

## BETÜL MARDİN, THE PIONEER OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN TURKEY

Assist. Prof. Dr. Eda Sezerer Albayrak  
KTO Karatay University Social And Human Sciences Faculty  
Department of Communication Design and Management Konya-TURKEY  
eda.albayrak@karatay.edu.tr

### ABSTRACT

Although the process of public relations has always existed in Turkey during the rule of the former Turkish states, the Seljuks, the Ottoman state and the first years of the republic, which was regarded as a search of solutions to problems, efforts of transferring and accepting the views of the administrators and the efforts to create relations and dialogue with the peoples, the process of professionalization of public relations dates back to 1960s.

Public relations processes started to take place in public institutions under the name of "press bureau" and more modern applications have begun to be used. It was necessary to establish units for having good relations with each other in the private sector to be able to determine the causes and remove any disagreements. On the other hand, while "public relations" was not popular with its current name, Betül Mardin started to work for the country after hearing the French name of the profession (relations publiques) who is known as the first female Pioneer dedicating herself to the field of public relations and has brought professionalism and prestige to it. With this study, the biography of Betül Mardin, who announces the name of our country in many international platforms in the field of public relations, and her views and her works on public relations are included, it is aimed to define the concept of public relations and enlarge public relations literature in our country.

**Keywords:** Public Relations, Public Relations Specialist, Betül Mardin

### INTRODUCTION

While the expansion and activity of individuals and institutions in wider areas of society for reasons such as globalization and social change strengthened communication among many units, the effort to prevent these difficulties played an important role in transforming Public Relations into a profession (peltekoglu, 2016:1). It includes many definitions of public relations that can be applied to different areas from consulting functions to management, marketing communication, politics to civil society organizations. The UK Public Relations Institute defines public relations as "a pre-determined effort to maintain good faith and mutual understanding between an organization and its target audience", the International Public Relations Association; "An enterprise is a continuous and organized management task that is carried out to achieve and maintain understanding, sympathy, and the understanding of segments where a public or private organization is in contact with or may be involved." (<http://www.1bilgi.com/halkla-iliskiler/2895/halkla-iliskiler-nedir.html>). Betül Mardin Public Relations "public or private organizations to have a positive image of the necessary publicity policy to determine, institutions to be directed in this direction, it is planned activities to provide information flow between human groups and organizations and to achieve the intended result by gaining the necessary effectiveness of this information flow." (Mardin, 1995:10). Betül Mardin is the first woman to be one of the milestones of Public Relations in Turkey, who has made many efforts in order to bring her to Turkey by understanding the importance of her entry into a profession that she does not know for the first time. This study talks about how the public relations process started in Turkey, how activities were based on past years despite the fact that the profession was not known as public relations, and how it became widespread with many pioneering names such as Betül Mardin in the 1970s, and experiences in bringing Betül Mardin's life, her work and profession to Turkey.

### DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN TURKEY

Although the process of professionalization of Public Relations in our country dates back to the 1960s, the first examples of studies in this field were actually traced back to the Orhun inscriptions of Göktürks. Afterwards, in nizam-ul-Mülk's "politics", it was stated that the administration had to inform the public about the ideas, opinions, comments and wishes of the people and that the administration had to have proper and sufficient knowledge about the situation of the people. The rulers of the Anatolian Seljuks reserved certain days of the week to listen to the problems of the people (onal, 1-2).

- The understanding of the Turkish state is based on the principle of "the state is for the people".
- The sultans assumed the duty of protecting the subjects (people) as security. It needs more prevention to control the duties assigned to the Caliph to the Sultan.
- There was a central Assembly in the center of the old Turkish states. Three separate meetings are held on state affairs and religious ceremonies (in Huns). The first meeting was more religious ceremony, the

second meeting was held for the determination of human and military power, and the most important of all was the spring meetings in which the country issues were discussed and discussed. Participating in these meetings was presented as a loyalty demonstration, and all the gentlemen and the people attended these meetings, ate the meals, held horse races.

