceive efficiency (with ICT) differently. As analysed and discussed in the previous chapter, politicians are focused on the managerial efficiency that ICT may bring in their work. They refer to the improvement of their administrational work and on the better public services ICT may facilitate. Interviews with activists, on the other hand, make it clear that the second group include the democratic component in efficiency. Better communication among activists, and
activists and other stakeholders, interaction between activists and their target groups, an increased number of campaigns, interaction with the media, the mobilization of passive citizens, and awareness raising are the arguments that are present in the interviews in terms of higher efficiency. This comparison suggests that unlike politicians, activists see ICT as efficient tools to improve democracy.

### 6.1.4. Status

Interviewees argue that ICT improve their status in political life and vis-à-vis institutionalized politics. The short story of an activist who compares youth activism before and after the Internet illustrates this argument: “After 97-98, with ICT, we started to learn what was happening at the international level by ourselves. As you access international information, you can inform the public sector about processes. This gives you a power of pressure on the public sector. The public sector could not block the information flow anymore because we could access it online by ourselves. This phenomenon helped us to be part of global processes, and learn about policies and developments. Information we gained in these processes brought us capacity. After ICT, communication on global processes is not in the monopoly of the public sector anymore. It still needs to be improved, though. Citizens should be more involved in the processes of communication” (Selim, 52, m, a). Another argument in the interviews claims that ICT have a progressive effect: “Online people are more willing for change” (Tolga, 39, m, a). Correspondingly, “traditional ways don’t work for change in Turkey” (Tolga, 39, m, a). Activists observe that as the use of ICT develops in activism in Istanbul, more knowledge is created. Moreover, they say that online campaigning has an increasing power in activism. The network structure of the Internet and the easier sharing of information is, activists argue, a “power multiplier”.

A critical argument in the interviews, however, is that using ICT means the virtualization of activism: “It (the Internet) is virtualizing things. It already is a problem that people don’t care, so making a fight virtual doesn’t help activism. They (ICT) should complement not replace offline activism” (Esra, 27, f, a). According to this argument, the results of virtual activism are passive activism and abstraction: “the online world is abstract; you can’t understand poverty in front of your laptop in your own sweet home” (Ferda, 42, f, a). Activists argue that using only ICT in activism promotes visual politics or slogan politics which are empty in content, in intellectual knowledge, and in debate: “People join groups on Facebook because their friends joined before or because they know or like the symbols of the group but they don’t know the content. They don’t read, they are not interested in words, they are interested in the symbols” (Ali, 29, m, a).

The visual expression idea also appears in terms of access to information. This idea says that people prefer communicating with ICT on their screen of their computers or on their mobile gadgets. Activists argue that people focus on seeing or reading and that they close down the hearing. They say that when compared with the past, activists used to have less visual and more oral communication before the ICT: “It was not an era of communication by smoke, we communicated by telephone even though it was not as
much (efficient) as The Internet. We were more politicized and we were more open to look for someone, to hear from someone. I very much feel this difference” (Selin, 53, f, a). In the interviews, we see that the peer pressure and identity display on social networking sites are deemed to make people display some kind of support for certain causes but activists think that these actions may remain empty: “it makes people feel good when they join a petition with a click, but people in front of an embassy would be the real activism” (Selin, 53, f, a).

An argument is that communication on ICT is not human. This argument says that non-human communication lowers the motivation to attend, for instance, in demonstrations or activism in general: “An online invitation to a demonstration is not human. It is just a message. I receive it or not depending on my mood when I read it. However, when someone tells me in person about the same demonstration, you feel it in his eyes and the influence on you is very different” (Selin, 53, f, a). This older/nowadays rather passive activist says she is more likely to attend a demonstration if she learns about it in person. ICT, according to interviews, foster individualism. Increased individualism caused by ICT is argued to isolate people from society and social issues.

Activists think that citizens become alienated from the city/society they live in: “sharing private content online with thousands is alienating” (Selin, 53, f, a). According to this argument individual use of social media serves for self-promotion of citizens rather than collective activity. Today, the argument says, The Internet and mobile technology permit individuals to access information individually, independent from others whereas before “activists had to meet in some locales, such as cafes to access information. There they could debate on issues and develop strategies, activities, events and so on. It was much more a collective activism. Istanbul was as big as it is today and we knew where to find what information. We were able to gather thousands for a demonstration. Today we are happy if there are 300-500 people” (Selin, 53, f, a).

6.2. Linking the local and the global with ICT

The local-global relation and the interaction of the two levels change with the new definitions of the concepts and the new ways of linking of these levels. The discussion of who loses and who gains in this interaction suggests several models of linking local and global. One way of the linking the two occurs, as discussed in the theoretical framework, in activism. While new social movements focused on the individual, recent social movements organize globally for causes like global social justice, democracy, or issues like the environment. After The Zapatista movement used ICT to inform the global community about their cause, they also happened to initiate a global network of activism. The network structure of the Internet further facilitated the networking of activists (Olsson 2008). It is argued that ICT facilitate both global, translocal, and simultaneous events in different locales for activists (Chadwick 2006; della Porta and Tarrow 2005). ICT are claimed to enable online networking, and communication and interaction between the activists of the world to create the link between the local
and global (Lipschutz 2005). The chapter continues by analysing what the activists of Istanbul think of the role of ICT in their interaction with the global.

6.2.1. Communication

In the past, “There was no such relation” (Ceylan, 60, f, a). Activists argue that before the introduction of The Internet and mobile telephones there were hierarchies and monopolies of information and of relations with global actors. Activists tell that the executives at the headquarters of the trade union in Ankara, for instance, communicated with world unions. Members in Istanbul, an older activist says, were only informed after a certain communication or activity with world partners took place: “co-organizations didn’t reach the local networks. We were only communicated the results afterwards” (Ceylan, 60, f, a). Activists argue that this situation changed dramatically. Today, as interviews with other activists also suggest, Istanbul branches of trade unions can and do communicate with their global counterparts on their own. Another argument in the interviews is the monopoly of information and relations with global actors: “we didn’t know what was happening in the world. Access to international events was not possible because all communication concerning these events was by/through the public sector. Civil society actors were not informed about events unless they were in close relationship with the public sector” (Selim, 52, m, a). This situation is also told to have dramatically changed after activists started to join global networks online. Activists tell that with ICT they could start to access the information on global processes on their own by bypassing the central political institutions, a situation that permits them to link local to global in number of ways.

According to the interviews, ICT are improved communicators for better and independent access to global knowledge and to world activists. Activists claim that ICT make them lose their prejudices towards some countries with facilitated communication with and access to free/alternative information on some previously inaccessible countries. They say that these prejudices are mainly developed because of the previously hidden/blockeded/official information on these countries. They say that with ICT they start to learn about and interact with activists of these countries: “Iran may seem very controversial politically, but you can realize that there are similarities between the activists in Iran and activists in Turkey” (Selim, 52, m, a). Activists say that they may maintain regular global communication with ICT. They argue that electronic communication permits them daily communication with world activists. This communication, the argument says, consequently creates opportunities for partnerships or co-implementation of projects. Activists tell that communication on e-mail lists of global activist work activity ensures their visibility. They say that sending out e-mails, for instance, do link them to the global “I happen to meet in global conferences people who already know my name through e-groups” (Feride, 36, f, a).

In cases where local activists cannot act offline in the street, they say that they use ICT for global solidarity: “We couldn’t do anything offline to support the workers in Brazil and Canada in their fight against Vale (a multinational company) because that company does not operate in Turkey. That is why we sent letters of protest and
informed our local members about the situation on our website” (Esra, 27, f, a). The same activists, however, say that they are ready to support workers of the world offline if possible. They supported the fight of the workers in South Korea: “That company does not have production here but sales. We protested against it and showed our solidarity to the workers” (Esra, 27, f, a). Passive online global activism appears in the interviews as another way of linking the two levels. Activists think that online petitions may give good results such as the suspension of the death penalty for an Iranian teacher.

6.2.2. Online networking

Interviews suggest that ICT are at the same time enablers of online networking. Activists argue that ICT are of crucial help in networking: “if you can’t use ICT you can’t use these networks and you can’t help the society to use them” (Selim, 52, m, a). Activists say that they find out about and access networks on the Internet. They explain that once they learn about networks that can be useful for their work in the local, they start to join, interact, and contribute to these networks with the help of ICT. Time and space freedom, possible with ICT, is argued to be most useful for activists in networking globally. An argument in the interviews is that activists do more easily follow global processes through online networks. They say that they join both local and global networks without, however, bypassing national and regional networks such as the European Union networks. They say that their membership in these networks may be active, for instance, as a member of the steering committee; or passive, as lurkers who only follow the communication and the flow of information. It is not because it is possible to easily join networks on the Internet that they join all the available networks; activists say that they select which networks to join.

It is however found in the interviews that online networking globally is not relevant for all kinds of causes. Nationalist activists, for instance, say that they do not see any point in networking globally or in linking their work to global activists: “What will you talk about with Greek nationalists?” (Gökhan, 27, m, a). They claim, however, that they are interested in creating their own global network: “There is the Turkish Federation in the world. We coordinate communication with the local federations on the Internet” (Gökhan, 27, m, a). Moreover, interviewees argue that networking is demanding. According to this argument, the network of networks may push activists to join too many networks in the end and being active in these networks demands too much time.

Secondly, activists tell that it demands language skills. The biggest complaint of activists is their lack of foreign language skills. Activists say that sharing information on their work in the local be it problems or successes, means too much work and time to translate this information: “they write in their mother tongue. There is no need to spend extra time in forwarding a document that is already written in English. But I need to give time for translation” (Güneş, 50, f, a). That is why some activists “(I) ask help from my foreign contacts on MSN chat for translation” (Feride, 36, f, a). They say that in some cases a selection of very important news or developments are shared in the networks so that the members can use this information for their local work elsewhere: “
we shared with the global network the information on illegal student labour thinking that if it happens here it may also start to happen elsewhere” (Güneş, 50, f, a).

All activists, however, are aware of the global networks created by the global organizations such as the UN. In the interviews there is another challenge concerning online networking: the online itself. Even with limitations of time, space, and costs, according to this argument “face-to-face global gatherings are more important for activists than online networking” (Tolga, 39, m, a). Activists argue that online networking does also permit some activists/organizations to misuse the online network for their self-promotion; to promote their work if not their political views.

6.2.3. Multidirectional linking of the local and the global

The interviews suggest that linking local and global occurs in different directions. The interaction may stem from local towards global. Activists tell that this is how they make parliamentarians from other countries such as German Greens, global non-governmental organizations such as Amnesty International, or global organizations such as UNICEF support the local work in Istanbul. In some cases, activists say that they warn their global partners or members of their global networks about illegal practices of global companies so that these activists are ready in case the same practices happen in those other places. They say that another way of linking the local to the global is to attend global conferences to present the work done in the local. Activists say that local networks in Istanbul may also link activists individually / privately to the world: “I could buy cheaper tickets to La Scala thanks to my local network” (Halim, 36, m, a).

The opposite direction, from global towards local, is also present in the interviews. The list of the 500 most influential Muslims in the world, for instance, includes an Islamist feminist activist in Istanbul: “in the introduction of the book, the criteria were listed as ‘what they do, their global recognition, and their impact’” (Feride, 36, f, a). Activists report that global (traditional) media reach them to cover their stories: “our campaign was covered by the New York Times, Le Monde, by the third newspaper of The Netherlands, a radio station in Australia, and by the BBC” (Tarık, 36, m, a). Moreover, they say that this visibility makes global actors reach them for their projects: “Following an interview with us on the BBC on our position on freedom of the Internet, we were invited to a meeting in the United States. After the meeting, our colleague will be now one of the 6 people invited to the museum of the freedom of The Internet that Hillary Clinton plans to establish” (Tarık, 36, m, a).

