MEASURING DELIBERATION ONLINE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF
DISCUSSIONS ON EKŞI SÖZLÜK

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ABSTRACT

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As the crisis of representation deepens in the traditional representative democratic institutions, new forms of democracy such as deliberative democracy become more significant. Deliberative Democracy is a form of democracy which centres deliberation and consideration to its core. The objective of this thesis is to measure online deliberative democratic practices on Ekşi Sözlük. As the internet become more reachable, it creates a potential to remove the reasons that created representative democracy. New forms of democracy, then, should be considered in this new platform of democratic practices -the internet. Analysing whether deliberative democratic practices are accomplished in political discussions on forum-like websites such as Ekşi Sözlük, is a way to see new forms of democracy is possible in the internet. By using the Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme, 3,706 Ekşi Sözlük entries were analysed in three topics on different political issues. Seven indicators were defined under analytical and social dimensions: creating an information base, values, identifying solutions, weighing solutions, common good orientation, respect, and reciprocity.

Keywords: Deliberative Democracy, E-Democracy, Public Sphere, Ekşi Sözlük, Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme

ÖZ

ÇEVRİMİÇİ MÜZAKEREYİ ÖLÇMEK: EKŞİ SÖZLÜK TARTIŞMALARININ KARŞILAŞTIRMALI ANALİZİ

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Geleneksel temsili demokratik kurumlardaki temsil krizi derinleştikçe, müzakereci demokrasi gibi yeni demokrasi formlarının önemi giderek artmaktadır. Merkezine müzakereyi ve izanı koyan müzakereci demokrasi bir demokrasi formudur. Bu tezin amacı da Ekşi Sözlük'teki çevrimiçi müzakereci demokratik pratikleri ölçmektir. İnternetin daha ulaşılabilir hale gelmesiyle birlikte, temsili demokrasiyi ortaya çıkaran nedenleri ortadan kaldırma potansiyeli de artmaktadır. Demokratik pratiklerin gerçekleştirilebileceği bu yeni platformda, yani internette, yeni demokrasi formlarının da dikkate alınması elzem hale gelir. Bunun mümkün olup olmadığını görmek için de Ekşi Sözlük gibi forum benzeri yapılarda yapılan siyasi tartışmalarda müzakereci demokrasinin mevcut olup olmadığına bakmak gerekmektedir. Çevrimiçi Grup Müzakeresi Kodlama Şeması kullanılarak farklı siyasi tartışmalarda toplam 3,706 Ekşi Sözlük girisi bu tez altında incelenmiştir. Analitik ve sosyal boyutlar olmak üzere yedi ayrı gösterge tanımlanmıştır, bunlar; bilgi temeli yaratma, değerler, çözüm tanımlama, çözüm değerlendirme, ortak iyiye yönelim, saygı ve karşılıklılıktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müzakereci Demokrasi, E-Demokrasi, Kamusal Alan, Ekşi Sözlük, Çevrimiçi Grup Müzakeresi Kodlama Şeması

To Merve, my amazing wife who made it possible for me to complete this thesis,

And to the friendship of a tiger and an elephant

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

History of democracy can be traced back to approximately 2500 years ago. Throughout the human history, democracy or democratic practices emerged in various geographies, from Ancient India to Scandinavia. However, the idea and the practices of democracy have been changed from context to context, time to time. The re-emergence of democracy occurred in the 17th Century. In these times, the idea of democracy also changed entirely.

The rise of the liberal thought and the bourgeois class had major effects on the idea of the democracy. First, the practices in the Ancient Athens have been questioned, and then the perspective of democracy has changed as per the principles of liberalism such as rationality, liberty, and individualism. A new form of representative democracy in which elected representatives held the responsibility to rule and govern rather than the all citizens, have emerged in 19th century. This change was the peak of the liberal influence on the ideal of democracy.

Naturally, the liberal or representative democracy did not go unchallenged. In time, politicians, scholars, and regular citizens raised their voices against the inequalities in representation. New forms of democracy have been theorized such as participatory democracy and deliberative democracy.

