

**Athens Institute for Education and Research  
ATINER**



**ATINER's Conference Paper Series  
MED2014-1556**

**Trade Unions, Communication  
Policies and Alternative Media**

**Bariş Çoban  
Associate Professor  
Communication Sciences Department  
Dogus University  
Turkey**

An Introduction to  
ATINER's Conference Paper Series

ATINER started to publish this conference papers series in 2012. It includes only the papers submitted for publication after they were presented at one of the conferences organized by our Institute every year. This paper has been peer reviewed by at least two academic members of ATINER.

Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos  
President  
Athens Institute for Education and Research

This paper should be cited as follows:

**Çoban, B. (2015). "Trade Unions, Communication Policies and Alternative Media", Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, No: MED2014-1556.**

Athens Institute for Education and Research  
8 Valaoritou Street, Kolonaki, 10671 Athens, Greece  
Tel: + 30 210 3634210 Fax: + 30 210 3634209 Email: info@atiner.gr URL:  
www.atiner.gr  
URL Conference Papers Series: www.atiner.gr/papers.htm  
Printed in Athens, Greece by the Athens Institute for Education and Research. All rights reserved. Reproduction is allowed for non-commercial purposes if the source is fully acknowledged.  
ISSN: 2241-2891  
17/08/2015

## **Trade Unions, Communication Policies and Alternative Media**

**Barış Çoban**  
**Associate Professor**  
**Communication Sciences Department**  
**Dogus University**  
**Turkey**

### **Abstract**

Globalisation, dominated by transnational capital, has affected the labour movement and trade unions. Global power has re-organised the nation-states concordantly to the necessities of the era, and they have become the local representatives of the global power. The change in economic structure leads to alterations in the political structure of nation-states. During this process, labor class and trade unions are negatively affected and they lose their power. Anti-democratic, neo-liberal policies of nation states, like privatisation of public enterprises and other attacks to the social rights like health, education etc., are reflections of the neo-liberal policies. Trade unions try to resist the neo-liberal restructuring, but their success is questionable. The changes in economic and political system necessitate changes in trade unions, and they should question their communication policies and accordingly changes are necessary in their agendas, i.e. the trade union agenda, the organising agenda and the political agenda, and the communication agenda. In this re-organisation process, trade unions should focus on the problems of communication policies and re-structure these policies by depending upon the requirements of the new era. Communication is sine quo non for trade unions because the existence and continuity of all trade unions depend on communication. Trade unions can use new information and communication technologies for communicating with their members (internal communication), the public (public communication) and trade unions of other countries (international communication and solidarity). The globalisation of the capital impels these trade unions to communicate with other trade unions and create a solidarity network among them. The solidarity among the trade-unions can be achieved through alternative use of new communication technologies, particularly the internet. New communication technologies, which have enabled the capital to globalise, can help trade unions to create the most effective international solidarity network of alternative media against the global power. In this process trade unions need to create their alternative media, and by creating their alternative media, trade unions act as political actors who take part in the political struggle related to the labor rights. It is aimed to determine the effects of globalisation on communication policies of trade unions and alternative media usage at national and international levels.

## Globalization or New Imperialism

Globalism is a result of the existing conditions of capitalism and it is the process of the reformation of the globe by the dominant power as well as the effects of economic transformation which effect all social relations as well. Unlimited expansion and development as a result of capitalism's development have an imperialist qualification; in this context, the globalization process is denominated as "new-imperialism". Imperialism is not a historical aberrance or anomaly, it is implicit to capitalist development, and it is a natural stage of capitalist development; "just as capital has the tendency on the one side to create ever more surplus labor, so it has the complementary tendency to create more points of exchange." Whatever the size of market, capitalists are always attempting to expand it. The tendency to create a world market is inherent to the concept of capital itself. Every limit appears as a barrier to be overcome (Marx 1999: 308). The globalization process requires an expansionist global power structure which aims to dominate all over the world. During its world reformation process, global power transforms all existing production relations and all social relations that depend on it. Globalization brings along the transformation of all local and global relations. In this respect globalization can also be defined as "*a rapidly developing process of complex interconnections between societies, cultures, institutions and individuals world-wide. It is a social process which involves a compression of time and space, shrinking distances through a dramatic reduction in the time taken -either physically or representationally -to cross them, so making the world seem smaller and in a certain sense bringing human beings closer to one another*" (Tomlinson 1996: 25). Re-formation of production forms and their relations in the new global power-determined system requires economic policies appropriate to the new imperial economy to be implemented by nation-states. The aforementioned transformations bring along fundamental change in political and collective life as well. The new imperialism reorganizes the nation states as their regional representative and turns them into their "agencies" and they are expected to govern the economy and the politics according to the given directions. This constitution of the global network cause all economic, political, cultural etc. affairs to interact with each other in a global sense; "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" (Giddens 1990: 64). In this case, globalization creates a "network society"<sup>1</sup> and makes international affairs and communication indispensable to workers as well as to companies.