Interviewees say that sometimes global organizations contact the more powerful local in order to reach the more remote or powerless local: “We are the honorary sponsors of the UNEP for the June 5th Environment Day” (Kaan, 30, m, a). Some global networks seem to be inspired to organize events in Istanbul when activists from the city join the network. Activists of Istanbul who join a global network may also initiate a local network within the global movement: “We learnt about MAI (Multilateral Agreement of Investment) when we subscribed to the Internet at home in 1998. We knew MAI was something bad but we didn’t know the details. We contacted the global network, asked them to inform us so that we can start a local movement. They included us. We were
the only people from Turkey in Seattle in 1999. We then created the local network and I was the international spokesperson of the network in Turkey” (Güneş, 50, f, a). Global activists may also contact individual local activists individually by e-mail or through other online communication tools: “Someone in Argentina added me on Facebook and asked me about the group and its content” (Ali, 29, m, a). Global networks may also inform local activists about events in Istanbul. Finally, interviewees say that the Turkish diaspora visits the websites or social media pages of local activists in Istanbul.

Another way of linking the two levels in the interviews is that local activists may serve as a bridge between the local and the global: “the very first network I have been on was a global network. It allowed me to link to the local, inform people in the local about what’s happening at the global level, and link the local back to the global to inform the global network about what’s happening in the local. This development has allowed many exchange opportunities for young people even from the least developed parts of Istanbul and Turkey. We also contribute to global decision-making and to global policies with our local experience. Youth councils are a model of Turkey. This model has been included in the official document of the World Summit of Sustainable Development” (Selim, 52, m, a).

The link may also occur in an irregular step-by-step model. Activists say that they may link their local work to the national level, for instance, by supporting a national initiative that works for the same cause. When the same activists link their own local work to the global, for instance in a global conference, they may also link the national initiative to the global: “I mean not directly from local to national and then to global within the same network but the issue is among my priorities in global processes that I am following” (Bilge, 29, f, a).

Finally, local links to local via the global. When there is a problem in the local concerning, for instance, workers’ rights, activists say that they link to the global network to be informed about the rights and go back to the local to fix the problem, or to ask the support of the global network as a pressure for the local problem maker. If a local employer who works with a multinational company violates the rights of workers, the trade union uses ICT to first access information on the multinational company, and then to contact the trade union in the original country of the company to learn more about the company and its commitments to pressure the local employer back home: “I then right away contacted our sister organization in France and asked what we could do” (Esra, 27, f, a).

The link between the two levels, on the other hand, appears to be very limited if not absent in some cases. Traditional leftist activists, for instance, are argued to be still closed to the world. This argument says that there may be inspirations from global movements or icons such as Che Guevera but that these ideological inspirations do not translate into global solidarity: “leftist organizations were closed to the world and they still don’t have international connections” (Selin, 53, f, a). Activists claim that many trade unions are disconnected from global networks: “There is no such networking for most of the trade unions in Turkey. When they have a problem, they ask us whom they should contact” (Esra, 27, f, a). There may be some sort of link between the local and the
global over self-development of activists. Linking local to global, in some cases appears as limited to a one-way access to information.

Linking local to global also comes with some concerns among activists. The word *global* may be irritating. It may, for some, connote the neo-liberal discourse and that is why linking local to global may be perceived as the invasion of the global corporations in the local, and the disappearing of local values: “there should be policies to protect local values. There is a global commercial pumping” (Selim, 52, m, a). That is why for some activists global /globalization causes in the interviews a negative perception. This argument replaces the word *global–ization* with *international–ization*. This is, for some, a more human and embracing approach. Those interviewees say that ICT and ICT-enabled online networks do definitely help the process. Interviews suggest on the other hand that online networking is not the only way of linking local and global.

In some cases, activists claim that it is because they feel and live as a citizen of the world that they join networks, thus the logic works in the opposite direction: “it has nothing to do with networks, it is about my own perspective” (Selin, 53, f, a). Linking local and global seems to be also problematic if national interests of organizations shadow global interests. In the case of trade unions, for instance, activists report that while some trade unions in the world are successful in acting globally, others act according to their national interests. Activists argue that studies abroad or international schools in Istanbul also help the local – global relation.

### 6.3. Activists in local political life

Pluralist, deliberative, and participatory models of democracy and the political, as already discussed, challenge politics which held the power for the State and other institutionalized politics such as the parliaments. The political, on the other hand, broadened this power to society giving voice to (previously unheard) different groups and permitting new forms of political activity (Mouffe 2005a, 2005b). Alternative forms of raising awareness on issues, informing the public as well as the decision-makers, and interaction with different stakeholders as well as non-organized citizens all facilitated by ICT, are deemed to empower activists as undeniable actors of new political life (della Porta and Diani 2006).

Another change in politics occurs in terms of levels. The claimed changes in the local-global relation is argued to make power fly away from the nation-state level either towards the local by empowering local politics or to the global, to global actors (Castells 2000). The analysis below looks at how the activists of Istanbul think ICT make a change in their work from this point of view of change in politics and the political.

### 6.3.1 Discovery of local politics and the political

An argument in this area is that activists realize the importance of local politics with ICT. As activists use ICT to join and interact in global networks, they say that they realize the importance of local politics and local political life: “Turkey is a centralized
country. Ankara solves all the problems. That’s why before activists used to talk only about national politics. As they entered global networks, they have seen that especially in the developed world, they think globally but act locally. They combine knowledge from their global networks and knowledge from their local work. This combination helps them to influence local policies and local authorities” (Selim, 52, m, a).

Activists argue that ICT are encouraging. According to this argument, these networks permit access to information and to solutions to solve problems in the local. An activist says that for activists whose political views reflect on their outfit; an activist with headscarf, for instance, may experience some challenges at home but “while I can’t access the court hall (as a lawyer) in my home country, I am given the floor to talk in global conferences. This proves to me that there is a problem to be solved and it encourages me to do something. It teaches me to not to give up” (Feride, 36, f, a). Activists also say that they feel encouraged because networking online globally permits them to know/envision the potential reactions of their global partners: “We know who would support us if something happens” (Esra, 27, f, a). They claim that they become more motivated and even more engaged because of the satisfaction of doing something and eventually making a change in society. Activists say that they are very encouraged by the concrete results of their work and when they see there are also other activists who are concerned about the same social issues.

Related to this, interviewees argue that using ICT to create their own global network makes them feel more self-confident: “... I have an organization even in Canada. I mean I am institutionalized. This shows how big you are. And it gives you self-esteem” (Gökhan, 27, m, a). They say that this self-confidence reflects on the motivation of their work concerning the local political life. Interviews also suggest that activists don’t only discover local politics in their own local but also in other locals in the country. The stories of activists say that ICT raise solidarity: “you feel like you have to share the knowledge with others” (Tarık, 36, m, a). More precisely, activists of Istanbul may use ICT to support local activists of other cities in Turkey with volunteer consulting: “I can provide oral or written support to local activists in the country. I don’t have the chance to go regularly to Kayseri, to Nevşehir, to Rize but I learn from online networks about their local work and their need for support and I support them” (Kaan, 30, m, a). This is how activists of Istanbul say that they are involved in the local political life in other cities.

Activists think that ICT and online networks do unavoidably make them more active in local political life because these tools make them react or reply to messages fast, warn other activists or citizens about developments, or intervene when something happens against their cause. Activists also argue that they become more engaged themselves as they engage citizens in their work/cause.

Other experiences of activists, however, suggest that ICT do not always make a difference in their involvement/engagement in local political life because, like one activist says, “I was already active and engaged before ICT” (Selin, 53, f, a). The critical arguments further say that ICT detach people from local politics rather than connect: “I think The Internet detaches people from local politics. Networks look as if

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they link to local politics but I don’t know if they really do so” (Selin, 53, f, a). According to this argument, ICT foster passivism and individualism: “I personally believe that online petitions do make people passive. I however still sign them thinking that maybe they are perceived differently elsewhere and that numbers may have a meaning somewhere else” (Selin, 53, f, a).

6.3.2. Empowerment

We see in the interviews the argument that ICT help capacity building. Activists say they can bring global knowledge to local politics. They explain that they use global knowledge to influence local politics; they claim that they can react in the local thanks to the information they receive online from the global. On water policy, for instance, water activists seem to use the information they access on their global networks on regulations of the European Union: “There is the perception in Turkey that the EU is something good. That is why it is crucial to link this information to the society and to local politics” (Güneş, 50, f, a).

Activists tell that they use ICT to contact and ask the support of global political figures as a pressure on Turkish authorities: “following our online communication with jurists-journalists in The Netherlands, a Dutch parliamentarian addressed questions to the Turkish foreign minister on the children who are the victims of law in the fight against terrorism” (Gözde, 25, f, a). ICT are further claimed to permit activists to access information other than their own particular area of interest. An activist who works for the irregular urbanization, for instance, says that he can follow the policies or issues on the environment in general which enriches his understanding of the field. Activists argue that ICT help training the global network of the local activists about the long-term strategy concerning the local political life back in Istanbul or Turkey.

Activists’ stories point to empowerment. Interviewees argue that ICT permit access to information and to global networks. This access is deemed to empower activists because they learn about processes independently from the official flow of information. Specialized activists then explain that they are empowered as a partner of the institutional politics. An activist summarizes this process: “in countries like ours, access to information is limited. That’s why our access to information through our global networks empowered us very much in the eyes of the public sector. We shared information on developments, cases, processes with public sector and it made us a powerful partner in the national level. Our knowledge made us very strong also at the local level. Many of the projects implemented by the government are due global agreements but before, we didn’t even know what those agreements were. Now we do. And we can pressure the government to do something because we know that they signed x agreement. When you go to the local, information without interpretation makes you more reliable. More citizens rely on your organization more they are willing to be involved in your work. This empowers you more. I can say that ICT and global networks are the reasons why civil society arose suddenly after the UN Habitat Summit” (Selim, 52, m, a).

The activist learnt about the EU regulation on the commercialization of water over a press release sent to the e-group by an Italian activist.
When activists join networks they think that their “role changes. Before, you had one role. After joining different networks you acquire more and more active roles. You propose policies, you benefit from policies. You become a serious power” (Selim, 52, m, a). A promising case of the empowered activists is the involvement of an activist group in the change on local authorities’ law: “there was not a participatory mechanism. The mayor of a city used to open a call for tender and then chose a company to prepare the strategic plan for the city with couple of bureaucrats. The city would use its budget according to this plan. However, the project we have started, stemming from global cases, is a participatory mechanism where you invite all stakeholders of the city when deciding on the strategic plan of the city. We called them city councils, youth councils etc. we needed to put this in law to ensure the sustainability. Now, by law, all cities have to have city councils and have to involve all stakeholders in the strategic planning. Otherwise there are financial sanctions” (Selim, 52, m, a).

In an opposite direction, the same activist says that ICT also empower them in the global political processes. He explains that the work done in the local enables them to contribute to the global: “We now contribute to the policy documents of the global processes. Local youth councils, for instance, are a model of Turkey and a paragraph on them is on the WSSD document” (Selim, 52, m, a). While for some activists “It is not possible to disconnect civil society from world nor from local politics” (Gözde, 25, f, a), a fundamental limitation appears to prevent activists to be actively involved in local politics: lack of participation: “If they (activists) have all these networks and opportunities, they as citizens and civil society should be able to participate in policy making, decision making. But they can’t. They only hear about local policies once they are made. After a while they feel like not even hearing anymore. There are many qualified, educated people who are interested in local politics. We can say that those networks are useful only if these people can influence local politics. Otherwise it doesn’t go beyond chatting” (Ferda, 42, f, a).

6.4. Fantasies of activism in Istanbul

Activism is another dimension where we see the three main fantasies (of the three areas). Integrating ICT in the activist work provides the imaginaries to create a fantasy of technological power. Online activism for instance is an idea of this fantasy. The idea of a global public sphere where the local and global interact and where activists form the harmonious global community is a scenario of the fantasy of harmony. In this fantasy local activists link to global and become the “we” as the global activist community. This harmonious community enabled by the ICT also creates the fantasy that ICT enable and even empower activists. This fantasy of political power is that “we” gives power to activists both in the local and the global. Consequently the fantasy of political power then says that activists are empowered in the political scene and that their voice is taken serious by the decision-makers. The final section of the chapter discusses what fantasies activists of Istanbul create based on their perception of the role of ICT in the changing activism in the city.
6.4.1. Fantasy 1: ICT solve the problems of activism

The use of ICT in activism and several advantages of this use provide the imaginary for the fantasy that ICT solve the problems of activism. This fantasy that activism gains power in local political life is fed by the imaginary of the improvements in activism today with ICT compared to activism in the past without ICT. Interviewing older activists revealed the limitations and challenges of activism before ICT. From a democratic point of view, the biggest challenge was the state monopoly of information flow. Political institutions are claimed to have held information and not to share it with civil society. This phenomenon left activists without the necessary information they needed to proceed. This democratic problem was not present however only at the level of politics. The central government culture apparently also reflected on the traditional forms of activism such as the trade unions. The hierarchy within these organizations is said to have prevented members outside the executive board (who sit in the capital city, Ankara) to access information. Members of local networks of trade unions, (e.g. the network in Istanbul) were the most disadvantaged in accessing information and contacts. According to interviewees the undemocratic practices of the State monopoly of information flow and the hierarchy within the activist organizations have been eradicated by ICT. Today, ICT are deemed to permit activists to access information online on their own without being dependent on a national politics source. This development causes among activists the fantasy of technological power over the information (flows) they need to access.