The existence of a fair system, The ability to work, the respect of the language and religious traditions of the people, and the importance and value given to the people are indicators of the public (tortop, 13). In the Ottoman Empire, however, there was a positive relationship between the people and the administration in the period of establishment and rise, but the people are important in the eyes of the government. In the early years of the Ottoman Empire, the problems of the people came together in the people and the brain to report their complaints and to convey their wishes were an application allowed by the traditions and in the period of the Ottoman Empire.;

- petitions of the people
- private listening in mosques
- Divan meetings
- justice
- Council of Ministers of peasants
- the divan-ı hümayun complaint pen
- Foundation applications
- Notable institution
- the sultans report their visit to the mosque
- wonderful tasks
- works such as tradesmen councils are examples of practices that will take place within the framework of Public Relations (erdoğan, 2006: 96-97).

In addition to the efforts to meet the needs of the sultans and important personalities in the Ottoman Empire, the Permanent structures that reflect the power they gave and the monuments that respond to the social needs are the works aimed at immortalizing the reputation and reputations of people from a public relations perspective (peltekoğlu, 2016:140). Erzurum and Sivas congresses are considered as an important step in forming public opinion in favor of the national struggle. Newspapers published during these periods have been tried to provide the public with information about the goals or goals of the Congress and to take place around the newly established organization of the people. Mustafa Kemal Pasha tried to create a common consciousness for the benefit of the national struggle, but also wanted to convince and enlighten the public. Public relations Studies (Akandere, 2000:51) that will enable the formation of a strategic plan during the national struggle period and implementation of this plan.):

- Determination of objectives, determination of resources, preparation of strategic plan
- Relationship and communication between leading individuals and groups in the war of independence
- Establishment of societies and committees, dissemination of studies and decisions
- Ensuring cooperation between young people fighting from the formal and informal organised struggle
- Encouraging the participation of the public in circulars, decisions and other activities
- Determining the relations between the other countries of the national struggle, the occupying forces, the destructive societies and the Government of the Palace
- To conduct communication media relations, to use existing Newspapers, to establish the national struggle press and communication network, to use telephone and Telegraph

Public relations studies in Turkey with the start of the planned period in 1960's and first of All public administration has shown itself. With the effort to reduce bureaucratic procedures, the expectation of improving state-society relations and the impartiality of the administration, showing that the administration behaves equally to all citizens without any political distinction. It is aimed to maintain good relations between the governing and the society-state within the context of these two important issues (fidan, 2008:68). Since 1960, the state planning organization has been established in line with the Prime Ministry in order to accelerate social and cultural and economic development and to harmonize this social and cultural transformation and to harmonize the policies applied. Afterwards, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs General Directorate of information and the Department of National Defense Department of press and Public Relations are the first examples of Public Relations (geçikli, 2012:13). With the transition to the planned development period in our country, the management of the decisions to be taken with development to manage the long-term goals and to connect to the plans requires the administration to act in accordance with certain principles, openness, responsibility and conditions in a democratic administration facilitated, arbitrary movements prevented the complementary element was ( fidan, 2008:69).

The central government organization research project, which was realized in 1962, was put into effect. The aim of the mehtap project is to determine the distribution of Central Government tasks and to examine whether this distribution allows the most effective implementation of public services (Dinçer, 1974:2). The Mehtap project included a wide range of Public Relations projects and it is said in the fourth of the four main proposals of the report: “it is obligatory to establish a close relationship with the public in the studies and decisions of all levels of government institutions.” In the relevant project, it is that the administrations in developed countries have set up various mechanisms in terms of these relations and that they have to listen to individuals and get their opinions at the top of them. The Mehtap project includes the following lines regarding public relations: “in the Turkish Administration, it is necessary to establish Public Relations and listening methods in accordance with the structure of every institution at various levels” (dinçer, 1974:14). Mehtap project in the following years, some ministries 4. It is observed that they take into account the substance and adopt Public Relations.