With the help of global power, multinational companies effect a worldwide economic and political transformation to be experienced by

---

<sup>1</sup> "The network society, in the simplest terms, is a social structure based on networks operated by information and communication Technologies based in microelectronics and digital computer networks that generate, process, and distribute information on the basis of the knowledge accumulated in the nodes of the Networks" (Castells 2005: 7).

imposing neo-liberal policies to nation-states. As this transformation means poverty and repression for societies, global power aims at suppressing the movement and opposition against the aforementioned policies with the use of violence through nation-states. With the globalization process, global-scale power-holder western companies or company partners started having a voice as the national economies lose validity. The success of the global economic structure can be guaranteed by the existence of repressive nation-states. In the theoretical context, through the globalization process, although it is asserted that physical boundaries are eliminated and nation-states have lost their validity, nation-states still continue their existence by being reformed by the globally dominant power; *"the nation state, yet despite the rhetoric it is still powerful nation states that set the rules for the global economy, and on which capital is ultimately dependent"* (Cumbers 2001: 269). Culturally, nation-states serve to form a structure that adapts the ideology of global power in order to block social mentality and to create an independent platform for itself. Global companies support this process effectively. In this context, nation-states will maintain their existence and repress society, especially organized social opposition organizations and trade unions for global companies and turn their societies into the object of global process by organizing production and consumption cycles according to global neo-liberal policies. The new imperialism implies the beginning of a challenging life for the lower class. The pressures on workers go from bad to worse, no unionization and assumption of public become the primary concerns of labor organizations. The process obliges new organization and struggle forms for the proletariat. A necessity emerges for an international solidarity network to be built, which protects the people negatively effected from new imperialism over the entire world, by teaming up solidarity and struggling unions in the propagating arena of global power.

### **Class Struggle in the Age of Global Capitalism**

The globalization process aims to weaken the social class movement, in this sense it claims that the opposing ideology which dominates the traditional labor movements has lapsed. It is of great importance to emphasize the class ideology in this context and to state that the real power is still the proletariat against global capitalism.

Denial of class struggle is one of the fundamental statements of the new social movement theorists. It is asserted that evolution of capitalism eliminated class relations and, that at first, the working class lost its significance as a result of the technologic development and does not have the aggregation stressed by Marx to create such evolutionary transformation. In spite of all the alteration and transformation, people are still obliged to sell their labor, in other words be workers, to be able live in the capitalist system; *"despite the apparent sophistication of production and management systems, they still depend as always on the compliance of workers"* (Radice 1999: 16). In the context of

traditional concepts, it is not right to limit the proletariat to manual labor. Those who live by selling their intellectual labor besides their manual labor to capitalists are also considered in the worker category because the ones who contribute to the production process (Callinicos 2007: 35). The shift in production, has introduced new work formats and new types of workers. *"In advanced industrial societies, employment and production have shifted towards non-material 'service' activities, some of which are knowledge- and skill-intensive, and away from manual manufacturing tasks"* (Radice 1999: 15, 16), this change exposes the need to review the traditional definition of the proletariat.