Activists confirm that the Istanbul networks of trade unions equally use ICT for their own access to information. They say that ICT provide technical and practical facilitation to activists. For activists in Istanbul, however, this practical seeming improvement means more. Better access to information, for instance, is not only about accessing information in more practical ways but it also means access to alternative information. This is a crucial argument in the interviews for those activists who need to access and who need to diffuse information that is not accessible by traditional means. This argument again creates the fantasy of technological and political power among the activists who think that they can have power on the access to information.

A second improvement in the interviews is the increased interaction. ICT are argued to increase interaction in numbers but interviews suggest that the interaction also increased in terms of who interacts with whom. Activists also point to the interaction of activists and citizens (and among citizens) on social networking sites over engaged posts and comments. In a political culture where citizens traditionally are reluctant to say which party they vote for, this public expression of political views may mean more than increased interaction in quantity between the activists and citizens, but we may comment that it also means the emergence of online public political deliberation. Moreover, activists argue that increased interaction, possible with ICT, lead to multi-stakeholderism. This is a considerable change in an undemocratic political culture where civil society disappeared after military coups. Activists’ partnerships with each other and with local political institutions indicate a certain improvement in local
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democracy which creates the imaginary for the fantasy of power. We see here that the fantasy of technological power links to the fantasy of political power.

Higher efficiency is an argument that includes both the managerial and democratic components in the interviews of the activists (unlike the perception of politicians as analysed above). They refer to efficiency in terms of ICT’s help in the offices or work in general; and also in terms of help for activists to reach and mobilize more citizens, especially young people. In a city where the majority of the population is under 30, this outreach means more than cheaper and faster communication at the office. Reaching young people in Istanbul means awareness building in the biggest group of the city. Online outreach also means, as activists stated, reaching unorganized/unengaged people. Thus activists see ICT as of high importance not only as practical facilitators but also as improvers of local political culture. This is another reason for activists to create a fantasy of power.

The fantasies of political and technological power with the idea of ICT solving the problems of activism, civil society, and more broadly of democracy are, however, frustrated by the arguments of challenges and limitations that sustain the Lacanian lack in the society and in the political in Istanbul. Activists worry that passive online activism and abstraction (will) harm their work. They argue that ICT foster individualism which they think is a challenge for the collectivism needed for activism. Activists seem to be well aware that they are not the only users of ICT. They know that their adversary may also benefit from the same opportunities in technology to create counter discourses on their cause. ICT apparently are not always very efficient either. Even though they use online tools and social media, activists recognize that these tools are not always more efficient because they require skills and resources. Activists say that they have difficulties in relying on online content and online activity of their supporters. It is argued in the interviews that trust is important in activism and that computer-mediated communication is not the best way to build this trust.

Moreover, activists argue that losing control is easy on the Internet. Even though this argument looks at first sight like a challenge for activism, from a democratic point of view, this phenomenon may also have a positive impact. The reasoning of the argument in the interviews is that ICT is available for every political view, which is why the image of some activists may be damaged by other activists or individuals. This image, however, because of the very same argument, may be anti-democratic in the first place. The image to be damaged online may be the image of the activists who work against democratic rights. In that sense, this seemingly negative change may at the same time be a positive one for democracy. It is important to make here a flash-back to a similar experience that we saw when an activist said a municipality creating counter-cause blogs. This second case, however, should be differentiated. We cannot comment it as maybe-also-positive because in this second case in institutional politics the highest (elected) local government, use ICT to manipulate citizens’ opinions and support on a certain issue by sabotaging activists’ work. Therefore, this argument about losing control may be a negative but also maybe a positive change in activism. In either case, it frustrates the fantasy of technological power.
A second argument for the negative change is the decreased collectivism due to visual communication. This argument says that people access information on screens visually and not by hearing. This phenomenon is said to have eradicated the café tradition which used to permit activists meeting in person to access information and once gathered, they discussed and planned strategies. This collectivity is, activists argue, replaced by online individuals. That is why street demonstrations are claimed not to gather as many people as in the past. ICT thus do not seem to always empower activism; it is argued that they may also be detrimental. While these arguments indicate a more crowded and diversified online population, passive activism is argued to threaten democracy. In a city (or country) where the political agenda changes so very quickly and where the social memory is very weak, the lack of follow up due to passive activism may lead to no result. Activists in Istanbul are also concerned about the more general challenges of ICT such as threats to privacy and the digital divide.

Digital divide is not present in interviews as a challenge for activists themselves but for their target groups in the society. That is why online activism is not always relevant for all activists. ICT thus may help activists in their work but they may also harm it; that is why activists think that ICT should complement when needed and that e-activism should not replace the offline activism. This argument links to paradox in the Lacanian theory. While ICT may solve the problems and overcome the challenges and limitations of activism, once online, activism may become passive and this would harm political activity, engagement, and democracy.

### 6.4.2. Fantasy 2: ICT ensures local-global collectivism

Access to and interaction with global networks online and various ways of linking local and global creates the fantasy of harmony and solidarity. The second fantasy is that ICT help a local – global collectivism. This fantasy uses the imaginary of glocal/translocal interaction among activists. Interviews indicate that activists use ICT to network and to link local and global. Different models for this linkage over ICT and ICT-enabled online networks are present in the interviews. The local links to the global especially when they need support from global partners, organizations, networks as well as traditional actors such as the parliamentarians of other countries. This support may be certain specific information or advice when they need it to solve a problem in the local. Activists may also ask global organizations or individuals to stand by them as a support in/for the local. Global actors may also be used to pressure multinational companies as well as Turkish authorities depending on the cause.

The link stemming from the global towards the local mostly happens as an appreciation of the local work by, for instance, including local activists in global success lists, as the case of the 500 most influential Muslim or global projects like the Museum of Freedom of The Internet. Turkey in general and Istanbul in particular is situated in an important geo-strategic point on the world map. This is a secular Muslim country that is governed by a neo-liberal Islamic party which recently changed the foreign policy and the balance between the army and the civil politics. This may be one reason why
the global media are interested in covering the work of local activists⁸. Activists state the names of several European or global traditional/mainstream media companies that covered their campaigns and opinions. Moreover, global may link to local when they need the support of the local activists in their project. In these cases they contact the more powerful local in order to reach the less powerful local. The third model of linking the two levels is to serve as the bridge between the two. This model does not only feed both sides with knowledge and experience but it is also claimed to empower the activists who build this bridge. In Castells’ words, these activists become the switchers between the networks at different levels. The switchers, as Castells argue, feed both the levels which in turn feed themselves.

The global knowledge and local experience apparently is a good combination and it is empowering when this combination links local and global. Interviews reveal another way of linking the different levels. This is what is noted as an irregular step-by-step model in the analysis. This is about linking local work to some related national networks and picking up on the issue referring to the national network in global processes. This link, however, is rather scattered, spontaneous, irregular, and it is more based on the personal interests of the activists. The experiences of the elite activists who benefit from successfully linking the local and the global may correspond to Lacanian partial enjoyment in this area. Partial enjoyment however is not enjoyment because enjoyment is stolen for good by the Other. The Other of this fantasy of harmony is the local challenges and limitations.

This fantasy of the harmony and solidarity between the local and the global with ICT is thus also frustrated. The frustration stems from the challenges in the local. Activists argue that Linking the local and the global with ICT has many advantages for them. Benefiting from this link, however, requires more than ICT. Activists in Istanbul say that they lack foreign language skills. This fact repeatedly appears in the interviews as a complaint, failure, or a situation to be improved. Without language skills activists cannot access information or global networks online even though they possess ICT. Activists with limited language skills nevertheless know about global networks and some still join them. These activists, however, say that they remain as lurkers who can only try to follow the flow of information without interacting and without contributing to the networks with any kind of content. Some activists who can do some kind of translation select the information to be sent to global networks because translation is very time-consuming for those with modest language skills. We may then comment that in this case only the elite who have excellent language skills can benefit from the global networks, link local and global, and participate in global processes both online and offline.

The fantasy of harmony of those activists who do not have the skills is thus frustrated at that level. The challenges of linking local and global also include the lack of time. Networking globally is claimed to demand time. Activists need to allocate time to follow processes, and to interact within these networks to benefit from them. We can say that small or informal groups or individual activists will be disadvantaged compared to

⁸ The data collection took place before the Arab spring of 2011. After the uprisings in the Arab world, Turkey as a Muslim country with relatively/(slightly) better democracy in the region is increasingly interesting for the global media and think tanks.
organizations who can practically (e.g. office space) or financially (e.g. salary) afford volunteers or employees. The interviews also indicate that linking local and global is not always preferable even with the necessary skills and resources. The analysis shows that this has different reasons: glocal/translocal interaction let alone partnership may be irrelevant due to the nature of the cause. This situation, however, as seen in the analysis, does not disconnect these kinds of activists from the rest of the world. They still create a global network with their own members who are scattered around the globe.

In an ideological level, activists do not always perceive the global as a positive concept. This concept may immediately irritate some activists who take linking local and global as the invasion of global companies in the local. It should nevertheless be noted that these activists are not in principle against global solidarity or the interaction of local and the global. They, however, prefer different terminology such as internationalization which, according to them, does not mean the dominance of global capital. Finally, even though the local-global link is desirable, face-to-face global meetings are argued to be more important than online networking. The analysis on Linking the local and the global with ICT thus suggests several challenges and limitations that leave many of the local activists outside of the game. If linking the local and the global with ICT is an advantage for local activists, then apparently there are many activists in Istanbul whose work cannot benefit from this advantage. The fantasy that ICT create local-global collectivism is thus also frustrated in Istanbul.

6.4.3. Fantasy 3: ICT empower activists in local political life

The final fantasy in this dimension is that ICT empower activists in local political life. Several reasons why activists feel more empowered and engaged in local politics provide the imaginary to create this fantasy of political power. Activists argue that ICT make them discover local politics. Stories of activists tell that politics used to mean only national politics due to the reign of Ankara. Activists argue that ICT and ICT-enabled online global networks made them learn about the relevance / importance of local politics. Chronologically, this process also coincided with the UN Habitat City Summit that took place in Istanbul in 1996. Activists say that they could meet world activists and join global networks with ICT. The very agenda of the summit on empowering local governance, and the work of world activists in/on local political life inspired activists of Istanbul to think about and act in the local. This is how activists explain that ICT made them discover local politics.

Activists say that they also discover solutions to their local problems once they start to interact online with their global counterparts. As they accessed information online on global processes they started to attend events about these processes. Activists argue that the more democratic structure of these processes, or the potential support they saw in their online interaction may encourage them to fight in the local. We see in the interviews that the independent access to information, possible with ICT, also makes activists discover the commitments of the Turkish government in global processes and agreements. This is how they say that they can learn their rights in the local and find the
legal basis for their work. The discovery of the local politics, (motivation for) solutions, and rights are enough to create the fantasy of political power that make activists believe in their increased power in local political life. As local activists join global networks they say that they can specialize in the field. Global knowledge and experience seem to make some activist groups establish multi-stakeholder partnerships. They claim that partnerships with political institutions in the local but also at the national level (ministries or directorates) empower activists. The leading youth organization which works for local governance and youth capacity building is a case for this process. This organization later was involved in the process of revising the law on local authorities to make local politics more participative. This change in the law on local authorities is not only important because it envisages a participatory structure in local politics but it also is claimed to be a participatory process in itself.