In 1964, population planning law was enacted in order to adopt the idea of the number of planned children to families.

In 1980 and later, the Public Relations Department was transformed into “Public Relations Department” and the Public Relations Department was merged into “press and Public Relations department”.

With Kaya project completed in 1991, the General Directorate of press and information was transformed into General Directorate of state information.

It was possible for private organizations to meet public relations in Turkey in the 1970s. Companies such as eczacıbaşı, koç, sabancı, and private banks (akbank) came immediately after multinational companies and focused on this issue and thus accelerated public relations development in the private sector (asna, 1988:29). In the 1980s, the development of Public Relations accelerated by neoliberal policies and accelerated in Turkey as well. In the late 1980s and 1990s, most enterprises started to take part in official institutions (Erdogan, 2008:95). The first public relations company was established by Alaeddin asna and Betül Mardin, one of the first public relations experts of Turkey. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TY4WZx\\_TEv9\(see\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TY4WZx_TEv9).

When the development of Public Relations in Turkey as a profession is examined, it is seen that women and men have joint efforts and the Father of Public Relations in Turkey, Alaeddin asna and Betül Mardin (knife&humeric, 2013).

With the public relations name not yet known, Betül Mardin, who has accepted to step into the profession in a “coincidental” way with this definition, is known as the first female pioneer of this profession that introduces the profession in Turkey.

### **WHO IS BETÜL MARDİN?**

Born in Istanbul in 1927, Betül dates back to Egypt and Mardin. Her real name is Betul and his meaning is “the Mother of Mary” and his meaning is “goat”, but she has lived the trouble of being called as Betul by the Istanbul citizens for the rest of his life. She couldn't speak until she was 5, and then lived as a stutter until he was 13. Mardin, who said that she was not able to talk and stutter because of his childhood, was very beaten up and she started to exercise by putting stones in his mouth to overcome this problem. Today, she can speak fluently, but because of the beating that he suffered from injuries in her body, a center in the brain was broken and therefore, the car and computer can not use. She stated that his inability to talk and stutter when she was a child was being whipped and that he always worked for him to be the best in a business and not to be ridiculed.

Mardin, who graduated from Istanbul American College in 1946, started her career as a journalist in the translator newspaper in 1957 and then started to do the jobs of an American newspaper, Mardin said “jobs” because she said that public relations are not known yet. She continued as a producer for Turkey's radio and television (TRT) institution. Mardin, who was hired as a program producer, said that although she did not know how to make the program, she started to work hard and learned how to prepare the program for a radio channel. After completing a BBC training course in London in 1967, Mardin started to teach TV lessons with English on Turkish state television, which was established in Ankara in 1968. After leaving TRT in the same year, as a result of a coincidence, a profession in Turkey was never known first, scared and then entered as sure of itself. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TY4WZx\\_TEv9\(see\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TY4WZx_TEv9).

The Egyptian government saw the seizure of all of the family's assets in 1950. She experienced the years of youth who witnessed World War II, witnessed his own poverty, experienced Theater years in existence, and took her first steps to the profession in the 60s when she began to stand on her own feet as a young woman who was

determined to overcome even though her family had prevented her from going to University (in the 60s). <http://www.kigem.com/hayata-hakim-ve-zamansiz-bir-kadin-betul-mardin-.html>)

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS AND BETÜL MARDIN**

Mardin, the first female pioneer of Public Relations, talks about hows she has stepped into a profession that is not yet known as “public relations” in Turkey.:

“On 10 May 1968, after I resigned from my position in TRT, I returned to Istanbul, but I had to look for a job. Akbank Chairman of the Board Ahmet Dalli Bey went to say that I was looking for a job. Said that thought it was a job in itself for me, and this thing “next to one of the workers thinks I'm picking on him whenever I say something, and crying out, she came up to me when I yell at and will give his resignation and I think it doesn't work like that,” he said, and the profession “I'll tell you tell them, you tell them you tell me with the statement” defined.”

