Introduction

The definition and idea of the "public sphere" (Öffentlichkeit) was first presented by Jürgen Habermas in 1962 started to gain prevalence only in the late 1980s. With this concept, Habermas defined a space where individuals converse and criticize issues about the state without a case of restriction, whose accessibility for everyone, that is, whose freedoms of gathering, organization and expression and publication of judgments and are guaranteed. Arendt discussed the start of the public sphere model from the Ancient Greek "Police". It should be considered that what Habermas expressed as, with its first simple meaning we conceive, public sphere is not communities formed by individuals. The concept of public here is an institution, namely organization must be formed that may have a name. The lexical meaning of the word "public" does not fit the Habermasian definition. With its definition in the dictionary, public: 1) all, whole, 2. The whole of the people in a country, people, commons. Debates of democracy have revived after the 1968 events, spread throughout the world followed by rising neo-liberalism in 1970s, disintegration of the Eastern Bloc countries and polarization created by the Cold War. In time, Habermas' definition of Public Sphere and discussions of Civil Society that were aimed towards overcoming the political and economic issues in the global system were added onto these debates.[1] In his work named the Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit, 1962), Habermas defined the bourgeois public sphere, analyzed historical, political and economic developments, and moved from the bourgeois public sphere to the "differentiated public sphere" created in social life by civil society. In this work, Habermas emphasized that the "social state model" formed after the destruction of the bourgeois public sphere. The approach of social state that has been increasingly developing since the 19th century managed to draw the state to the economic area. In the social state approach, the state and the people are integrated. The thing that achieves the integration is the structural transformation of the public sphere. According to Habermas, structural transformation of the public

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1   Özbek, Kamusal Alanın Sınırları, P. 27.

sphere is actually the expression of the transition from the "bourgeois" public that focuses on the homogenous and abstract individual to the "differentiated" public that is created by civil society in real social life. The role of mass media is important in this transformation. The thing that transforms the public sphere in the broad sense is the comprehensive results of the role of democratization and the increasing role of the media.[2] Habermas defined this transformation as the "structural transformation of the public sphere". While Wolton talked about a broad sense by leaving technological advancement aside, democratization processes and the effects of the media on masses are strong enough to carry this transformation to new extents. Increase in the value of communication networks have, in terms of their political and financial functions, growth of the capital investment and expansion of communication networks through technology, have played an important role in the transformation of the public sphere and the media. "The political economy of the traditional mass media of Western societies has developed ironically".[3] The industry, which has been rising since the 17th century, has laid the groundwork for individualization of the society while at the same time has been promoting social life and preparing a suitable environment for the increase in the activity areas of the public such as cinema, theater, newspaper, entertainment club. Nevertheless, this newly created environment led to further separation of the public and private spheres.

A subject that should especially be discussed would be the near past, present and tomorrow of communication network technologies. Developed communication network technologies have had significant effects on the public sphere with each new qualified communication device invented. The public sphere emphasized in 1962 by Jürgen Habermas and the definitions and theories of the public sphere that evolved around it broadened their borders through each new communication device, and in some cases, changed the existing borders. The mission of technology to "democratize" the society associated with mass communication tools in the 19th and 20th centuries, is now being dedicated to new media. For example, the definition of Information Society, which emerged with prevalent usage of internet technology today and may be associated with the definition of the pub-

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2   *Wolton,* Les Contradictions de L'espace Public Médiatisé, Hermès 10, 1991, P. 95.

3   *Dahlgren,* L'espace Public et les Médias, Hermès 13-14, 1994, P. 244.

lic sphere, was opened for debate as the Theory of Network Society with Castells' suggestion. According to Castells, counter hegemony powers, for example, environmentalist movement, counter cultural movements and human rights organizations take part in activities within networks by combining what it local and what is global with the internet.[4] This discourse by Castells overlaps with Habermas's definition of the public sphere to some extent. With its Habermasian meaning, the idea of "public sphere" is an institutionalized discursive area of interaction where participants take part in discussions about their mutual issues. This space is one that is conceptually separate from the state; and in principle, it is where critical discourses are produced and distributed against the state … a space for conflict of ideas and debate[5]. An important point here is that Habermas defined the public sphere over locality, that is, each society has its own public sphere; Castells, on the other hand, described an activity on a global level, because the internet which is the most prevalent area of usage for communication network technologies provided speed up for the development of globalization. According to Bauman, "We are all on the move… Some of us do not need to go outside to travel: One can run from around on web pages in the speed of light, read messages from the furthest parts of the globe on computer screens and send messages… Space is no longer an obstacle; one second is enough to conquer it".[6] Global prevalence of informatics tools, information transformation and distribution made the citizen no longer an object of a single public authority. While the citizen has private communal identity on one hand, they have an identity of a territorial state and an international identity on the other hand. The phenomenon of international identity is as virtual as the information carried around, but at the same time, as real as the content of the same information.