Another flash-back here to the previous chapter, however, reminds us that despite this legal change mentioned in the interviews with activists, local politics still lack participation, at least in Istanbul. The fantasy of participatory politics is frustrated by the contradictions between the written rules and the practice of these rules in the local (see the previous chapter for the analysis of the concept and the discussion on the fantasy). Activists also discover about international organizations. The European Union, for instance, is an important regional organization for Turkey because she is a candidate country to enter the Union. Activists argue that access to alternative information and access to European networks permit them to learn about certain EU directives and regulations that may not be better than those in Turkey. These activists thus discover the legal European Union and act accordingly in their local work. Apart from these discoveries, activists do also say that they feel more powerful when they see that they can use global actors to pressure the local authorities who oppress them or undermine their rights. This fantasy of political power derives from the imaginaries that ICT increase self-confidence and solidarity among activists in the local. Finally, activists claim that ICT and ICT-enabled online networks provide them tools to contribute to global political life. They say that their knowledge and experience in the local inspire global processes for future strategies and recommendations. All these discoveries and empowerment arguments of activists are argued to motivate them to be more active in local politics which keeps the fantasy of political power alive.

This fantasy, however, is also frustrated by the local political tradition. Even though ICT help activists to improve their work, their interaction, and their relations, their main role remains the same: activist. They still don’t seem to be partners in local institutional politics. That is because they cannot participate in decision-making processes in local politics. This argument of the interviews says that online networks “cannot go beyond chatting” if the members (activists) cannot participate in local politics. Another challenge in this respect, according to the argument, is that ICT make it possible to pretend participation. Various online tools to contact activists may at first sight look like participation but activists desire “meaningful participation” in local politics. There is another argument, in this part of the analysis, on how ICT may detach activists from local politics with individualism and passivism. Activists argue that ICT detach people from society and social issues and push them more into their own individual life. Finally,
on a narrow basis, an argument says that ICT do not make a change for those who are already interested in local politics. Here again, the discovery of local politics and tools to be more active and engaged in local politics, as well as some promising cases may play the role of partial enjoyment. If, however, activists, as part of the creators of the political and as the actors outside of the institutionalized politics cannot participate in decision-making in local politics, it means that the lack is not filled. The enjoyment of participation is still impossible and that is why the idea that ICT empowers activists remains as a fantasy.
7. **IDENTITY**

The blurred divide of public and private spheres is claimed to have added identity as a category in political life. As the political spreads in private sphere, identity unavoidably started to rise as an issue as identity politics (Zaretsky 1995). Therefore discussions of social change started to refer to identity. It is a significant subject, for instance, in the discussions on the social change with the increasing use of computer-mediated communication and ICT with new identities such as virtual, online identities (Turkle 1996; Jordan 1999; Boyd 2007 among others). Rosenau (2004) argues that the interaction between the local and the global blurs the boundaries between internal and external affairs which in turn cause the crisis of identity. Identity also becomes a dimension of the network society in the framework of the interaction of the different areas of social change. Castells (1997) refers to global/cosmopolitan and local/communal identities that emerge in the network society depending on the inclusion and exclusion in global networks. The use of ICT by institutional politics with e-government applications, and the use of the technology by political actors are deemed to make citizens also more interested and more engaged in politics and the political as active citizens (Coleman 2001, 2004). The several changes in these areas, here again, provide imaginaries for creating fantasies of harmony and, political and technological power.

The last chapter analyses the perceptions of citizens by answering the research question *how do ordinary citizens perceive the role of ICT in changing identities in Istanbul?* The chapter, like previously, breaks down the analysis into three sections according to the three areas of social change studied in this research. It then discusses the fantasies of citizens based on the interviews. Even though it is a methodological matter, it is important to note here that ordinary citizens were asked to mention the first three identities that came to their mind. The questions of the interviews followed over these three identities. The list of identities suggests a multiplicity of identities putting the family identities in the front. Being a mother, father, or daughter for instance comes before occupational, gender, political, national, religious, ethnic, hobby/leisure, local, geographical, and language identities. This situation is not surprising given the importance of family in the society.¹ The answers to this question also included character, personality or “me” whose irrelevance for identity indicates the various perceptions of the concept in the society - or the reluctance of interviewees to tell about their identities, or as some of them state, it may mean that they didn’t think about their identities before and it is not easy for everybody to come up with three of them when a stranger puts the question.

7.1. **Identity and ICT**

Turkle (1996) argues that the Internet may change the perceptions of identity; she argues that the Internet is able to make people think about identity from different/new perspectives and that it permits them to actually create multiple identities. Various

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¹ See the contextual background chapter for the priorities of citizens.
practical advantages of ICT may feed the creation of new identities. Livingstone (2008) argues that communication and access facilitated with ICT play a significant role in identity building, and in the management of identity, lifestyles and social relations. Virtual communities and other spaces of online interaction such as the social networking sites or other community communication technologies (CCT) provide tools for new ways of developing (new/virtual) identities. Integrating ICT in the identity building process also fosters discussions on the differences there may be between the online and offline self on one hand, and hybridizing online and offline identities on the other (Jordan 1999; Boyd 2007). This section analyses how the ordinary citizens in Istanbul see ICT changing their identities.

7.1.1. Communication

The interviews with the ordinary citizens suggest that one way of building identity with ICT is with communication. Citizens tell that they feel more comfortable and freer in their communication with ICT which make them create certain identities: “I communicate and talk about this identity online especially when the subject becomes popular” (Meyda, 21, f, oc). They say that they use ICT in their daily interaction concerning a given identity; a citizen says for instance that communicating content by the p2p sharing helps creating a hobby related identity or feeding an already created identity.

Citizens say that they like to communicate with other citizens who have the same identities. They explain that they use ICT in their communication with other citizens who have the same identity in number of ways: they communicate for instance over chat (instant-IM) messages, they share content, mostly photos on either chat messages or on social networking sites. While e-mail is more practical than phone calls for some, it is said to be very rarely used by the others. In some cases, citizens tell that they meet on social networking sites and then they switch to other ICT: “if we meet on Facebook chat at night we say hi and then switch to the telephone because we are lazy to write. Mothers don’t have time for instant or mobile text messaging” (Karolin, 33, f, oc). Citizens say that e-groups are spaces where they meet people with the same identities and communicate with them to further develop the identity.

Citizens claim that their online talk has increased over the years concerning the communication of their identities. They say that Facebook groups for instance provide spaces for online talk on identities. They tell that some identities require/mean being more talkative, and with those people they use ICT more: “because southern people like to talk and they use more words than they need when they express themselves, I use online communication more (in quantity) with them” (Derin, 32, f, oc). Citizens explain that they use mobile technology (calls but also text messages -SMS) for communicating with other same identities. Another argument is that communication activates some identities. On the girlfriend identity, the interviewee says that even though she cannot meet her boyfriend as regularly as she wishes, she can still be in touch with him thanks to ICT: “they (ICT) help a lot. Even though I cannot see him I still see him online and on the mobile” (Tansu, 22, f, oc).
Citizens express confusion concerning the cause-consequence relation of ICT and their identities: “I am not sure if I use ICT and online communication more because I am Mediterranean and thus sociable and talkative or if I become more Mediterranean and talkative because I can talk more online. In any case, ICT do for sure have a role in this identity” (Derin, 32, f, oc). There are at the same time some identities, such as family or ethnic identities, for which interviewees say that they prefer face-to-face communication or even only face-to-face communication: “I don’t use ICT in my communication about that identity” (Milo, 30, m, oc). Citizens name other identities about which they do not deliberately communicate about with others such as the national and religious identities. Some citizens count “me” on the list of three identities. These interviewees say that they don’t communicate about that identity either. Another challenge present in the interviews is that communication about some hobby related identities such as the amateur musician may be risky online. Citizens tell that they are reluctant to share their original work on the Internet: “It is not very logical to put all the songs online because of copyright issues” (Hayri, 21, m, oc).

7.1.2. Access

A second set of arguments in the interviews with citizens is that ICT provide better access to information and to content. Citizens claim that fast access to updated information help them create different identities: “I can say that ICT seriously help building this one because I can check what is happening, what do people think, what their positions are” (Meyda, 21, f, oc). Interviewees say that ICT help them research issues that feed their identities. Citizens give examples of various online resources including the public websites where they can access information which according to them are necessary to build or develop identities and “clarify things”. Citizens say that with ICT they may also access archives. They claim that ICT are very helpful for hobby related identities for access to news and to downloadable content. For a music lover identity, an interviewee says: “without the Internet (and downloading) I couldn’t have learnt about so many kinds of music and movies” (Murat, 25, m, oc). As for regional/geographic/local identities, access to news from a specific region/local or access to gossip from these places is argued to feed the related identity: “reading the gossip about the people from home (town) on online local gossip pages feeds that identity” (Derin, 32, f, oc).

Citizens say in the interviews that their identities change over time. They claim that this change mostly occurs in terms of further development of an identity or increased awareness of a previously weaker identity. In some cases, citizens say that as they use ICT to access to more information or to actually practice the identity, some of their identities are emphasized and become stronger: “It became a more dominant identity in my life” (Feryal, 27, f, oc). In other cases, citizens talk about an opposite process where the exact same use of ICT makes them soften a previously more strict identity: “I can say that I have softened, I became more moderate. If the environment I am in has a role in this change, ICT also has a big role in this process” (Meyda, 21, f, oc). Citizens also argue that ICT make them realize about conflicts concerning their identities. Here again, they say that access to information and to other people with the same identity
make them think of certain conflicts. Citizens claim that access to the Internet at home plays an important role in these changes: “it (the identity) is now emphasized because I am connected at home” (Murat, 25, m, oc).

7.1.3 Facilitation

The interviews with ordinary citizens show that there are more ways in which ICT facilitate identities. Online working possibilities, for instance, is an argument for ICT to sustain certain identities. Online work or possibilities of doing work or homework online make citizens practice some of their identities: “I work online from home, I forward my office telephone line to my home line so that people who call me don’t understand that I am at home. This identity wouldn’t work without ICT” (Karolin, 33, f, oc). Citizens also claim that ICT remind them the reasons to evaluate their identities and that this situation develops their identities: “I see what I should do and what I should not do, I can see that online” (Hayri, 21, m, oc). Citizens explain that some identities especially develop on the Internet such as the hobby related or occupational identities. Finally, citizens argue that developing an occupational identity with ICT makes them gain more respect from their audience: “using ICT in your work puts you in a better place in the eyes of the students” (Feryal, 27, f, oc).

Interviews suggest at the same time that ICT do not help building all kinds of identities: “they (ICT) don’t help at all because I don’t use them for that identity” (Karolin, 33, f, oc). Citizens tell that ICT have nothing to do, for instance, with ethnic or family identities. Digitally divided citizens tend to remember national, local, or religious identities and they confirm that they don’t use ICT in building or developing these identities. Even though some of their identities change over time, some citizens think that ICT do not play any role in that process. In some cases, citizens argue that ICT may have an indirect role in the change of identity or in the building of new identities related to the time spent online: “it may have an impact because I spend too much time online” (Murat, 25, m, oc).

7.1.4. Virtual identities

A theoretical comparison in this area suggests that in the interviews with the citizens virtual identity is absent. As noted in the introduction of the chapter citizens were asked to name the first three identities which they could think of. Citizens do not mention in those lists anything about virtual identities. They do not tell anything about building, developing or considering building virtual identities. Interviews also lack the experience of differences between the online and offline selves of the citizens. They do not compare for instance their communication about a certain identity when they do it online and offline. Any other comparisons concerning online and offline identities are absent. Citizens do not mention anything referring to hybrid identities either. They do not say anything about hybridizing the online and the offline self.
7.2. Linking the local and the global with ICT

Rosenau (2004) argues that the interaction of the local and the global and the blurring of the internal and the external create a crisis of identity. Castells (1997, 1998) claims that ICT and the network society structure create global identities. He argues that joining global networks of power and wealth with ICT on online global networks detaches people from the local and makes them global. The space of flows which has no place will erode, he claims, the identification of one place but will make its members cosmopolitans. Urry (2000) argues that that as global media diffuse global images people feel citizens of the globe. Concepts like rooted cosmopolitan (Appiah 1996; Tarrow 2005) and firewall (Norris and Inglehart 2009) however, argues that the local identities do and will be present in the interaction of the local and the global. Access to the global and the online networking may provide the tools to feel global. Below is the analysis of the perception of the ordinary citizens on how ICT and ICT-enabled networks link them to the global and how they think ICT make them feel global.

