

FROM THE THEME EDITORS

THOSE CONSTRUCTED, BROKEN AND UNITED BY NARRATIVE...

Hello,

In the call for papers for Digital Narratives issue, we said that digital narratives introduced by new communication technologies and moved far beyond them, have been shaping our meaning-making processes in this age when the boundaries between online and offline constantly become blurred or even deeper. We invited others to trace the meaning-making processes via digital presence in the academy. Our call has made sound and we are pleased to present this issue. In this issue, Moment Journal focuses on the relations built through narratives in digital times.

We open the issue with an interview with John Hartley titled *“On humans, fiction and cultural science”*. Taking his seminar *“Humans vs. Westworld”* as the starting point, Hartley explains the Cultural Science approach that differs from Cultural Studies with two examples from popular television. Following this interview regarding Hartley’s recent approach that he has developed with Jason Potts, you will find John Postill’s response *“Media-related changes as finite processes: A response to Ece Algan”* to Ece Algan’s critical article *“On the value of longitudinal media ethnography and a response to Postill”*, which she wrote to criticize John Postill’s article *“The diachronic ethnography of media: From social changing to actual social changes”* in Moment Journal’s issue of Ethnography.

Digital Narratives issue consists of four thematic articles, three essays, three articles out of the theme, three book reviews and two academic event reviews. It is likely to claim

that this issue of Moment Journal, while tracing narratives in the academy, constructs its own narrative as a whole. The effort to write an article is, after all, an attempt to construct a narrative regarding the matters addressed. The first thematic article is Eda Çetinkaya Yarımçam's study *"Narratives on information and communication technologies by academics in social sciences"* based on her recent PhD thesis. Çetinkaya Yarımçam analyzes how the reception of information and communication technologies of academics working in the field of social sciences transformed from past to present within the range of data she obtained using various research methods such as open-ended surveys, in-depth interviews and diachronic ethnography. The author follows the continuities between the period prior to the intense use of information technologies and the new habitus, and examines academics' individual practices of using information and communication technologies.

Other two thematic articles focus on game studies. In his article *"A New Perspective on Debates about Digital Narrative vs. Game Form in Game Studies"*, Yavuz Demirbaş presents the reader with an overview on game studies and examines the positions within the field from a critical perspective. Addressing the "ludology vs. narratology debate" (game theorists vs. narrative theorists) which is of key importance in game studies, Demirbaş provides a critical reading with references to local studies. He argues that games should be historically analyzed in order to understand the social transformations. Thus, he stresses relationality between culture, narrative and game forms. The second article that focuses on game studies is *"War narrative in digital games and 'playing the victim' as the construction of an opposing subjectivity: This War of Mine"* by Özge Sayılğan. The author criticizes the position that computer games based on a war narrative impose on the gamer/subject via a different perspective the digital game *"This War of Mine"* provides. She thus conducts an interesting discussion about digital games and various subject positions in this regard.

The fourth thematic article is *"The non-verbal clues on the digital communication: The interactions and affective with emoji"* by Nihan Özant and Merve Kelleci who discuss digital communication with a quantitative approach. In their study, Özant and Kelleci remind the reader about the transformation of verbal and non-verbal communication, and examine the position of non-verbal communication form in digital communication, how it is involved in the process and its effect on communication. We included this study that looks over the tendency to focus on the verbal within the discursive structure of narrative

but through the use of quantitative research method to examine affect, in the hope of encouraging a new dialogue via this issue.

We have three essays in this issue. Two of them come out of the digital story workshops conducted with the aim of circulating the experiences of refugees in 2017. These essays are written by Burcu Şenel and Burcu Şimşek, both of whom are members of Hacettepe University Faculty of Communication Digital Storytelling Workshop Unit team. In her essay *"Roads, dilemmas and dreams: Digital stories from refugee women"*, Şenel constructs a narrative of her inner conflicts in the process of collecting the experiences of refugee women during the creation of their digital stories and her own positioning both within and outside the academy. In her essay *"Stories without visa: Digital stories from Morocco and Turkey"*, Şimşek addresses the online-offline encounters created within and around the digital storytelling workshops that were conducted with the participation of refugees in Morocco and Turkey. The third essay is written by Hakan Ergül for the remembrance of Ahmet Cemal whom we lost in August.

The three articles out of the theme in the Digital Narratives issue focus on tracing the footprints of lives through everyday life and literature. In her article *"Combat of voices: Female voices in Iris Murdoch's Nuns and Soldiers"*, Hayriye Avara examines how the female characters are voiced in Iris Murdoch's novel *Nuns and Soldiers*, which was previously analyzed in various studies on the basis of ethical and philosophical discussions, as if she refers to John Hartley's emphasis on the place of fiction in our lives. Analyzing the female characters' discourses and voices in the novel through Bakhtin's terms such as dialogism, monologism, polyphony and carnivalesque, Avara presents an enlightening and inspiring study that explains how Murdoch constructs the female characters' dialogues with both themselves and the world around them through a dialogical communication. Nevin Yıldız Tahincioğlu, in her article *"Honor as a cause of antagonism between migrants from Turkey and Swedes: The examples of Uppsala and Stockholm"* discusses the issue of honor added to the already heavy burden of migrant women within the context of intercultural communication. In the light of the in-depth interviews she conducted in Uppsala and Stockholm, Yıldız Tahincioğlu concludes that the term "honor" preserves its repressive meanings that create gender inequality for migrant women experiencing intercultural encounters in their lives, and deepens the gap between Eastern and Western cultures, maintaining its significance through an ethnocentric discourse. The third article out of the theme is *"Public relations as storytelling of our times: An analysis of biographies of Vehbi Koç"* by Ebru Akçay, who considers public relations as a modern way of storytelling. She

focuses on the question how the biographies of Vehbi Koç, that are produced for the aims of public relations sector, construct a narrative and she reminds us that biography is a crucial device for the construction of narratives.

The book reviews in this issue provide the reader with a pleasant reading experience regarding the transitivity of our online and offline lives. Gökçe Zeybek Kabakçı criticizes Robert Fullford's book *"The Triumph of Narrative"* in her enlightening and inspiring review where she addresses narrative types and their appearances in everyday life from a historical point of view. The second book review is by Umut Yener Kara. In his reading of Ed Finn's *"What Algorithms Want: Imagination in the Age of Computing"*, Kara criticizes the book which discusses the recent interest in algorithms in the field of social sciences and the cultures organized with and around these algorithms through popular examples such as Bitcoin. The last book review is written by Göze Orhon on Deborah Nelson's book *"Tough Enough: Arbus, Arendt, Didion, McCarthy, Sontag, Weil"* which aroused a great deal of interest in social media since its publication. Stating that Nelson addresses the biographies and texts/non-canonical works of Arbus, Arendt, Didion, McCharty, Sontag and Weil, six intellectual women known for their achievements and tough characters, Orhon presents a critical perspective to emotional toughness.

There are two interesting academic event reviews in this issue. The first review is by Mine Gencil Bek regarding the interdisciplinary workshop *"Anthropologies of Media and Mobility: Theorizing Movement and Circulations across Entangled Fields"* held by EASA, University of Cologne and University of Siegen in Köln in September 2017. The second review is written by Tuğba Taş. We hope you enjoy reading Taş's review of the *Contemporary Art and Photography Symposium* held in the Contemporary Arts Center in 17-19 November 2017.

We would like to thank all the authors, referees and the Moment Journal team for their contributions in the Digital Narratives issue.

Emel Uzun Avci

Burcu Şimşek