As new technologies appeared as a result of evolution of capitalism, arguments about the doctrine of classes become invalid as the productive work force decreased in number and white collar workers increased in number. The doctrine of classes is based on an illusion that they would be democratized by themselves especially in new communication technologies context. New Technologies, network society<sup>1</sup>, have brought about the structural transformation of capitalism, *"changes in technology and in patterns of demand have seriously affected the market power of labor"* (Radice 1999: 15). Democratic life can not be developed and labor can be liberated with development of new technologies which depend on capitalist mentality; on the contrary, unemployment, poverty and repression are globalized by it. Even though the quality of work done by the workers alters, the fundamental mentality of exploitation is still maintained. Arguments like: the transformation is contingent, the number of workers decreasing or labor is liberalized with the new capitalist improvement do not reflect the truth. Changes in labor processes, along with new technologies, have brought not the destruction of workers but a shift. As Callinicos stated (2007) it is not possible to consider the ones who are obliged to earn a living by selling their labor or the ones who are unable to have actual supervision on their work, outside of labor class. The proletarianization of all parts of society which are obliged to sell their labor to capital and be deeply affected by the capitalist crisis, presents the reality that the proletariat does not decrease, on the contrary, it increases incrementally. Transformation in productive labor actually brings about increases not decreases; capitalism's tendency to go beyond borders, the process of re-forming the world, the search for both the world and low-cost labor and

---

<sup>1</sup>"As the network society diffuses, and new communication technologies expand their networks, there is an explosion of horizontal networks of communication, quite independent from media business and governments, that allows the emergence of what I call self-directed mass communication. It is mass communication because it is diffused throughout the Internet, so it potentially reaches the whole planet. It is self-directed because it is often initiated by individuals or groups by themselves, bypassing the media system. The explosion of blogs, vlogs, podding, streaming, and other forms of interactive, computer to computer communication sets up a new system of global, horizontal communication networks that, for the first time in history, allow people to communicate with each other without going through the channels set up by the institutions of society for socialized communication" (Castells 2005 :13).

production forms are the results of the endeavor to turn the world into a factory and a consumer market accordingly. Therefore, the globalization process brings along proletarianization, this new stage of globalization maintains exploitation insensibly by applying intensive repression models on the oppressed ones. Intensified class exploitation shall bring along about a strong class struggle. It is necessary for unionist organizations to develop new discourses, new movements, new communication methods that may influence "the labor class" apart from the manual workers in order to proletarianized social classes to be in a unionist struggle and gain class consciousness, get organized by freedom and egalitarian request.

The transformation which global capitalism has been through also deeply affects labor process. Internationalization of capitalism and formation of new production types and relations accordingly, the relation between the workers and employers go beyond the traditional relation and it is necessary for unions to redefine themselves in these relations context; *"Shifts in the composition of the labor force and high rates of unemployment were accompanied by changes introduced by employers, intent on adapting to new forms of international competition. This process of adaptation has influenced the form and character of bargaining relationships between employers and unions"* (Waddington and Hoffmann 2005: 43). Despite the opposite arguments, in the context of this reality, unions still maintain their importance and continue to be one of the indispensable organizations of social opposition and resistance against capitalism for the oppressed during the new capitalism period. *"Unions as powerful established institutions can still play a role in resisting capital and forging a more progressive politics, but only if they are able to change both their character and strategic orientation"* (Cumbers 2001: 269). According to the structural transformation of capitalism, unions need to change in accordance with the new age and produce new organization and struggle forms in accord with the new economic system. Unions have to determine new strategies and tactics suited to the re-formed structure determined by neo-liberalism which expand to all countries through the network of multinational companies; *"Union responses have focused on extending unionization into the expanding private services sector and on adapting union structures to changes in the labor market"* (Waddington and Hoffmann 2005: 77). It is necessary to gather organization models and form organization policies with perspectives that go beyond existing boundaries, which are in solidarity that is active and effective in politics, not only with the workers and the unemployed but also with the students against unemployment and poverty imposed by global capitalism, and also stay in solidarity with other international opponents and create solutions to the encountered global problems and crises in addition to the locals ones; in this context it is obligatory to develop new and creative methods and organizations for struggle. In spite of the economic, political and social relations transformation through globalization, the unions which are unable to renovate themselves shall experience many more defeats during this process. Repressive use of no unionization policy by the states bring about big problems; *"Membership decline and labor market restructuring have also*

*encouraged many unionists to question whether existing union structures are appropriate to meet the challenges"* (Waddington and Hoffmann 2005: 61). Companies use subcontracting effectively in order to break down the effects of the unions in the workplaces or organize collaborative unions to inactivate the struggling unions etc. are some of the problems which are likely to be encountered. In this sense, unions should be in solidarity with all social opposition organizations, in national and international arena, against all possible adverse moves.