7.2.1. Access

In the interviews citizens argue that online access to global information is more convenient than offline alternatives. Citizens claim that ICT permit free (free of charge and free of censorship) access to more world news and media. Citizens explain that their most common purpose of using global websites or software is communication such as e-mails, voice over IP, and instant messaging. They say that these websites also provide entertainment with online games and downloading music, movies, and sports on p2p sharing. Interviewees say that they use global websites also for other purposes such as shopping. They tell that global websites help them compare prices of goods with local prices: “I am very much interested in technology. I compare prices on e-bay” (Milo, 30, m, oc). In some cases, citizens say that global websites provide them with access to global job markets/job announcements.

7.2.2. Online networking

We see in the interviews that access to information and easier communication with ICT make ordinary citizens join networks at different levels. Citizens argue that social networking sites, especially Facebook, provide the most network opportunities for them to link to national and to global levels: “I guess Facebook is the most popular” (Tahsin, 43, m, oc).

The interviewees claim that global networks open up new perspectives for them to understand the opinions of other people world wide. They say that online networks are very convenient for citizens who change residency. As a case of using ICT to link the local and the global or the local with other locals, an interviewee says that she can access information and communication with former friends/neighbours in another city in another country and that she can link to the social (and political) life of that former home on the online networks. Citizens also argue that some networks do motivate the
will to connect to the global: “I am motivated to go abroad when I see the photos people share (on Facebook) from their trips to abroad” (Tansu, 22, f, oc). Different ways of linking local and global appear in the interviews. Citizens tell that they use ICT and online networks to link global to local by for instance attending/participating locally in a global activity that they learn about on their global networks. Another way is to link local to local via the global by visiting a local office of a global network in another country and link it back to the local office in Istanbul.

Interviews suggest, on the other hand, that for citizens networking does not necessarily require ICT. They tell that networks of ordinary citizens are also accessible without ICT. They claim that alumni networks, student clubs, friends and family networks are all accessible with in-person meetings and face-to-face communication. Interviewees say that old ICT such as land line phones may be enough for these networks to be sustained. Citizens say that traditional media also provide information on the work and contact details of some networks. Moreover, they claim that they can connect to the world via their relatives in other countries without the need of online networks. Those who have family abroad connect to broader diaspora through their relatives. They say that they access information on different social (and political) life styles and models in other countries, mainly western European countries, through their relatives: “they come here (Istanbul) or we communicate by (landline) telephone. They tell us about their daily practices” (Ahmet, 43, m, oc). Another argument in the interviews is that benefitting from online networks to link to the global from the local is demanding. Citizens explain that online networking demands time and energy. They explain that even though they hold ICT and language skills and even though they are willing to be linked to the global, they may lack time and energy to do so: “even though I may, I have to select and I can only be actively involved in 2 – 3 places in the world” (Derin, 32, f, oc).

Citizens tell that they enjoy and benefit from ICT for various purposes, but they also explain that they face challenges, limitations, and concerns. In the interviews, an important challenge is the digital divide. Interviews reveal that this divide is not only financial but it is also an age and cultural divide. Older citizens tend to be less interested in ICT even though other members in the family use them. In the interviews it is seen that the lack of language skills is another challenge that prevents them from using global websites: “my English is not sufficient to join them (online global networks), it depresses me not to understand what is happening, that is why I am demotivated to join them” (Murat, 25, m, oc). Some citizens, however, use online tools such as the social networking sites or voice over IP software to communicate with family members who are abroad.

Interviewees say that another challenge is the lack of interest to link local and global. This challenge appears in the interviews in several layers. This lack of interest may be about linking to the global. Some citizens say that they simply are not interested in what happens at the global level. Those who are interested in learning and talking about the world agenda say that they access information/news on television: “I follow the world news on television and I read newspapers daily” (Ahmet, 43, m, oc). Finally, the interest in the world affairs may be limited: “as for world news, I check the football pages of the newspapers” (Ersin, 18, m, oc). The need for more global news is raised
by some citizens who think that this would open people’s minds. Lack of time appears as another challenge to use ICT to connect to the world. This lack can stem from busy schedule, different preferences, or from parents’ limitations for minors.

Citizens argue that using ICT, on the other hand, brings about some general concerns. Citizens tell that eye health concerns for instance limit their ICT use. Interviewees also claim that the online world is open to everybody and that this makes it a space full of different intentions. Citizens think that this is one reason for not trusting and/or not using the Internet all together. Citizens are worried that ICT disconnect people from the real life and make them anti-social. Some citizens say that they are reluctant to join online networks and e-mail groups due to spams: “I don’t follow anymore because there is too much spam on those e-groups” (Murat, 25, m, oc) or they sign in on some social media just to protect their names: “I opened an account on Twitter with my name so that nobody else opens a fake one under my name” (Murat, 25, m, oc). Some citizens tell that even though they join networks, they prefer lurking rather than actively participating in the network. Finally, citizens tell that they join local networks for local people which do not provide tools to link to global or which are irrelevant for this linkage.

7.2.3. Feeling Global

Citizens list a number of reasons why they feel (more) global with the use of ICT. An argument is access to a quicker flow of global information: “when an earthquake hits Haiti we know about it almost instantly and that links us more to the world” (Nesrin, 33, f, oc). They think that accessing information on other places of the world makes them follow the world and feel like they are part of the world: “I can follow the developments in the entire world thanks to the Internet and that is why I feel part of it” (Tahsin, 43, m, oc). Citizens argue that access to other locals also permits them to compare their local with other locals which they think gives them a more global perspective. Citizens explain that ICT provide them with the opportunity of communicating and debating with people from other countries. Global communication appears as a criterion for being global when an interviewee states that “If I put on the map people I am e-mailing, I can say that I’ve e-mailed the big majority of the world. Taking into account the mobility of people, in the end I happen to send e-mails to almost the entire world” (Derin, 32, f, oc). Access to global entertainment is another argument of citizens why they feel more global with ICT. Citizens argue that social networking sites provide global visibility which they think is important in feeling more global. Citizens who are digitally divided also say that they feel like becoming more global because they closely follow world news on traditional media.

Interviewees say at the same time that there are other factors than ICT that make them feel more global. Citizens claim that traveling abroad, international conferences or business related events make them feel more global. Another argument is that citizens do not need to go abroad to feel global because they can make foreign friends in Istanbul. Another non-ICT argument in the interviews is that citizens feel more global because they feel like they are part of globalization by having the same problems with
everybody: “I see from foreigners who come here that we have the same problems. This should mean being global” (Tansu, 22, f, oc).

Feeling global, however, is not omnipresent in the answers. An argument in the interviews is that citizens do not feel (they are becoming) global but they feel closer to the global: “The Internet didn’t make me global, it helped me approach the global” (Meyda, 21, f, oc). They say that they have become more interested in what happens in the world but that they are not global. Citizens think that if their appearance is different than that of the generally accepted global citizen it may be a problem for some people: “They see us (veiled women) as an obstacle to globalization” (Meyda, 21, f, oc). An argument says that citizens are still local but that they think that they will be global with time. Another argument in the interviews is that globalization is possible with one’s local/original identity: “if globalization is an evolution, I believe that we can evolve while protecting our originality” (Meyda, 21, f, oc).

Interviews also suggest limitations in feeling global. Lack of interest in world news and in feeling global is one limitation. Citizens also complain that due limited finances they cannot travel as much as they wish. Students argue for instance that they have limitations and challenges concerning exchange programs such as the incompatibility of credits. They also explain that the European Union student exchange program Erasmus gained a reputation of being 6 months of holidays “that is why it is very difficult to take the risk” (Hayri, 21, m, oc).

7.3. New identities in politics and in the political with ICT

Identity is a dimension where politics and the political and their interaction with ICT occur in different forms. The use of ICT by both politics and the political proposes a new identity for citizens: e-citizens. There are different forms of e-citizen. Citizens may become e-citizens when they use the e-government applications to access official information, to benefit from online public services, to contact officials, and to participate online. The creation and sharing of political content on social media opens up new spaces for citizens to become e-citizens in another more general and social / political form. ICT are deemed to foster democracy by increasing citizen engagement. Papacharissi (2002) argues that the Internet as a democratic space will encourage political deliberation.

ICT are also seen as promising for they facilitate organization, communication, and participation of citizens (Clift 1998). Bimber (1999) claimed that ordinary citizens who are engaged and who are in political networks may be mobilized by ICT. Blumler and Coleman (2001) argue that the expression and exchange of ideas online make citizens engage widely. Online communication was also argued to challenge political the hierarchy (Rheingold 1993). The last section of the chapter analyses how citizens perceive the role of ICT in this field. New identities and new use of local authorities’ e-applications, and the challenge to hierarchy are blended in this section as the new expectations of citizens from institutional politicians. New expectations found in the interviews inspired the researcher to test the limits of the citizens with a hypothetical
foreign mayor candidate. Citizens were asked whether they would vote for a foreign candidate if the candidate had everything they expected from a mayor. This test also links back to feeling global in the previous section and to global city in the chapter on the institutional politics. The section also analyses how citizens see the role of ICT in their political engagement.

7.3.1. e-citizens using e-municipality

Citizens say in the interviews that they use municipal websites for several reasons. One reason is access to local official information. They say that both metropolitan and district municipal websites are reference points to search for official information: “I checked the website to learn what the necessary documents are for marriage” (Ayça, 25, f, oc). They explain that the search varies from checking information on the public transportation schedule to criteria for municipal study grants, from the calendar of cultural activities to job vacancies. Secondly, citizens tell that they use municipal websites for online public services. They claim that especially the mobile service on tracking the traffic situation is very popular. Citizens tell that they use city cameras, also available to show alternative routes during rush hours traffic jams. Citizens further list online public services such as online payments of bills and taxes, applications for study grants, purchasing tickets for sea transportation and maps as popular e-public services offered both by metropolitan and district municipalities. In the interviews, we also see that citizens use municipal websites for complaints. Citizens explain that they refer to municipal websites when they wish to submit a complaint. They say that they either use the communication tools available on the website or they use the website to reach the relevant contact person for a complaint: “I sent them (the municipality) a couple of complaints regarding adding more bus services and adding signs for the metrobus” (Meyda, 21, f, oc). On a narrower basis citizens say that they check the municipal websites out of curiosity or for joining pre-election campaigns.

Interviews with citizens suggest at the same time that there are limitations in the use of municipal websites. One limitation in the interviews is the lack of need. Citizens argue that they do not (always) need official information. They add that even if/when they need official information they do not think of municipal websites to access that kind of information. Another limitation in the interviews is the division of labour within couples. Citizens explain that this division prevents them from using the e-services such as e-paying bills or taxes: “I don’t touch those matters, it’s my husband’s task to do the payments, but I know that he does it online” (Karolin, 34, f, c). Citizens argue that they become more traditional concerning online public services. Even though they have access to and skills for using ICT in their professional and/or private lives, they say that they prefer offline public services: “no, that I do face-to-face” (Ayça, 25, f, oc). Citizens say that they don’t use the municipal websites because they assume that these websites are out-of-date “I don’t think those websites are updated” (Nesrin, 33, f, oc). They say that they find municipal websites user-unfriendly and that user-unfriendliness discourages them from using these tools. Citizens explain that even though they use e-government websites in general, they simply don’t have the habit of
using the applications at the local level. As for digitally divided citizens, they say that
they are aware of the e-municipality and online options but that they do not use them.

7.3.2. Demanding citizens

In the interviews, we see that citizens gain new ICT related expectations from
institutional politicians. Citizens explain that they expect mayors to have ICT skills, and
they expect to e-communicate with mayors (and/or other officials of municipalities).
A 15 year old from a slum says “there is no life without the Internet” (Dilvin, 15, f, oc). That is why she thinks that mayors should use it. Citizens think that it should
be compulsory for mayors both in the metropolitan and the district levels to use ICT,
arguing that it is not possible to govern without them. There is an assumption in the
interviews that mayors probably do use ICT. Citizens argue that a person who doesn’t
use ICT shouldn’t become a mayor: “I can’t respect that kind of person. Mayors should
be able to use ICT because they should be a step beyond citizens, and they should be
able to give a certain vision to the public” (Derin, 32, f, c). Citizens come up during the
interviews with quick proposals off the top of their head such as: mayors should have
blogs, they can gather and inform people by opening a group (a reference to social
network sites), municipalities should have their own search engines and “I even expect
them to develop new tools” (Derin, 32, f, oc). Citizens think that mayors should be
skilled in using ICT in order to understand the mentality of ICT and in order to make
ICT policies. They also argue that if ICT-skilled, mayors can offer better services for
citizens.