While traditional institutions of representative democracy are being contested, traditional platforms of democracy are also questioned by some, as a result of the changing context. The rise of information technologies –especially the internet demonstrated that the issues which have been discussed in the platforms of representative democracy (such as parliaments), can also be discussed by the whole population. Information technologies made traditional institutions of representative democracy *reachable*. Thus, these technologies *democratized* the representative democracy.

Deliberative democracy which centres communication, deliberation, legitimation, participation, reflection, and agreement to its core, is taken as a *turn* in the democratic theory since 1990s (Dryzek, 2010:3). From the beginning, its potential for creating a new democracy form –or political reform, has been discussed. As a communicative-centred theory, one of the main focuses of the deliberative democracy is the concept of the public sphere. Public sphere is a concept which is central to discussions in social sciences since Ancient Greece. The meaning and the definition of the public sphere has been changed from context to context. Still, main formulations of the principles of the public sphere usually more *visible* throughout the Enlightenment Age. As will be discussed below, public sphere is disappeared with the effects of mass culture and mass media. However, some revitalizing the public sphere is considered as a vital way for democracy according to some researchers. Therefore, revitalizing public sphere or search for new public spheres was on the agenda of the researchers.

In this context, internet started to become more visible, more common tool for the humanity since late 90s. Some scholars began to consider the internet as a new public sphere in time. Naturally, there were some supporters of this proposition as well as opposition. Deliberative democracy, as a new theory of democracy which objects the perspective of representation, and supports dialogue, saw the internet as a new platform for revitalizing the public sphere. In addition, as a result of its three distinctive advantages (normativity, plurality, and legitimation), deliberative

democracy is considered as one of the most suitable forms of democracy in the context of internet.

Some researchers took this opportunity and proposed improvements in the traditional institutions of representative democracy and creating new platforms for deliberative discussions. Online forums, discussions sites, social media websites, newspaper comments sections, and specifically designed platforms for deliberative democracy are considered among these new platforms. Ekşi Sözlük, the most famous forum-like website in Turkey, can be considered as a public sphere and a platform for deliberation to occur in this context.

Some researchers started to question whether deliberative practices can be achieved or fulfilled in reality and they have started to conduct researches in order to measure deliberation. Therefore, an empirical turn in deliberative democracy also emerged since the beginning of the century. As a contextual *coincidence*, the internet and the empirical turn in deliberative democracy cross with each other. In addition to measuring the deliberative democratic practices in *real life*, some researchers started to analyse the online deliberation possibilities in the internet.

There are two main focuses in empirical analysis of deliberative democracy (both online and physical); quality and design. While design of the deliberative democracy analyses the ideal design of the deliberative democratic platforms, measuring the quality of deliberation feeds and shows the way for researches on design of the deliberation.

The aim of this thesis is to focus on online deliberative discussions and to measure the level of quality of deliberation in these discussions in specific Ekşi Sözlük topics by asking the research question of;

- To what degree and how writers in Ekşi Sözlük accomplish the ideals of deliberative democratic discussions online?

What is the importance of this question? First, the internet is an essential tool, place and a constant in our daily lives. It continues to gain importance in political, social, and economic actions of humans. Economic actions such as trade, shopping,

procurement etc. are depending on the internet as well as social actions. Naturally, political actions also exist in the environment of the internet. However, due to its *more inclusive and direct* nature, internet is not a place for representative political acts. Nobody needs to *elect* a representative for logging into a political forum and make some comments, instead he/she can participate any political discussion online by removing the representative intermediary. This direct characteristic invalidates the reasons behind the representation.

If the need for representation decreases as a result of the internet –or the internet deepens the crisis of representation, then the traditional practices of the representative democracy should become impractical. However, in the initial formulations of the e-democracy, researchers focused the concept as it was the continuation of a representative democracy. Ironically, considering the e-democracy as a supplementary for representative democracy actually resulted in more participation of the citizens. The increase in participation, naturally, caused for new democracy forms to be discussed in the context of the internet.

Deliberative democracy, then, can be the new form of democracy in a world in which the internet is the most prominent political and social platform. Measuring whether deliberation exists in the platforms which are not initially designed for deliberation, becomes important. If deliberative democratic practices exist in the online platforms, then deliberative democracy can be the *key* form of democracy in the upcoming years.