### **Trade-Unions, Communication Policies and Alternative Media**

As a result of the economic and political transformations during the globalization process, social opposition is obliged to go through reformation in the field of discourse and practice in accordance with each age. Opposition movements lost their class emphasis as non-governmental organizations become stronger incrementally especially when anti-capitalist, anti-globalist new social movements arose. New political theorists support invalidation attempts by sealing off the class emphasis as "archaic". However, the crisis of global capitalism shows that class continue to be valid and as a matter of fact it makes a point of the need to emphasize it again.

Even though the impoverishment in the world by means of globalization, unorganized state of societies, especially the working class, makes it possible for the ruling class, which has the support of global power, to impose the neo-liberal policies as "the only option" on societies. Local and global powers apply violence and act in a frustrating manner against struggling organizations that stress class struggle, which is one of the predeterminers of global capitalism's smooth existence. It is not possible to bring neo-liberal policies into life unless class struggle is precluded. Like in the Venezuelan example, a leader who stands by the destitute against the intervention of local and global power and above all else political campaigns are organized against political organizations then the "revolutionary process" is terminated through military intervention, while the same process reaches fruition in Chile, it fails in Venezuela because of the organized reaction of the nation. In this context, global capitalism brings along ideological militancy and a concentration of violence. Neo-liberal policies aim to reform social life and this means forcing a lifelike nightmare on the oppressed. Gradual increased in poverty, crime and violence become ordinary, in brief maintaining the society in days to come is a result of new economic policies and they are imposed on societies with the decisions taken in the political arena. Important duties are assigned to labor unions in this process. Unions, which can be defined as the struggling organizations of labor class, lose their historically opposing side, leave aside the relations with the rulers and the need to be in political opposition; all these facts prevent unions from producing consistent class policies. It is claimed that "Liberty, equality, fraternity" quests of workers are behind the date and formation of a mass which is individualized and integrated into the society of consumption which just



aims to improve itself and its economic life, extinguishes struggling organizations. For workers, unions have turned into an ordinary apparatus to improve economic recovery and unionists become clerks who are in communication with "patrons" with a disconnected state of mind from the class while trying to solve the problems inside the limits of the dominant system, without questioning. Organizing a strong resistance against the attacks of employers is not possible as a result of the breakdown of the relations and the communication between the unions and their organized crowd, the abandonment of unity in acts and unity in problem solving. In this context the need to revise the understanding of the unions on the unionist approach, administration, organization and struggle arise. The only solution to defend the future against the attacks of global capitalism is to create new unionist organization towards unions which are not based on a class struggle concept while rebuilding communication with the workers.

The need to re-form the unions is a significant issue. The organization that can not respond to social transformation and the reservation of communication formats and the conservatism of the conceptions that back-up the crowd to system with an insistent manner, suppress a class movement that can transform reality. The abandonment of democratic organization and governance by class organizations caused these organizations to fall apart, even worse, it brought about their transformation into the ideological apparatus of the state. Intrasystematized unions have changed into structures which act using limits determined by the state, in order to keep the masses under the control of state which denies democratic communication, in other words, it is changed into a monolith bureaucratic structure which is deaf to different voices and opponents of anti-system. In consequence of this reality, the confidence of the workers in the unions declined and the unions are handed over to elites. The structures of the unions gradually became anti-democratic and by not being the organization of workers anymore they are transformed into an authoritarian power over them. Historically, the apparatus, which were created by the oppressed in order to defend their liberties against the sovereign, have institutionalized in history and escaped their control. This fact requires the oppressed to obtain these apparatus anew and transform those or build new organizations to grow.

In a context under the influence of globalization, it has become an obligation to restructure the unions that aim to struggle. It is necessary for unions to adopt democratic communication<sup>1</sup> in their internal operations and go through with an effective fight against racist and sexist discourses and acts related to it. It is necessary to clean and renew the unions in the democratization context, from racist and sexist impressions. Trade unions *"have tended to be seen as somewhat old fashioned, male dominated, confrontational and are seen as part of the past by many younger people"* (TUC 2001), in this sense, renovation is possible by removal of timeworn, outdated and male dominated thoughts; it is necessary to produce and adopt an

---

<sup>1</sup>"Alternative media are crucially about offering the means for democratic communication to people who are normally excluded from media production" (Atton 2006: 4).