Another demand in the interviews is about the citizen-mayors e-communication. Citizens think that e-communication should be available both on municipal websites
and on mobile communication technology. They think that mayors should regularly
use e-mails, and “chat would be nice” (Dilvin, 15, f, oc). Citizens argue that this kind
of communication would equalize the status of mayors and citizens, and that it would
normalize the relationship between the governor and the governed: “We had an empire
for 600 years. People have suddenly shifted from ‘long live our Sultan!’ to democracy.
Worshipping authority is in our genes. Interaction with ICT would allow citizens
to see governors/mayors as normal people with different jobs and not as superior
people. This kind of interaction would allow us to change our worshipping genes”
(Feryal, 27, f, oc).

Citizens also argue that online interaction between mayors and citizens would
induce better governance. They think that this e-communication would permit more
access to information. They claim that citizens would be more informed, thus they
would have more opinion on politics. Even though many of the citizens say that they
do not receive replies to their e-mails², they tell that they are happy to receive greeting
text messages on their mobile phone from their municipality on their birthdays, as well
as on national and religious days. Citizens think that mayors should be fully available
online but within limited time frames. Some citizens argue that mayors should interact
online with citizens in person and not delegate this communication.

² See the chapter on institutional politics for more detailed analysis of online interaction between
citizens and politicians.
The majority, however, argue that e-communication should be ensured with a team and not directly with mayors. Citizens propose that a team of communication serves as a bridge between citizens and mayors. This team would be in touch with citizens and report back to mayors who are busy doing other work. Citizens also suggest that mayors select the most important messages to reply to in person. They say that mayors’ assistants can reply to less important messages. Citizens say: “he (mayor) may not reply if I am a normal citizen, it is fine if his assistant does so” (Ayça, 25, f, oc). Citizens also tell that the important thing is the online interaction between citizens and institutions; who replies is not important.

Citizens are at the same time aware of limits. Concerning the first expectation, for instance, they recognize the age divide. They agree that mayors are above a certain age which makes them master ICT at a lower level. The age divide appears to be an acceptable excuse if mayors do not use ICT. Citizens argue that the second expectation, citizens-mayors e-communication, is not an easy task in Istanbul. They recognize the high population of the city as a challenge in regular e-communication. Citizens underline that it would not be fair to expect mayors to reply e-mails in person in a city of 13 million people. They argue that it is not appropriate to be accessible anywhere anytime because otherwise mayors cannot work for citizens and that they would lose their efficiency as well as their health.

Alongside the ICT-related demands, citizens list other expectations and/or criteria for the kind of mayor they wish to see in Istanbul. These expectations are about the policies, public services, skills, and personality. While they talk about what they expect from institutionalized politics over the figure of mayor, citizens also complain in the interviews about the lack of democracy in local politics in Istanbul. They complain about the lack of participation in decision-making, lack of interaction/communication between institutional politicians and citizens, and the presence of corruption. As for expectations, at the policy level, citizens say that they expect from politicians to adopt an anti-corruption policy, a participatory governance model, interaction with citizens, and policies in/for the interest of the people of the city. Citizens want politicians to work on sustainable solutions, fight against poverty, and have the same distance for everybody in the city: “they should not be surrounded by the elite who have the same political views as them; they should have advisory boards consisting of ordinary citizens” (Ahmet, 43, m, oc).

As for public services, citizens expect public services that would improve their quality of life “he (mayor) should add something sustainable and unforgettable” (Milo, 30, m, oc).

Citizens expect more social, cultural, and recreational activities/services in the city. We see that citizens also have specific expectations about the personality of the politicians. They emphasize in the interviews the importance of honesty with several different words such as honest, fair, reliable, accountable, ethical, independent from political ambitions, humane, and transparent. Citizens say that they expect intelligent, well educated, well mannered, hardworking, charismatic, self-confident, strong politicians/mayors. Some political views also appear in the interviews as preferences such as secular, leftist, nationalist, and an independent candidate. Citizens say that
the family of the mayors and their education and behaviour are also very important. Finally, they say that they expect from politicians good organizational skills, good time management skills, knowledge on the city, and a decent profession.

7.3.2.1. Testing the limits of citizens: hypothetical foreign mayor

When asked whether citizens would vote for a candidate who offers everything they expect from a mayor and who is from another country, we see three kinds of responses: yes (of course), yes/maybe with conditions, and no (no way). Citizens argue that they would vote for a foreigner because they don’t trust and/or because they are dissatisfied with the current (or previous) mayors. They add that “it is absurd to trust someone just because he is Turkish” (Ayşe, 14, f, oc). Another reason for voting for a foreigner is individualism and individual interest: “I’ll definitely vote because the important thing is my interest as a citizen of the city. If that candidate is good for my interest I don’t care if he is Turkish or not” (Hayri, 21, m, oc). Citizens also argue that the national identity is not significant for them because they have other expectations from the politicians. Citizens say that they don’t mind voting for a foreigner because they think that there is a mayor-citizen disconnection. They say that whoever the mayor will be he/she will be disconnected from the citizens anyway.

Some citizens take the option as a new idea and they tend to try it by “why not?”. Other citizens even order candidates from specific countries: “oh God, how I wish a Swiss mayor would come and fix it (the city) properly” (Karolin, 33, f, oc). An argument in the interviews is that the city is already governed by foreigners with the privatization of national resources and the globalization of the economy. Citizens argue that “there is no reason to be racist” (Ayşe, 14, f, oc) and that a foreign candidate should also have his/her chances. A futurist argument is that with world citizenship happening, this kind of situation may sound so normal in the future: “the same way we don’t even discuss today whether women can be mayors, people of the future won’t probably discuss this kind of thing” (Can, 13, m, oc). Citizens refer to corruption in institutional politics in Istanbul and claim that they prefer a trustworthy foreigner to a corrupted local: “ours work for the outsiders, maybe an outsider would work for us” (Nesrin, 33, f, oc).

Citizens say that ICT permit them to access world models of city governing and that is why they are open to different models. They think that elections are their power to make a change in politics: “there are deadlines, you’ll try at first, if he does not work properly you’ll cut him (the foreign mayor) off at the elections” (Nesrin, 33, f, oc). Another argument is that they are not interested and they don’t care about politics and that is why they think “it is worth trying” (Milo, 30, m, oc). Finally citizens say that they anyway are detached from the institutional politicians: “how much do I know of Kadir Topbaş? How much do I know of his family, of his identities? I only know that he is Turkish. In the other case I’ll only know that say he is American, that’s it. I am not worried that he would do genocide or something” (Murat, 25, m, oc).

A second approach in the interviews introduces conditions. Citizens say that they would vote for a foreign candidate conditionally. These conditions include both
practical and political aspects. Practically, citizens say that they expect the candidate to live in the city for at least 10 years and speak the local language very well. Moreover, citizens think that the candidate should interiorize Turkishness and repeat “how happy is the one who says I’m a Turk”\textsuperscript{4}. Citizens also argue that if the candidate respects Islam or maybe even converts to Islam, he/she would gain the trust and love of the locals, and that citizens would feel proud and thus may vote. On politics, citizens think that the candidate should have convincing policies. They say that the candidate should have the same distance to people from different ethnicities and religions. Another political condition in the interviews is that there should be no common history between Turkey and the country where the candidate comes from: “they would never forget past hostilities” (Burak, 14, m, oc). Moreover, citizens think that there should be a reciprocity rule so that Turkish citizens can also run as candidates in the country where the candidate comes from.

A final argument in the interviews is that it is impossible to vote for a foreigner. Citizens think that governing a city is a very local matter and that only local candidates should be at the position: “it is not enough to be technically educated and skilled for the position. One should know the local culture and local identity to come up with good solutions to local problems” (Tahsin, 43, m, oc). They argue that the society is too xenophobic, too nationalist, and too paranoid to vote for a foreigner: “This country is allergic to foreigners; they cannot open up (to the world/foreigners)” (Ahmet, 43, m, oc). Practically, citizens argue that a foreigner would not have enough technical skills and knowledge to govern Istanbul. They argue that the local people would have difficulties in trusting in the foreign candidate and that is why people wouldn’t give consent to such a candidate: “I am not sure if I can trust him” (Tansu, 22, f, oc). Citizens say that a foreign mayor would make them feel like a colony. They argue that a mayor from another country would work for the interest of his/her own nation(als) and that he/she would have “bad intentions”.

The culture/religion argument repeats here as the major condition “impossible in Turkey unless he converts to Islam” (Burak, 14, m, oc). Citizens add that a foreign mayor would cause “incompatibility of cultures”. A question from one of the citizens is “why would he bother? This is such a problematic city”. Citizens argue that there is enough local capacity to govern the city and that there is no need to export expertise from abroad. The world citizenship argument is also present here as a concept created for American interest: “I think the world citizenship is rubbish and not feasible; Americans promote it for their own interest” (Can, 13, m, oc). Finally, citizens say that they have no problem in voting for different minorities of Turkey but that they would not vote for a candidate from another country.

7.3.3. Engagement

Citizens argue that ICT and online networks link them to local politics in different ways. They say that they learn about processes and networks to get engaged on the Internet: “I learnt about a call to join the local youth council on Facebook, and I joined in” (Hayri,
Citizens also claim that online tools such as Facebook groups are useful to learn and follow the political issues and discussions. Another argument is the indirect engagement. Citizens say that their friends who are engaged in local politics and the online networks of those friends may motivate them to learn about political issues and participate in political talk over their friends’ networks: “my friends joined the ‘young civilians’ and they organized demonstrations. I can see things through their eyes and I can evaluate the issues through their arguments. It helps me very much to understand the issues” (Meyda, 21, f, oc). Citizens tell that access to information on online networks permits them to compare lifestyles, policies, and applications in Istanbul and those of other cities elsewhere. They then argue that this phenomenon makes them acquire new perspectives in local politics. Citizens claim that this situation raises their awareness in local politics and increases their interest in local issues.

Citizens also argue that ICT and online networks permit them to link to local politics abroad. If they lived abroad for a while or if they work for global/foreign companies or organizations they may follow world cities and their local politics online, and they may participate: “I lived in Brussels before and now I am working with Danes. I am involved in several networks concerning these two countries. I send and receive information, and follow their political agenda. I warn people and initiate discussions or action online from Istanbul. This interaction and participation is part of my daily life” (Derin, 32, f, oc). Citizens claim that the most important impact of online networks is the motivation for participation. They say that they find more tools to discuss on political issues with ICT: “people were reluctant to react but now on social media they discuss politics” (Feryal, 27, f, oc). They say that networks or groups created on social networking sites motivate them to participate in local politics.

Citizens who are already interested in politics explain that they become more engaged with ICT and online networks with access to information and to higher awareness. If engaged in helping people they say that they feel happy to make a difference. Citizens argue that they are taken more seriously by local authorities if they engage in social/political activity (possible with ICT): “when I go to the municipality as a member of the youth council I have an identity in their eyes, they take me more seriously. They ethically should take all citizens equally seriously but that is not the case. This encourages me to be more active and engaged” (Hayri, 21, m, oc).