Secondly, as explained design of deliberative democratic platforms is another question that keeps the minds of scholars who work in this field busy. By analysing how and why deliberative practices are low-high in online, can support the design of deliberative platforms. Designers of deliberative democratic platforms can use the outputs of the studies that focus on the quality of deliberation and make change in the designs accordingly.

Thirdly, analysing different topics that contain different subjects can answer the question of "what affects the deliberation in online". What causes deliberation to be

high or low in certain discussions; is it disrespect, low reciprocity, or inadequate statements of reasons.

In order to answer the question of "To what degree and how writers in Ekşi Sözlük accomplish the ideals of deliberative democratic discussions online?" a revised version of scheme named "Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme" will be used. Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme is developed by Black et al. (2011) in order to measure online deliberation practices. As it is derived from the main standards in deliberative democracy such as respect, proposal of solutions, or statement of reasons, indicators of this scheme are similar. Main indicators of the scheme used in this thesis are the same indicators which are used by Black et al. in their research. In addition, two important revisions are made for following reasons; first, considering the unique context of Ekşi Sözlük, some indicators in the social dimension are removed such as clarification or consideration. Secondly, following the studies of Bachtiger et al. (2018), and Klinger & Russmann (2014) the indicator "common good orientation" is added as the concept of common good is considered as a constant in deliberative democracy.

3 different Ekşi Sözlük topics will be analysed by using Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme;

1- We Demand Unisex Toilets,
2- A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees,
3- January 1st Plastic Bag Tax.

These topics were selected as they focus on different subjects from identity politic to refugee crisis. As discussed, it is important to analyse what decreases/increases the level of deliberation in different topics. The topic "We Demand Unisex Toilets" is selected as its main focus is gender and identity politics. The topic "A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees" is selected as it is related with identity, nationality, and the current refugee crisis in Turkey. Lastly, the topics "January 1st Plastic Bag Tax" is selected as its main focus is on daily political issue rather than *controversial* discussions.

In the first chapter following this introduction, the change in the perspective of democracy throughout the history will be discussed. The chapter starts from the idea of democracy in Ancient Athens; what was the context that results in democracy, what were the first practices of democracy, and what was the perception of democracy. Following the Ancient Athens, the roots of the republican and liberal ideals will be discussed in order to create a basis for the re-emergence of the democracy in 17th century.

In the section, republican and liberal turns, the questions how the ideals of democracy are changed and what was the main context that caused this change will be the focus. First the republican thought and philosophers and their influence of the idea of democracy will be argued. A similar and comparative discussion followed the republican turn in the section liberal turn. Here, the main focus will be to demonstrate the way to representation and the influence of liberalism in the democracy. In the following section, representative democracy will be explained; its main institutions, its problems and challenges, and its crisis. Participatory democracy, as the first major objection to the representative democracy, will be discussed in the following section. Similarly, its main claims such as beyond elections or the participation is discussed as well as participatory democracy's importance as creating a base for deliberative democracy.

In the third chapter, the main theoretical base of this thesis, deliberative democracy and public sphere will be discussed. The chapter begins with the public sphere; how it emerged, which and how scholars/philosophers contributed the concept of public sphere; how it is changed, how it is *disappeared* as a result of mass culture and how it is re-emerged.

In the following section, deliberative democracy will be explained as a new form of democracy. In this section, philosophical roots and the principles of deliberative

democracy will be discussed. In addition, advantages and differences of deliberative democracy is one of the focuses in this section.

In the fourth chapter, emergence of e-democracy and theory of online deliberation will be discussed. The chapter begins with the initial formulations of e-democracy and then argues the internet's potential as a new public sphere. Then, online deliberation and preconditions of online deliberation is mentioned.

