

About the 67th issue,

We are delighted to present the latest issue of the *ConnectIST Istanbul University Journal of Communication Sciences*. This issue includes seven original research articles. As with our previous issues, curating the 67th edition involved significant dedication and effort. First, we thank our guest editors, Associate Professor Yeşim Kaptan from Kent State University and Professor Ece Algan from California State University. We would also like to thank our authors, peers, and *ConnectIST* readers who participated in our virtual conference. Since 2021, we have been organizing virtual conferences for our thematic issues to reach colleagues abroad. It was a great honor and excitement for the *ConnectIST* team as we received many abstracts from different parts of the world for the last virtual conference themed, ‘Television in the Global South,’ which was held on 14-15 March 2024. The participation of authors and readers from many countries showed us that our efforts to introduce the journal were not in vain. At least we believe in this issue; we ‘connected’ scholars from various parts of the world around the discussions of ‘Television in the Global South.’

Another motivating development in this issue was that an ethics editor had joined the *ConnectIST* editorial board. We thank Prof. Joseph Straubhaar from the University of Texas for accepting the position of ethics editor of the *ConnectIST*.

In this issue, we present the following articles:

Uğur Baloğlu and Lee Artz, in “Conditions and consequences of Turkey’s transnational TV production: A study of American women audiences” examine how Turkish TV series shape the cultural perceptions and intercultural interaction practices of American viewers. Through audience ethnography, the research shows that Turkish dramas improve appreciation of Turkish culture and challenge stereotypes among American women. In “The influence of Turkish TV series on Generation Z in South Africa: An exploratory study,” Mercia Coetzee, Fatih Baritci, and Zühal Fidan Baritci conduct semi-structured interviews with audiences from various ethnic groups and genders living in different cities in South Africa. Similar to American women viewers, the results show that African participants generally gain positive impressions of Türkiye’s culture, nature, fashion, and people through Turkish TV series. Many people express a desire to visit Türkiye based on information from Turkish TV series.

Gökçe Baydar Çavdar, in “Populist styles and meanings in Acun Medya reality shows” through multimodal discourse analysis of three factual entertainment shows of the latest seasons, argues that these shows reaffirm the ideals of the nation and the family in various manners. In “A cultural analysis of Generation Z’s perception of individualism and collectivism in Turkish television commercials through a Hofstedeian lens,” Nilnur Tandoğmuş Kahraman and Özlem Kalan try to understand how Generation Z growing up in Türkiye, which Hofstede defines as a collectivist society, perceives individualist and collectivist messages in advertisements. The double-phased research finds that contrary to Hofstede’s prediction, the participants’ preferences, tendencies, and approaches are in common in the qualities belonging to individual culture. Ayşenur Kılıç, in “Representations of religion in the entertainment media: A comparison of the TV series *Shtisel* in Israel and *Ömer* in Türkiye” focuses on two cases from the Global South -the Israeli series *Shtisel* and its Turkish scripted format adaptation *Ömer*- to revisit the theoretical debates on the relations between entertainment media, politics, and society by employing Curran’s radical democratic approach. The research shows that Curran’s radical democratic framework, in its current form, appears somewhat limited in its ability to fully interpret scripted format adaptations, where production and consumption processes are notably more complex, as in the case of *Shtisel* and *Ömer*.

In “‘Bad word’ for good engagement: The commodification of ‘the Suroboyoan language’ in Indonesian local television newsroom,” Aditya Fahmi Nurwahid, Esa FK Wibowo and Citra Safira explores how Indonesian TV station Jawa Timur TV commodifies the Suroboyoan language in its Pojok Kampung news program. The findings show that the TV channel only considers its market position and audience reach without offering any quality-driven journalism to the public. Sevda Ünal and Mutlu Binark, in the research titled “How past-present-future interconnect in China: CDramas as a tool of cultural governance and the possibility of a ‘Chinese Wave’ in the case of GenZ” try to identify the discursive practices of the Chinese Communist Party’s cultural governance through the GenZ series and examine how transnational audiences perceive the series. Thematic discourse analysis is employed to reveal the series’ discourse themes, and the netnographic research approach is applied to discuss the compatibility of audience reviews with the series’ discourse. Besides some remarkable results, the study finds that artistic quality and idol culture are insufficient for CDramas to create a Chinese Wave among transnational audiences.

Before closing this introduction, let me remind everyone that our journal can continue to publish academic studies in communications sciences through your valued support and participation.

We look forward to appearing before you once again with our 68th issue.

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