Interviewees, on the other hand, say that they don’t always need ICT to be engaged or activated in local politics. A digitally divided citizen tells: “my relatives in Europe tell us when they come here or on the (landline) telephone about their daily religious practices there. They are free to practice there in Europe, but we at home cannot do so. This kind of news from them make us feel like discussing more what we can do to get the same rights at home” (Ahmet, 43, m, oc). There are also several challenges and limitations in the interviews on engagement. Lack of interest is a challenge: “I am not interested” (Tansu, 22, f, oc). Citizens argue that lack of access and lack of trust in online networks equally challenge and limit citizen engagement. Ordinary citizens say that they may feel reluctant about political talk in general whether it is online or offline: “some talks go in very different directions that is why I try to avoid political talk altogether” (Ersin, 18, m, oc).
An argument in the interviews is that lack of democracy discourages political talk, political activity or engagement: “you don’t feel like participating or being involved in anything if you know that they won’t listen to or read your contribution” (Karolin, 33, f, oc). Citizens claim that ICT and online networks may also become dangerous in a very easily influenced and manipulated society. They argue that in these kinds of societies ICT may accelerate dangerous reactions. We also see the dominance of traditional media. Citizens say that they follow political news on television more than they do on the Internet. Finally, citizens argue that access to and skills for ICT are not enough to be engaged. They say that they need a proper social environment for that, otherwise they are disconnected from local political life: “I am not a sociable person; I don’t have a social environment that would engage me” (Murat, 25, m, oc).

7.4. Fantasies of identity

The fantasies of the three areas of social change in this research are also present in identity. Using ICT to create or sustain identities gives the imaginaries for the fantasy of technological power. Virtual identity is an idea of this fantasy. Being in the placeless cyberspace make people create the fantasy of harmony with the idea of adopting global or hybrid identities. The claimed differences and changes in the governor-governed relations with ICT are what make people create the fantasies of political power. The analysis of the perceptions of the role of ICT by the ordinary citizens in their changing identities suggests that the fantasies of harmony and political and technological power are also created in Istanbul.

7.4.1. Fantasy 1: ICT create (virtual) identities

The role of ICT in building and developing the identities of citizens provides the basis for the fantasy that ICT create (virtual) identities. This fantasy of technological power says that people use ICT to create alternative (virtual) identities that are different than their offline identities, which gives them the power over their identities and how others see them. Interviews with ordinary citizens about their identities and ICT suggest that ICT provide them with better communication and better access, as well as other kinds of facilitation in building new identities and/or developing existing identities. Apparently, communicating with others online with ICT helps citizens to build some identities or helps them to learn about certain identities. Communicating with citizens who have the same identity is argued to help the development of an identity. Citizens argue that better access with ICT to information/news/gossips develop identities. They claim that access to the Internet at home and the regular use of ICT have a role in the change of the identities of the citizens. Another argument in the interviews is that ICT provide more tools and opportunities for citizens to build, develop, and sustain certain identities.

There are multiple reasons why this fantasy is frustrated. Putting aside the usual suspects such as the different levels and aspects of digital divide, those citizens who
are not digitally divided present arguments that frustrate the fantasy. The primary frustration is that they do not refer to ICT or mediated communication for all kinds of identities. They prefer face-to-face communication about certain identities such as gender, ethnic or family identities. There are some identities such as religion or national identity about which they don’t like to talk nor exchange ideas with others. There are some identities such as hobby related e.g. amateur musician, about which citizens say that they are reluctant to use ICT for privacy and copyright concerns. Some identities such as ethnicity are argued to have nothing to do with ICT.

The most important frustration of this fantasy is the absence of the very concept of virtual identity in the interviews. Not a single interviewee refers to a virtual identity created with ICT. In the beginning of the set of the questions on identity, the interviewees are asked to tell the first three identities that come to their mind. In line with the Turkish society’s priorities the family related identities are the most common identities. We may comment that the fantasy of power manifest in Istanbul by the familial identities such as mother and father instead of virtual identities. In a typical Turkish family there is the hierarchy of members which gives parents power over children. In the interviews there are two contradictory arguments on the relation of the family identity and ICT.

While an argument says that ICT helps this identity very much another one fully denies the role of ICT in the process. Occupational, gender, political, hobby related, ethnic, religious, national, local, geographic, and language identities follow the family identities. Some citizens answer with characteristics of theirs or simply by “me” answers. We may comment on this either an escape from telling the identities or as a lack of knowledge or understanding of what identity means. Citizens do not say anything about virtual identities. Moreover, they don’t refer to any difference between their offline identities and their online versions either.

7.4.2. Fantasy 2: ICT make people feel global

Linking the local and the global with the help of ICT, online experience in cyberspace without a specific place, cosmopolitan citizens, and the global elite provide the imaginary for the idea that ICT make feel global. This is again linked to the overarching fantasy of harmony. This fantasy of feeling global is also present in the interviews with citizens. Citizens explain that they access the global with ICT for global information and news. They say that they use global websites for communication and for accessing online content such as p2p sharing systems. They add that other purposes are shopping and searching for jobs. Some citizens perceive communication with relatives abroad or members of the diaspora as communication with the world. For them using ICT to communicate with relatives in Germany means linking local to global. This is one way citizens think that ICT link them to the global.

Citizens argue that another way ICT link them to the global is over online networks. They say that ICT help them to get to know and join networks. They name Facebook as the most popular tool to do so. In the interviews, online networks appear as tools to permit citizens to gain a global perspective. Citizens who previously lived abroad

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See the identity section of the contextual chapter
Part II Analysis

and/or work with international organizations at home say that online networks help to keep in touch and to regularly participate in the social and political life of other cities in the world. This idea of participating in other cities’ social and political lives is part of the fantasy of power and harmony at the same time. Citizens create the fantasy of technological and political power while contributing with online content on the relevant websites of the cities they mention. This idea also includes the fantasy of harmony when citizens link their local to other locals for a harmonious and better society. Another argument is that the content on online networks motivates citizens to travel and to see other countries, especially when they see on these networks visual content from people who travel. Citizens say that they can also learn on online networks about the global events of global activists that happen simultaneously in different cities. They say that they join these events in the local. This is how they argue that online networks help them to link the local and the global.

Citizens also explain with various arguments how they think ICT make them feel global. They say that access to quicker information on the global actuality like catastrophes in other countries make them feel like part of the world and the global. Another argument in the interviews is that communicating with the world with ICT makes them feel global. Citizens also feel global when they use global entertainment and social networking sites. The globalization idea, here again, is part of the fantasy of harmony that citizens create when they see that they can learn about what happens in the world in real time and when they identify with the victims – in cases of catastrophes. Digitally divided citizens say that they feel more interested in the world through the news they access on mainstream media. There are some arguments in the interviews that say that citizens may feel global also without ICT. Studies and travels abroad, and relations with world people in Istanbul are among the reasons why citizens say they feel global without ICT.

This fantasy, however, is frustrated by local challenges. A significant challenge is the digital divide. This is a financial as well as age and cultural divide. Another challenge in the interviews is the lack of language skills. Citizens who do not speak foreign languages are simply cut off from access to global information. They say that they may access information about global on local media and other local sources. Citizens argue that Linking the local and the global with ICT is time and energy demanding. Even with skills and connections, they say that they still can’t be as involved as they wish in the global due to lack of time. Lack of interest is another argument. Citizens say they are not interested in linking to the global. Some citizens say that they are only interested to learn about football news from the world. There are other challenges expressed in the interviews such as the lack of interest in becoming global, limitations in student exchange programs, and financial constraints that prevent travels abroad that ICT may not necessarily fix.

An argument found in the interviews is that citizens do not become global but they are closer to the global. They say that they become more interested in the global, they access more information on world affairs and discuss them while at the same time remaining local. Citizens argue that ICT do not make them global. We may then comment that they become local 2.0 rather than global. They become local 2.0 in the
sense that they are more connected, more easily connected, and they interact with the global with ICT\textsuperscript{6}. We can also comments that the local 2.0 may be the partial enjoyment which is not enjoyment.

7.4.3. Fantasy 3: ICT engage ordinary citizens in local politics

The final fantasy is that ICT engage ordinary citizens in local politics. Access to information on the political agenda and online tools to interact with other citizens give the basis for this fantasy that citizens are (more) engaged in local politics. This fantasy of political power is based on the idea that citizens will be more active and engaged in local political life with the various features and characteristics of ICT. Online government applications that permit access, transaction, communication, and interaction are argued to foster democracy with this increased engagement of citizens.

All citizens, including the digitally divided, say that they know that municipal websites are available even if they don’t use them. Those who use ICT say that they use these websites for a number of purposes. These websites serve as reference points for accessing information, using e-public services, and submitting complaints. In the interviews, there are, however, cultural obstacles like the division of labour amongst couples that prevent some citizens from using online public services. Some citizens say that they prefer offline transactions even though they otherwise use ICT. The lack of need and the lack of interest also appear as the reasons for not visiting/using municipal websites. Citizens say that the other reasons why they don’t use municipal websites are the lack of habit, user-unfriendly web-design, and out-of-date information on the websites. Interviews thus record that not all citizens become e-citizens. The fantasy of technological power that we see in the analysis of the institutional politics is therefore frustrated here because we see that e-government as a tool to engage citizens fails in converting citizens into e-citizens in Istanbul - in the sense of using the e-government applications.

Interviews suggest however that citizens become more demanding. The analysis also clearly indicates that citizens gain new ICT related expectations from the politicians. Citizens say that they expect politicians to be ICT skilled and to use the technology both personally and for their work for better policies and better services for citizens. Citizens also express their will to e-communicate with institutional politicians. An argument concerning e-communication is that this kind of communication would normalize the governor-governed relation. The current relation that traditionally puts the governor in a superior status is something that the citizens say they wish ICT to change. They argue that the equalizing online communication would change the situation. This argument, (even though not always necessarily ICT-related), together with the rest of the expectations suggest that citizens expect democracy. They say in the interviews that they want participatory, transparent, and accountable governance in local politics. Their claim that this kind of governance is lacking in Istanbul makes them create more fantasies.

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\textsuperscript{6} Local 2.0 may appear as a term to refer to local media or local activism that use web2.0. Here the researcher uses it for individuals who connect to and interact individually with the global, as a new identity/status for individual citizens.
A perfect mayor from abroad is a fantasy about someone who will come from abroad and bring everything citizens wish to see in the city. Some citizens even pick the country where the mayor should come from: “a Swiss mayor...”. This fantasy is frustrated by the arguments of nationalism, xenophobia, paranoia, religion; at a more practical level with the lack of language skills; and in political level with the importance of locality in city governance. None of the citizens, however, refer to legal limitations for foreigners to run as candidates. An interesting point to note is that some citizens refer to ethnic minorities of the city when they hear the word foreign candidate. That should obviously be the subject of another piece of research but it is worth mentioning the existence of the kind of narrow perspectives in society which produce the reasons for frustrations or variations in the fantasies such as the fantasy of harmony.

As for engagement, citizens argue that ICT and online networks link them to local politics in various ways. One argument in the interviews is the access to information on opportunities, processes, and tools to engage in political life. Citizens claim that social media help them to learn and follow political discussions. An argument is that citizens may use the experiences of their friends who start to be active and to engage in political life. In this case, they say that they may start to be more interested in politics and the political. Another argument is that access to information on local politics somewhere else, which is possible with ICT, make citizens gain new perspectives in the local political life. Citizens argue that these new perspectives increase their awareness and interest in local issues. They argue that the most important role ICT play is that they motivate citizens for participation.

This participation however means in the interviews participating in the political discussions on social networking sites and not necessarily participating in decision-making. Nevertheless, it presents a strong imaginary for this fantasy. Citizens who are already interested in politics say that they are more engaged with ICT and online networks. Another argument is that if engaged, citizens are taken more seriously by local politicians. This argument reminds us of the argument that politicians reply to e-mails from activists more regularly. We may then argue that engagement means a certain social status in Istanbul which supports the argument that it is a fantasy of power. We also see a sub-fantasy of engaging in local politics elsewhere. Citizens claim that they can participate and even initiate some events or discussions in the cities of the world through online networks. We may comment that the lack of participation in Istanbul may be one reason to create this fantasy of political power and harmony with this claimed translocal participation in the political of the other local.