understanding which enables international solidarity with liberty, equality and fraternity emphases and is also anti-racist and not male-dominated. It is a significant issue to provide syndicate training to workers to prevent them from going with the flow of tendencies that harm the class struggle under the influence of nationalist, racist ideologies; it is necessary to explain and defend “fraternity of society” against the use of nationalism by the power to make the workers the enemy of each other. Besides, unions, as one of the mechanisms which re-produce male-dominant arguments against women, need to abandon such sexist approaches and it is also necessary to emphasize that the woman problem is also a contemporaneously democracy problem. It is necessary to place woman in union management even more, “positive discrimination” should be actualized. Eliminating all repressive attitudes towards women and making the union struggle a struggle that liberates woman, are some of the basic requirements to create democratic communication. Historically building trade unions as the organizations of men as well as sharing the same understanding of employers against women bring along the deformation of democracy. In this respect, the unions without women can not possibly be democratic. Formation of unionist democracy and democratic communication happen by fighting against the racist and sexist mentality and approach. The formation of democratic trade unions is possible by being involved and putting up a fight to solve these issues in a democratic, understanding context.

Getting the workers, who are isolated and despairing of globalization, together, is possible with a democratic communication form and it became a significant problem for the trade unions to tell the oppressed that salvation from the ongoing problems and social liberation is possible by not being individual but by being communal. Showing the oppressed class the defeat of the unorganized society by the neo-liberal attacks which means losing their future, requires the efficient use of new communication methods. It is necessary to use the alternative media<sup>1</sup> practices to defend the reality and breakdown the illusion in a way and use it against the structure of the mainstream media which hides reality. It is one of the important duties of trade unions and other opposition organizations to express what capitalism is for societies both in the local and the global context by using different ways of communication to prevent the workers from alienating themselves from reality. There is no such chance for trade unions if they are out of the communication arena; therefore, they need to have a fully developed strategy of communications which determines all the social processes; *"the communication strategy of a trade union being integral both to the organizational dynamics of the union itself, the Labor movement and to the surrounding political environment –state, labor market and material relations of production"* (Ward and Lusoli 2003: 151). Along with the actualization of flexible production, trade unions need to re-form their communication

---

<sup>1</sup>"The classic Marxist analysis of the media contains within it the seeds of such a space, in that alternative media may be considered as offering radical, anti-capitalist relations of production often coupled to projects of ideological disturbance and rupture" (Atton 2006: 7).

methods, get organized and regulate strategies and tactics accordingly. Correspondingly, it is necessary for the workers from diverse nations to obtain an associated organization and gain the culture of struggle, be in touch through their organizations and build local and global solidarity. This process precisely manifests the need for addressing the communication problem which has not been dealt with so far by the trade unions and it is obvious that it should be considered in its economic and social contexts. It is also essential for the trade unions to learn how to use the new communication methods effectively which are in use by global capitalism with an opposing approach. Moreover, it is important to form the media of workers and fictionalize it as alternative media, radical media or activist media (Atton 2006; Bailey et al. 2008; Downing 2001; Waltz 2005), it is possible to ensure local and global communication of the oppressed and through this communication it is possible to ensure the solidarity of the destitute who are isolated by the repression of nation-states and global companies. In order to actualize "another world is possible" motto, oppressed ones should build strong organizations above all and these organizations should create a "alternative communication network" that covers the entire society by developing effective communication strategies. Afterwards it should be ensured to prove the internationalist unity of all the workers. In this sense, the formation of international information network is necessity. It is essential to form new international "alternative/radical" unionist organizations for solidarity against nation-states that apply intense violence and pressure on workers and the destitute that are re-organized with globalization; it is also possible to build a barrier to prevent the poor from being kept away from the left options by the nationalist or alternative fanatic religion systems. Rebellious of crowds which are unorganized by themselves begin to arise due to starvation and poverty in the world and it is an indicator of sharpened class struggle and the unorganization of the crowds will cause their defeat. If getting organized is taken into account as a process of communication, the necessity for gathered organizations to speak the same language in order to defend the oppressed and create the force to transform the world with them comes into the picture. The necessity of creating an alternative media<sup>1</sup> rather than the mainstream media for social communication comes into question. Alternative/radical media organized jointly by structures like trade unions, unions, parties etc. may gain the power for popularization of new social communication methods against the mainstream media. Besides, alternative media<sup>2</sup> takes on significant tasks like setting the social agenda and by taking away the power of the system from

---

<sup>1</sup>"As alternative media are defined as being in a negative relationship with mainstream media, the contingency of this concept should be emphasized: what is considered "alternative" at a certain point in time could be defined as mainstream at another point in time. The societal context in which alternative media function is inseparable from the concept of "alternative media" and can serve as a starting point for the definition of alternative media" (Bailey et al. 2008: 18).