The fifth chapter is the chapter where the main platform of the study, Ekşi Sözlük, and the used scheme (Online Deliberation Coding Scheme) will be explained. Following section focuses on the importance of this study in terms of the empirical turn in deliberative democracy. In the discussion section results of the content analysis will be discussed and compared for each topic.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORY OF THE IDEA OF DEMOCRACY: DIRECT DEMOCRACY-LIBERAL-REPUBLICAN TURNS-REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY-PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

According to a research conducted by Pew Research Centre, as of 2017, 96 out of 167 countries are considered as democracies or democratic governments[1]. This means nearly 58% of countries in the world can be considered as democratic. Only 21 countries (13%) are considered as autocracies while 46 (28%) of them considered as mixed regimes (partially democratic). A relatively short time ago, in 1977 only 25 countries were democratic while there were 62 autocracies and 13 mixed regimes. 40 year, considering the lifetime of countries, nations, and regimes, might be a very short time. But in the recent 40 years the world saw (and still seeing) a democratization trend. However, a trend of democratization cannot be described under a single meaning. What are the limits of this trend? Do terms like elections, voting, or separations of power guarantees being democratic? We, indeed, always look for democracy in every little corner of life. We always raise our concerns, voices against "anti-democratic" processes, statements, acts etc. But there is a main question remains vital; what is democracy? Can we easily define it? Are there non-changeable notions in the terms of democracy? Is the understanding of democracy is changing time to time, location to location, then why?

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[1] https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/05/14/more-than-half-of-countries-are-democratic/

2.1. Direct Democracy – Ancient Greece

The word *democracy* has two elements in Ancient Greek; *demos* and *kratos*. Demos as in its dictionary meaning, is the people. While *kratos* means rule, power, and force[2]. Therefore, democracy in a very generic meaning is the "rule of the people". So, the rule of the people first started in Ancient Greece.

The Athenian era is usually seen as the origin of democracy. Although there are some researches (Larsen, 1973: 45–46; Isakhan, 2007) that track down the democracy to Mesopotamia and Indian subcontinent, the ideals of modern democracy such as equality, respect to law, and freedom of participation as well as first democratic institutions are derived from the Ancient Athens. Although these ideals have been re-interpreted, re-invented, and re-discovered throughout the time, they were always at the centre of democracy discussions. One might rightly suggest that the nature, essence or cores of these ideals have been changed. Indeed, concepts of equality, justice, or freedom are interpreted in various ways as a result of social, economic, and political contexts of different times. Similarly, these ideals are strongly connected with the economic and political factors in Ancient Athenian context.

First thing to be mentioned here is that the social context of Ancient Athens, namely *polis* or the city-state. In the Ancient Greece, city states were the social organizations of people. In generic terms, *polis* was the sovereign city which can be perceived as a country, on in other terms the city was the country. First examples of *polis* can be seen in 8th Century B.C., after the conquest of the Kingdom of Mykonos by Dorians. People who are aware that they are not secure anymore, started to establish settlements which have similar characteristics as tribal communities (clans and villages –*gene* and *komai*).

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[2] Kratos is also the name of the titan, "the divine personification of strength" in Greek mythology who ordered Hephaestus, god of blacksmith, to chain Prometheus.

As Aristotle's definition, the *polis* was established as a result of merging these clans and villages. According to Agaogullari, the re-development (the Dorian invasion resulted the collapse of Aegean trade routes) of trade caused "relatively" equal tribal/village organizations to dissolve and re-structured in a more unequal way; *polis* formation. In time *polis* became a city where the centre is ruled by landlords and the poor villagers are located in outskirts (2002:13-14).

Slaves had no rights not freedom in Ancient Greece. They were considered as "speaking animals" or commodity. They were not "human". In Ancient Athens, the labour force of the slaves was the main force behind creating the accumulation of wealth. Wealthy Athenians started to "enjoy and discover" the philosophy or mathematics as a result of this. In this era

Citizens were the backbone of the polis although they have the lowest number. Generally, every man who had a right to carry a weapon, considered as citizen in Ancient Greece. It is important emphasize that citizens were the decision makers, however they were outnumbered. Ancient Athens had a population of 350.000. Only 40.000-45.000 of this population considered as citizens (Held, 2006:29). Citizens were also divided into different groups/classes in themselves, as well; 1- *Eupatrid,* 2- *Demiurgoi, 3-* Georgoi, and 4- *Thetes*.

Georgoi class was the poor farmers who had small farms and fields. *Thetes* was the city residents who had not have any crafting skills, or vocational skills. They were the labourers of the city. Main importance of these two classes was that the position of them among two main classes, *eupatrid* and *demiurgoi.* These two main classes always seek the support of *Georgoi* and/or *Thetes* in order to strengthen their power and position against the other.