Mardin, who learned that the French name of the profession was “relations d  publiques”, said that she had no knowledge of this subject when she translated the “Public relations” of his English as “public relations”. After working on it, Mardin accepted the job offered to him, and in the following days she was called by selahattin Beyazit, who founded a record company and asked him to advertise the record company and she said, “the job you want from me is Public Relations “and she accepted the job. Betül Mardin, who started working with several companies within the same week under the “public relations” framework, received an offer from a business owner who has a business place in the Bosphorus near twenty restaurants containing the names and phone numbers of five thousand people who eat at tarabya Bay every day and completed this job for a long time. Betül Mardin, who sees that they can bring together the targeted people in a customer style with this list, has started to enter the profession more and has started to hold more tightly. At the same time, the Public Relations of Akbank, which was instrumental in meeting this profession, continued to move around the city and communicate the problems of the personnel she met in Mardin branches, trying to promote public relations in the branches. However, as these processes continued, Mardin went abroad to London to investigate how this was done and whether it was enough in this profession and what should be done to make this profession much better for Turkey.

Mardin, which saw that public relations became widespread after returning from London, founded A&B with Alaeddin Asna, the first public relations company in Turkey, and continued its activities of Association for recognition of Public Relations profession in Turkey, institutionalization and professionalization, and organized conferences and panels. Mardin, who is also a member of the International Public Relations Association, has been a driving force for Turkey to open its doors on this issue. First of all, Mardin was a member of the Confederation of European Public Relations associations cerp and the International Public Relations Association Ipra, which was the main purpose of promoting Turkey on International platforms.

She said that Turkey had difficulties in international platforms and that its neighbors should get along well with their neighbors and that public relations are very important in this context. The next meeting of this International Association was held in Turkey and Mardin organized a meeting entitled “importance of Public Relations in countries ' relations with their neighbours” which was held for the first time in Turkey and made it possible for all members of the Association to come to Turkey. Mardin, who attended the next meeting in Hong Kong, told an American that she had asked two questions in the context of International Public Relations and that she had attracted the attention of all members. Betül Mardin, who participated in the meeting held in South Africa the following year, expresses her experiences in the following sentences:

“When I walked in, there was a buzz. Everybody was yelling, “mother, mother.” It turns out they decided to call me “mother” after the previous international meeting. When I still meet with public relations professionals on International platforms, they call me “mother.”

([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TY4WZx\\_TEvG](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TY4WZx_TEvG))

After that, Betül Mardin was elected as the world President of the International Public Relations Association in 1995. Mardin was the first Muslim Turkish woman to be assigned to this task. As the first Muslim Turkish woman on the stand, she told them to try to understand the Muslims and try to look at their cultures. And in the same speech, the President said that each meeting should meet on a different theme and that he determined the theme of “tolerance” in this meeting. <http://www.halklailiskiler.com/bet-l-mardin-ipra-baskanlik-surecini-anlatiyor-ndeuc7.html>( see). Two years later, he won the title of 'Member Emeritus', which means 'master'. Mardin, who was elected as a “lifetime honorary member”, was entitled to the title of President of the Presidents.

In 1969, Mardin trained on the radio and television programming of Istanbul University Faculty of Communications, and added the trainer to her career. Since 1975, she has taught Public Relations at Boğaziçi University Tourism Department. She has been a faculty member of Istanbul Bilgi University communication faculty since 1997. In 1998 she received the title of honorary doctorate in communication by Anadolu University. Mardin, which received many national and international awards, has finally been awarded the 2005 Atlas award of the Public Relations life achievement of the American Public Relations Association (prsa). As Honorary Chairman of image and strategy Promotion companies founded in 1987 with its partners in active business life, it continues its mission to implement all its theories related to its profession. ([http://www.engelsizkariyer.com/Y0aziYazdir.aspx?id=274\(see\)](http://www.engelsizkariyer.com/Y0aziYazdir.aspx?id=274(see))).