<sup>2</sup>"Alternative media can offer ideologies, representations and discourses that vary from those originating in the mainstream media. These differences emanate from the higher level of participation of different societal groups and communities" (Bailey et al. 2008: 19-20).

setting the agenda of the oppressed class, it may interrupt the re-production of the social consciousness by the power. In order to explain the need for unionist organization to society, it is necessary to form democratic and libertarian "alternative media" which can turn the agenda of the workers into an agenda of society apart from the mainstream media. One of the basic principles to conduct the class struggle is exposing the reasons behind their reality and the problems they have been through, it is essential to use alternative communications; to intervene in the determination of social consciousness with the effective usage of communication methods by power and re-production of its own system, and by democratization of social communication it needs to socialize the new communication methods that break down the impression of the state. For example, making an effort so as to build television, radio and daily newspapers that reach mass crowds which express the political and economic requests of workers and enable the alternative culture to be kept alive, it can make a great contribution to the successful communication of the unionist organizations and thereby democratization of social life.

New communication technologies can be used efficiently by the opponents just as they serve to the global power, therefore unions especially have to learn to use new media effectively in order to be efficient in the social arena by going beyond the traditional communication strategies. It is necessary to seek and find new way of using alternative media to break down the influence of the power on crowds. They need to use new communication technologies that will support the struggle of the unions in particular; *"TUs are not powerless in the face of technological developments but can harness and shape the technology to fit their own needs and demands"* (Ward and Lusoli 2003: 156). In this sense the Internet provides significant opportunities, besides, the Internet is the strongest media of global civilian society, in spite of all presented problems (Ford and Gil 2001: 201). The communicative power of the Internet comes from its exceeding capacity. It provides significant opportunities to enable information sharing and to maintain solidarity among the workers of trans-national companies . New communication technologies *"in a participant and creative way, is made accessible for everyone"* (Raby 2008: 59-60) and efficient use of this arena by anti-system movements enabled re-organization of opposition in the local and global arena and establishment of solidarity between the opponents; in other words, it enabled new democratic communication; *"the internet is potentially our first global public sphere, a medium through which politics could be made truly participatory at both regional and international levels and the internet is the first medium through which individuals and independent collectives throughout the globe may hope to communicate, in their own voices, with an international audience of millions"* (Ford and Gil 2001: 202). From a contingent perspective, in a communicative context, the internet really offers opportunities to trade unions and other opponents; despite the commercialized structure of internet, it serves as a low cost communication platform to opponents that they can use effectively. In this sense, because of its capacity to enable democratic communication, it is defined by the new social movement theorists as the core

component of an important and contingent political transformation; *"in terms of experiences of getting organized and taking action in internet, some militants, suggested that the internet will be a democratic social forum, people protect the characteristic, collective decisions will be taken by voting or debates without the mediation of politicians"* (Castells, 2008: 201). In the unionist context new media presents great opportunities, *"ICTs could facilitate organizational change, but the independent adoption of the new media by collective structures such as branches, internal union groups or activist networks allows them to communicate their views to a local, national and even global audience more frequently and effectively than previously"* (Ward and Lusoli 2003: 155). New media can be used effectively to gain new members and keeping the gained members in communication with the union, in other words, can be used for effective participation in union struggle; *"New ICTs (information and communication technologies) can also be used for targeting and recruitment of Members"* (Ward and Lusoli 2003: 153). New communication technologies reach and organize especially young workers and offer significant opportunities while making them a part of the union struggle. Understanding of union communication which does not take into notice the skill of young workers who use new media apart from the traditional media, will be unsuccessful (Ward and Lusoli 2003). In short, alternative (new) media become sine qua non for class struggle. It is essential for trade unions to undergo transformation appropriate to new communication structures in order to make the new media a component of its struggle by using it effectively; in addition to the traditional alternative media it is essential to produce alternative new media<sup>1</sup>.