The internet may facilitate action without leaving the chair in trade, meeting new people, seeing new places, home decoration and even shopping for the kitchen. The network society that emerged with globalization and development of the internet and is increasingly rising, mainly created new communication technologies and led people to establish virtual communication environments. "Platforms called Social Media" such as Face-

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4   *Castells,* Globalization and Identity in the Network Society, P. 110.
5   *Özbek*, Kamusal Alanın Sınırları, P. 28.
6   *Bauman,* Globalization: The Human Consequences, P. 77.

book, Twitter, YouTube, Google+, Hi5, MySpace provide the user with the opportunity to establish their own profile and open it up to other users. In their profile, the user is able to share their photos, biography, experiences and opinions. Social media users are able to interact with both their friends and people they do not know and also share texts, photos, videos and musics. According to Akar, communications on social media, which is an environment of peers, may be from one to many or from many to one, and it might not be possible to predict the real effect area of social media. With the help of social media, individuals gained the opportunity to publish their own opinions, points of view and experience on this global scale. Abundance of information on the internet, multiple options, means of interaction revived the dreams of "participatory democracy", "direct democracy" and "agora". This is the structure of the public sphere that was formed via digital environments. The most important advantage provided by the digital environment is the phenomenon of participation and plurality. Moreover, as monitoring posts is technically difficult and sometime the authors are not legally bound by their content, social media is promoted as an environment where people gather and freely share their opinions. Free sharing of posts and distance from censorship form a public sphere that is far from a totalitarian structure. It should be noted that, if the person is sharing with their own name and last name or if they are famous or known, it is possible that their posts will be found by the state authority and they will be held responsible for them. Indeed, according to Eric Dacheux, one function of democracy is the possibility of formation of a public opinion via opposing debates and establishment of a space of mediation between the state and the civil society. This space that is not found in totalitarian regimes is the public sphere.[7] It is possible to reduce the difference between the virtual public sphere that is formed via the digital environment and the real public sphere that arises from within the civil society to technological infrastructure and face to face dialogue. The main elements that make formation of the public sphere possible are equality, debate and freedom. As a representation of the communication conditions that will facilitate the establishment of opinion and will based on debate among a public group consisting of citizens, the political public has the potential to be the main concept of a normative theory of democracy. Ac-

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7   *Dacheux,* L'espace Public, P. 14.

cording to Habermas, the main issue is the freedom of opinion and association of the civil society. In the light of this, it may be argued that the virtual public sphere is just as valid as the real public sphere. In the structure of the real public sphere, there is the anxiety of encountering the state authority at any time. The state authority may intervene with or establish hegemony on the real public spheres when they contradict its interests. Just like King Charles II closing down coffee houses in 1675 as they had become common meeting points of the people where they were able to talk about politics and conspiracies.[8] As opposed to this, the internet has a complex structure that cannot be easily shut down as it is far from rationality. Nevertheless, governments that are trying to prohibit the public spheres for civil society are looking for ways to limit the internet, keep it under control and close it down for the civil society if needed. Just as the museums, newspapers, reading rooms, operas, coffee houses emphasized by Habermas in formation of the public sphere played an important role, the internet is playing a similar but stronger role, while the internet harbors various spheres that are parallel to each other. Easier experience of sharing opinions via the internet and increased participation played an important role in the increase of usage of social media. Especially Facebook, which was designed for finding friends and sharing daily content, is the most cybernetic example of the transition from the private sphere to the public sphere.

Thus, with the help of social media, you may spread your political opinions without getting up, reach like-minded people and form opinion groups. Increased number of users of social media brought about diversity of usage purposes. Some individuals are using social media with the aim of joining social movements, following these movements and organizing them. Of course, it would be a utopic expression to say that social media accounts are opened purely for these purposes. We saw the best example of these in the Arab Spring triggered by Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. The first example of internet-supported public revolts was seen in the Presidency Elections in Iran. The internet in Tunisia and Egypt became prominent with its function to accelerate politics. Especially the social networks of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube led to fast mobilization of masses and acceleration of revolution movements.

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8   *Standage,* A History of the World in 6 Glasses, P. 156.