Betül Mardin,

1998 – the 75th anniversary of the Republic by şişli Branch of the Turkish Women's Union. The Year award.  
1996 – 1997 – congress newspaper[citation needed], image, “the most successful publicity of the Year” award.  
1996 – Women's Magazine “The Most Successful Women” Award.  
1995 – 1999 – Faculty Of Communication, Successful Communicators Award.  
1994 – IPRA “GOLDEN WORLD AWARDS”  
1994 – National Productivity Center “six Businessman of the Year” award.  
1984 – a certificate of success in Public Relations and Marketing at Sheraton hotels.  
1983 – Sheraton hotels (eame-1) Public Relations awards.  
1982 – American Hotel Association Public Relations Gold Key 2.lice.  
1979-Public Relations World Congress Special Event Competition 3.the one. he was awarded his prize.  
(<https://www.biyografi.net.tr/betul-mardin-kimdir/>).

Betül Mardin has had many experiences throughout her career and has always been thinking about, trying to produce new ideas and trying to develop this profession in Turkey. Betül mentioned that Mardin was involved in the promotion of the Istanbul Festival and distributed 35,000 brochures alone, that Taksim left it to workplaces in many districts of Istanbul, especially in Nisantasi districts, and that Atatürk Airport came to mind. She said that a police had left the pamphlets in front of him and that every passport had been stamped with the pamphlets so that they had reached those numbers that were considerably more than they were stamped with.

Again, while the concept of sponsorship, which holds an important place in public relations practices, has not yet been heard in Turkey, Betül Mardin has been implemented. After having attended an invitation in London and thanked one of the responsible people of this invitation for paying all the concert's money to the Marks&Spencer brand, Betül Mardin was paid by a person or a brand in such large organizations and after having learned that the name of the company was mentioned in the organization and that it was “sponsorship”  
(<http://www.halklailiskiler.com/bet-l-mardin-istanbul-festivalini-anlatiyor-1ckor1.html>)

Public relations is the difference between “being ordinary and important” (Mardin, 1995:15), which describes Betül Mardin as giving the following recommendations to business people::

Mardin, who says that reputation architecture is very difficult in Turkey, said that managers are hasty, they want to sell their goods immediately or they want to be recognized and that the problem stems from it , Mardin must go through some time and then they will see the benefits of communication and make recommendations to managers in this direction.

(<http://www.halklailiskiler.com/bet-l-mardinden-yoneticilere-tavsiyeler-b9oml2.html>)

Speaking about how communication projects will be beneficial to the business community and organizations, Mardin mentions that companies should not be lying about the information they provide and that all their actions should be environmental oriented and that if they decide that one relationship is important then they will be able to advance further.

## CONCLUSION

Today, in the past years, the activities carried out on the way of Public gathering and informing the public are included in the scope of ‘public relations’ and it is seen that these activities were developed with the contributions of Atatürk during the Republican period. However, while the name of the profession was not known in Turkey yet, betül Mardin started a profession where he had never heard of it before, researched this issue abroad, and studies on how and how to gain it to Turkey. Turkey has managed to announce its name in the international arena on this platform and it has been the “first Turkish Muslim President” of this international association.

Betul Mardin describes his work in 6 words as “you scratch me, I scratch you”, but when it is necessary to use an academic language, he is a pioneer who puts public relations in the category of “reputation architecture”, which makes his country the first place in terms of public relations. [http://www.1bilgi.com/halkla-iliskiler/2895/halkla-iliskiler-nedir.html\(see\)](http://www.1bilgi.com/halkla-iliskiler/2895/halkla-iliskiler-nedir.html(see)).

Stating that the public relations profession in Turkey is one of the most important professions of the last century, Mardin also mentions that all these important works work together with public relations when we look at the map from international relations and politics to human relations. Mardin emphasized that there is a big difference between those who work in public relations and those who do not, and said that even greater importance will be given to the profession. He emphasized that young people, organizations and managers should work hard to make their public relations career progress, but this would turn into a gain if it is done together as a body.

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