Citizens list challenges and limitations that frustrate the fantasy of ICT engaging people in local politics as a fantasy of power. An argument is that citizens do not need ICT if they like to engage in politics; other ways of communication such as landline telephones or face-to-face communication may also motivate people to engage. A challenge found in the interviews is the lack of interest. Citizens also say that they are simply not interested in politics. They argue that they don’t trust online content and that is why they don’t think that ICT may engage them. A related argument says that online content may be manipulative and dangerous. Citizens think that they need to have a social environment to engage in politics. The lack of this entourage is argued to
prevent them to engage in politics and in the political. Citizens argue that the lack of democracy discourages engagement. Some citizens argue that they are not interested in politics and they are not engaged because they know that this engagement will not lead to anything because of the lack of democracy. Žižek (1989) proposes the formula of “they know very well how things really are, but still they are doing it as if they didn’t know” for his explanation of ideological fantasy that is the unconscious overlooked illusions. We may then argue that that while some citizens create a Žižekian ideological fantasy, a fantasy of political power with the idea of ICT engaging them in politics and in the political, others gave up on that fantasy because they know very well how things really are, and that is why they are not doing it.
PART III: CONCLUSION
8. CONCLUSION

8.1. Contradiction in perceptions

Societies change in various ways in various areas and dimensions. This research focuses on three areas of claims for social change namely the local-global relation, politics and the political, and information and communication technologies - ICT. It looks at three frameworks to understand how different perspectives make sense out of the claimed changes in these areas. In the theoretical framework these areas are both discussed separately and together with several different perspectives that each provides concepts to help us understand the arguments.

The claims for changes and their discussions in the local and global relation are about the changes in definitions and about the interaction of the local and the global. The second area, politics and the political receives claims for change and discussions regarding the introduction of new kinds of politics and the political, new models of democracy, different definitions of participation, new forms of institutional politics and different forms of the political. ICT is the third area; in this area there are again different perspectives about the role of ICT in social change and how they will affect social and political lives. ICT become the central component when these three areas are approached together when discussing their interaction.

The interaction of these three areas enabled with ICT provides the basis for the discussions whether we live in a new social structure, as Castells (2000) suggested as the network society. Different theoretical perspectives discuss the claims for changes caused by this interaction in the society. The proposed network society frame includes different dimensions such as institutional politics, activism, and identity among the others. Academic discourses present different perspectives while discussing the relations of these dimensions with ICT and how society evolves with the claims of change caused by this relation. Whether discussed separately or together, academic discourses on the social change include different perspectives of understanding and giving meaning to the changing society.

Secondly, the research looks at the empirical framework. This is the analysis of the empirical data collected in Istanbul. In line with the theoretical framework, this empirical framework consists of three part; institutional politics, activism, and identity. The focus of this framework is on the perceptions of the people of Istanbul. More precisely, the research analyses how institutional politicians, activists, and ordinary citizens perceive the role of ICT in the changing institutional politics, activism, and identity in Istanbul in the three areas of social change (local-global relation, politics and the political, ICT).

One conclusion of the analysis of the arguments found in the data is that each group has more than one way of giving meaning to change in society. We see various perspectives and ways in which people try to make sense of the change and various perceptions of the role of ICT in the change in their corresponding dimensions.
We also see that there are contradictions in perceptions between the different groups. Institutional politicians, activists, and ordinary citizens perceive the role of ICT in their corresponding dimensions differently and in contradictory ways. One contradictory perception is on the efficiency of ICT. Politicians perceive the increased efficiency of ICT in the managerial sense to manage the administrative work and public services better. They also perceive this role of ICT as a way to increase the technological power over the public with e-municipality applications where they emphasize access to municipal information and online public services.

As explained in the contextual chapter, local politics in Istanbul is challenged by chaos due to the complexity and multiplicity of local authorities. We see in the analysis that politicians do not perceive ICT as a potential enabler of coordination between the different local authorities. They do not perceive ICT as an enabler for higher interaction with citizens either. We see in the empirical analysis, the resonance of the arguments by the critical theoretical discussions on e-governance: (local) governments in the world benefit from ICT for improved management rather than for improved democracy (Chadwick & May 2003; Chadwick 2006; Norris and Moon 2005 among others).

Activists, however, perceive the role of ICT also as a democratizer. Activists argue that ICT permit them improved management but they emphasize the democracy component in efficiency. For activists efficiency means more interaction with other activists, other stakeholders, and citizens. They say that they benefit from the ICT to mobilize and engage the non-organized people in their fight for democracy. Here again, we find in the empirical analysis, arguments of theoretical discussions on how ICT respond to the values and needs of new politics (van de Donk et al 2004), and the potential impact of ICT in increasing political activism (Norris and Curtice 2006).

Another contradiction manifests itself concerning the concept of participation. While sending e-mails may very well mean participation for politicians, activists perceive participation differently; they say that they want meaningful participation in decision-making processes. Ordinary citizens join the will of activists concerning participation if they haven’t already given up on local democracy or if they are ever interested in local political life. While some ordinary citizens say that ICT make them engage in politics or in the political, others say that they are not interested in politics or in the political or that they have lost hope that they can ever be heard by the governors. The different perceptions of participation between these different groups also link back to the different definitions of and approaches to participation in the theoretical discussions: participation that is limited to access and/or interaction as opposed to participation that empowers citizens in the decision-making processes (Arnstein 1969; Carpentier 2011).

We also see a difference between the politicians on the one side and activists and ordinary citizens on the other side concerning the perception of the global city. Various arguments in the data explain that the global city policy and local authorities’ measures to this end are disconnected from the people of the city. While the politicians think that ICT may help them link the city to the global, activists and ordinary citizens argue that for this, Istanbul has structural challenges. We can then argue that here again there is a contradiction in the perceptions of different groups. The global city
seems to be a concept that would help institutional politics achieve some of their goals (apparently mainly finances based) and it appears as a concept that receives criticism from activists and ordinary citizens: criticism towards the concept in theory as well as criticism towards local institutional politicians in their implementation of their global city policy. The arguments in the interviews with activists and ordinary citizens reflect the theoretical discussions of the glocal as opposed to translocal (Carpentier 2007), rooted cosmopolitan (Appiah 1996 in della Porta & Tarrow 2005), and the firewall model (Norris and Inglehart 2009).

These contradictions and differences in perceptions tell us that these groups do not interact with each other. Institutional politics and activism, in other words politics and the political, do not converge in the perceptions of the role of ICT in changing institutional politics and activism in Istanbul. According to the interviews, neither politicians nor activists (nor ordinary citizens) think that ICT may play a role in connecting these groups and spheres in local political life in Istanbul.

8.2. Multiple Enjoyments and Others

The third framework this research looks at is the fantasy. This research looks at the fantasies that come out of the perceptions of social change in order to understand more deeply what lies in the basis of these perceptions and the variations of these perceptions. The claimed changes in the three areas of local – global relation, politics and the political, and ICT create fantasies of harmony, political power, and technological power that are (or will be) each frustrated. It is important to note here once again that this research does by no means promise psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is neither the intention nor the capacity of the researcher. The concept of fantasy is used here in a more contemporary and general way to understand the reasons why different groups of people in Istanbul perceive the role of ICT in social change the way they do, as a critical frame of social analysis. The choice of this frame, and not Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory or Castoriadis’ imaginary of society, derives from the fact that these theories also take the Lacanian theory as their basis or as their inspiration (Stavrakakis 2007). Fantasy allows fluidity between the different levels of perception and the frustration component in the concept provides the research with the tools for deeper critical analysis. Moreover, Lacanian concept of fantasy, despite some increase, is still underused in the critical analysis, especially in the media and communication field. For all these reasons, and as explained, because it was grounded in the arguments of the interviewees, the research uses the concept for a deeper analysis of the perceptions of the role of ICT in change in local political life.

The reason to create a fantasy is to cope with the idea of never reaching the enjoyment. The enjoyment is stolen by the Other and the opened lack will never be filled. Fantasy is the scenario created and believed in in order to forget or cope with the lack. We see in this research that there are several lacks in the local political life in Istanbul. Different groups in society create different fantasies based on the imaginaries created in their perception of the role that ICT play in change.
We see that the lacks are the lack of power in local politics, lack of decentralization, lack of participation/participatory local democracy, and the lack of interaction/connection between politicians and the activists and ordinary citizens. The contradictions in the perceptions and variations in the fantasies tell us that there is not one common enjoyment, in the local political life, that is stolen by the Other.

While decentralization and powerful local politics is the enjoyment of institutional politics, participation and local democracy is the enjoyment of activism, and interaction with local politics is the enjoyment of ordinary citizens. For institutional politics the Other is mainly centralized politics. The central government steals the power of the local authorities. The Other in activism and in identity dimensions are mainly the political culture and local politics. We can then conclude that if there is not one enjoyment, there is not one Other either. A group in society which copes with a lack caused by Other can become the Other who steals the enjoyment of another group. This may be due to the free will of the first group or due to regulations.

### 8.3. Digital – political fantasies

This research discusses the fantasies of harmony, political power, and technological power in the theoretical discourses. As seen on the below table, there is a variation of fantasies at the theoretical level, in each of the areas of social change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of change</th>
<th>Local – Global relation</th>
<th>Politics and the political</th>
<th>ICT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>Political Power</td>
<td>Technological Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Globalization</td>
<td>Institutional power</td>
<td>Technological determinism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Localization</td>
<td>Full participation</td>
<td>Social determinism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the analysis of the empirical data, the research also looks at and discusses the various fantasies that come out of the perceptions of the role of ICT in changing institutional politics, activism, and identity in Istanbul. We see that each group of people in each dimension creates fantasies based on their perceptions of the role of ICT in the changing society, and they accept them. In the perceptions of the role of ICT, in
each dimension is hidden a fantasy of harmony, political power, or technological power alone or in combination under different fantasmatic ideas and discourses.

We see that politicians, activists, and ordinary citizens all create fantasies of harmony, political power, and technological power in their own dimension. Integrating ICT in the institutional politics, activism, and identity provide the imaginaries for the technological power fantasies. We see that using ICT to link the local and the global in each dimension make people create the fantasy of harmony. Finally benefitting from ICT in the political life from their point of view makes people create fantasies of political power. We also see that these fantasies are not separated systematically according to each area. We can see that some areas combine the fantasies. To give examples, the fantasy of technological power is for instance coupled with the fantasy of political power for activists, and the fantasy of harmony is coupled with the fantasy of political power for politicians.

Another conclusion is that the differences and contradictions of perceptions reflect on the fantasies as variations of fantasies. The fantasy of harmony, for instance, has one variation of globalization among the activists who argue that they link to the global in multiple ways with ICT and that they benefit from this link between the local and the global in local. This fantasy of harmony is framed among the ordinary citizens as localization; what we called as the local 2.0 in the discussion. That is because ordinary citizens don’t feel global but close to global and they argue that they wish to keep their local values and culture while being closer to the global. We also see decentralization as an idea of the fantasy of political power among the politicians, while activists create this fantasy of political power with the idea of participatory local democracy.

### Table 11: Digital – political fantasies and their frustrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Digital-political fantasies</th>
<th>Frustrations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>Challenges in local-global relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(local-global relation)</td>
<td>Local-global interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political power</td>
<td>Local democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(politics and the political)</td>
<td>Digital skills/preferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ICT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each fantasy shows us what the lacks are in each dimension and what frustrates the fantasy. This analysis helps us see the challenges and limitations of the local political life in Istanbul both in politics and the political (and identity) sphere. We see that the challenges in the local-global interaction, in local democracy, and in digital skills are the frustrations of the fantasies that the three groups create in their dimensions.

To sum, we can argue that the multiple enjoyments stolen by multiple Others create lacks in local political life in Istanbul. Institutional politicians, activists, and ordinary citizens, create fantasies and believe in them in order to cope with the pain caused by
these lacks. Their perception of the role of ICT in the changing institutional politics, activism, and identity provides the imaginaries for these fantasies. All these fantasies, however, are frustrated by local challenges.

We should note that there is nothing wrong in creating fantasies. Fantasies are the driving forces that motivate different groups to take action for a better society and for a better world. The distance between the subject and the enjoyment is what motivates different groups to keep on working for a better society. We see, however, that there is no one common perception of better society because there is neither one common enjoyment, nor one common Other in Istanbul.

We see that the convergence of politics and the political is yet another impossible enjoyment in Istanbul. These two do not even converge in the fantasies. We may conclude that this situation is likely to create more fantasies and that the perceptions of the role of ICT will be there to provide the imaginaries for these fantasies.

This research focuses on the perceptions of the role of ICT in the changing institutional politics, activism, and identity in Istanbul. Even though the empirical data comes from Istanbul, we can argue that the conclusions may apply to any other city or local political context where the local political culture, political history, and legislation steal the enjoyment of different groups in society as the Other. As the use of ICT spreads in the world, they will create more imaginaries for different actors in the political life for more fantasies.
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