## Conclusions

It is clear that trade unions which maintain their importance in carrying out the class struggle against global capitalism have to undergo a structural transformation in order to develop policies appropriate to the new age. Neo-liberal policies of global capitalism caused great transformation in economical and political structures. This transformation means a dark age for societies, it appears as an obligation for the social opposition movements to resist by developing new political discourses and practices against new attacks that impoverish and disorganize societies. Revival of the class struggle brings about the revival of the class movements and the necessity to re-organize the unions against neo-liberal attacks arises. In this case unions play an important role as a significant component of political opposition to democratize politics and defend the rights of oppressed. Therefore, unions need to intervene collective

---

<sup>1</sup>"Alternative/activist media employ or modify the communication artefacts, practices, and social arrangements of new information and communication technologies to challenge or alter dominant, expected, or accepted ways of doing society, culture and politics" (Lievrouw 2011: 19).

life by using communications efficiently in order to be effective in the social scenes. During the social communication process, attacks of nation-states on class organizations by applying intense violence and pressure to class organizations in order to defend the interests of multinational companies and dysyndication of workers, overturning democracy in social context, and impoverishment of society along with it, turns the future into a utopia. In order to be able to tell this truth to society, it is necessary for unions to use radical media efficiently, especially new media, by using new communication policies. It is vital to stand up for this reality and future in the communications arena, thereby alternative media will play an important role to make the oppressed be heard everywhere, from the local to the global scale, and to create international solidarity. In conclusion, the unionist struggle's success is possible through creating democratic communication that enables unions to express and explain themselves to all oppressed social parts, workers and society.

## References

- Atton C (2006) *Alternative Media*. London: Sage Publications.
- Bailey O, Cammaerts B, Carpentier N (2008) *Understanding Alternative Media*. London: McGraw-Hill, Open University Press.
- Callinicos A (2007) "Yeni orta sınıf ve sosyalist siyaset". *Neo-Liberalizm ve Sınıf* ["New middle-class and socialist politics". *Neo-Liberalism and Class*] (end.) A Callinicos, C Harman. İstanbul: Locus. [In Turkish].
- Castells M (2008) *Enformasyon Çağı: Ekonomi, toplum, Kültür: Kimliğin Gücü* [*The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture: The Power of Identity*]. İstanbul: İ. Bilgi Üniversitesi Y. [In Turkish].
- Castells M (2005) *The Network society: from knowledge to policy*. *Network Society* (edn.) M Castells, G Cardoso. Washington: Johns Hopkins Center for Transatlantic Relations.
- Cumbers A (2001) "[Labour worldwide in the era of globalization: alternative union models in the new world order](http://goo.gl/NfX1ym)" (Book Review). *Capital & Class*. [Autumn 2001](http://goo.gl/NfX1ym). Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/NfX1ym>.
- Downing JDH, Ford TV, Gil G, Stein L (2001) *Radical Media: Rebellious Communication and Social Movements*. London: Sage Publications.
- Ford TV, Gil G (2001) "Radical internet use". *Radical Media: Rebellious Communication and Social Movements* (end.) JDH Downing, TV Ford, G Gil, L Stein. London: Sage Publications.
- Giddens A (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Lievrouw LA (2011) *Alternative and Activist New Media*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Marx K (1999) *Grundrisse [Floor Plans]*. Ankara: Sol Y. [In Turkish].
- Raby DL (2008) *Latin Amerika ve Sosyalizm [Latin America and Socialism]*. İstanbul: Yordam. [In Turkish].
- Radice H (1999) Taking globalisation seriously. *The Socialist Register*.
- Tomlinson J (1996) Cultural globalisation: placing and displacing the west. *The European Journal of Development Research* 8(2).
- TUC (2001) *Reaching the Missing Millions*. London: TUC.

- Waddington J, Hoffmann R (2005) Trade unions in Europe: facing challenges and searching for solutions. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/s6mDkE>.
- Waltz M (2005) *Alternative and Activist Media*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd.
- Ward S, Lusoli W (2003) Dinosaurs in cyberspace?: British trade unions and the internet. *European Journal of Communication* 18(147).