Considering the Tahrir Square and Taksim Gezi Park Protests, it may be seen that the public sphere that fits the definition of Habermas was formed. "This is because the public sphere is a specific area that emerges from within the civil society. It is a cultural and societal space of organization that will facilitate an effective rational-critical discourse that aims to resolve political fights".[9] Such new social movements' emergence via social media, like in the case of the civil disobedience protests named the Arab Spring, is caused by the lack of adequacy and effectiveness of civil society organizations. Organization took place on new media in countries where civil society organizations are not adequate or capable. It is harder to see these examples in Western countries. The individual, based on their political opinion, may define the public sphere as "the place where public authority is valid", "the space where there are pluralism, colorfulness and freedom" and "the space where the public servant is".[10] The public sphere is a space formed via freedom, debate and action. We may associate social and individual freedom that is one of the many doctrines in the formation of the public sphere with Kant's "Principle of Publicity". This principle is based on Kant's "Transcendent Formula of Public Law". This formula guarantees all kinds of social freedom, and in a way, individual freedom may only be achieved via social freedom. Habermas, in his studies after the work named "Transcendent Formula of Public Law", associated his conceptualization of the public sphere with his model formed in the framework of the life-system universe, and stated that new social movements has qualities that will excite the public sphere. Arendt brought a preliminary condition to social movements, the public sphere must be isolated from violence.[11] The acts of violence committed by security forces against the public sphere that is formed in new social movements broke Arendt's preliminary condition. This condition does not exist among Habermas' definition of the public sphere.

With the movement of industrialization and modernization, while distances become close, the private becomes the public, the hidden becomes the showcased especially by the usage of phones, mobile phones, televisions, computers and the internet, social life was slowly replaced by individual life, and then loneliness. According to statistics, people living in

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9 *Özbek,* Kamusal Alanın Sınırları, P. 27.
10 *Yukselbaba,* Habermas ve Kamusal Alan, P. 83.
11 *Onat,* Kamusal Alan Ve Sınırları, P. 28.

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crowded metropolitan areas feel lonelier. In modern urban life, families shrank, social ties were weakened, neighborhood, friendship, companionship relationships unfortunately lost their significance and value, some values were trivialized, and it became inevitable to be lonely among the crowds. Increased individualization in parallel to industrialization and globalization increased the need of social media for individualized people, and the need of individualized people for social media. An adventure of loneliness that started with the invention of radio gained a new group with television, while the internet and then social media created a different form of loneliness by allowing people to establish versatile communication.

One of the most important phenomena of today that lead the individual into loneliness and alienation is social media. Especially the long hours spent on Facebook and Twitter, and conversations had over these channels with close and distant friend, provided the users with a new experience of socialization. It is possible for individuals to participate in intense crowds and versatile communications in public or private places. However, the user of social media is physically lonely anyway.

While societies are increasingly becoming individualized, social movements can start on the other hand, they may reach large masses and find psychological support from foreign countries by crossing the borders of countries. The key point in this dilemma is absolutely social media, because if we consider Occupy Wall Street, Tunisia events that started the Arab Spring, 15M Movement in Spain and Taksim Gezi Park Protests, people received the news via social media and supported these events physically and communicationally with individual decisions. Indeed, although no news pieces were shared about the events on the mainstream media, people started to gain at places such as the Tahrir Square (2010), the Puerto Del Sol Square (2011), Wall Street Zuccotti Park (2011) and Taksim Gezi Park (2013) and organized demonstrations. For example, demonstrations such as 1 May Labor Day and examples that may be provided as mass movements were previously and usually carried out with the support and leadership of unions and civil society organizations. Most importantly, these were planned and announced beforehand. On the other hand, the events mentioned about did not start as union-organized or similar events, but they emerged with people on social media sharing information via text or visuals. In summary, new social movements had no leadership.In other words, they did not occur by the leadership of a political party, civil society organization, union or a leader.

Introduction

Groups of individualized people who use social media started a mass movement and gave rise to it, and with new social movements, a public sphere was formed by itself at squares and parks. The main issue here is whether the public sphere has undergone a new structural transformation with social media or not. Today, an individualized type of society emerged with the current economic and social life conditions. The members of this society are frequently following social media and new media and participate directly. Without any organization or prior announcement, they are able to leave their homes, disperse into roads, main streets and squares, and form crowded groups of demonstrators. This presents the equation of social media and its individualized metropolitan user starting mass movements without organization and creating a public sphere afterwards.