Eupatrid[3] was the noble class of citizens. They were the grandsons of first clan chiefs who were established the *polis*. In time, *eupatrid* started to enlarge their lands and became owners of the huge agricultural fields. This caused an increase in land owners' wealth, naturally. However, *eupatrids were* not the only one who had control over the wealth of the *polis*. The second main class, *demiurgoi,* was playing an important role in the economy in *polis*, as well. *Demiurgoi* can be descried as the "middle-class" of the *polis*. Especially artisans and merchants were the backbone of this class. In addition to their power on economy of the *polis, demiurgoi* had the right to carry weapon and they were enlisted to the army as hoplites. The fame of hoplite in battles and their superiority over cavalry (*hippies*) caused hoplites and *demiurgoi* to gain importance in *polis*. The main conflict that caused democracy to emerge was between those two classes (Agaogullari, 2002:23).

The *Demiurgoi,* the class that has been excluded from political mechanisms, was unhappy about the vast difference between the aristocracy and "common people". They have rebelled in 632 B.C. Although the uprising was unsuccessful, ruling class, *eupatrids*, took some action in order to change justice and political mechanisms. One of the major conflicts was in justice system. The order of the *polis* was determined by the laws called *thesmoi*. These rules were mainly pro-aristocratic and seen as the rules given by the gods themselves. The ruling class of *eupatrid* were interpreting these laws in line with their interests. That was the main reason of the uprising. *Demiurgoi* was demanding new "human-made" laws. The term *nomoi* created as a result of this demand. One of the most important historical figures, Solon of Athens, regulated *nomoi* and *thesmoi* when he has been appointed as the lawmaker (nomothet) of the *polis*. As Agaogullari (2002) emphasized, the appointment of Solon has two important results; 1- *Nomoi* became more important than *thesmoi,* 2-

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[3] There were three main noble classes in Ancient Athens. Eupadridi (good-borns), Geomor (landlords), and Hippeis (horseman). As it was in the Roman Empire, having a horse, or riding battle with a horse considered as a noble privilege.

The ideals and institutions of democracy is shaped. The increased importance of *nomoi* over *thesmoi* was the increasing importance of *demiurgoi* over *eupatrids* (Manville, 1997:124).

Solon of Athens had also established new institutions which will be considered as the roots of democratic institutions by the future writers. Those were; *ecclesia, bule,* and *heliaia*. Mainly the ecclesia was the "people's assembly" in which classes could send representatives to it. One of the ecclesia's main duties was to elect state officials as well as law-making. Some researchers questioned the importance of *ecclesia* (Rothchild, 2007). Main subject of this questioning was the "direct" characteristic of this assembly. With a simple calculation, in the most crowded times of Ancient Athens, there were 40.000-45.000 citizens. For instance, if the quarter of the citizens decided to join one of the *ecclesia's* meetings, that means approximately 10.000 people who are discussing, arguing, and shouting on the problems of the *polis*. The other concern about the characteristic of *ecclesia* is related with the characteristic of democracy in Ancient Greece. According to Rothchild (2007), there were about 30.000 citizens in the city during the Peloponnesian Wars. However, 130.000 women children, 25.000 aliens (strangers) and 200.000 slaves were the majority in the city. Roughly, only 10% of the total population had a right to vote, decide, or speak in public places. Nevertheless, *ecclesia,* as an institution helped Athenians to politicize in time. *Bule* was the Council of 400s, and its main responsibility was to lighten the workload of *ecclesia*. *Bule* was responsible to setting the agendas of *ecclesia* meetings and prepare draft laws. *Bule*'s member number was increased by Cleisthenes to 500 in 6th Century B.C. *Heliaia* was the people's courts. Every citizen who is over 30 could become a member of these courts by "draws". The main responsibility of these courts was to balance the power of the executives.

Persian Empire attacked Greek city states in 490 B.C. The need for soldiers and solidarity against this invasion caused rights and freedoms to expand larger groups of

people. In order to protect *polis* rulers started to be more inclusive for lower classes such as *thetes* in terms of enabling them to become civil servants. This meant that the spread of democratic institutions to a greater number of people, people who had no rights not freedoms before.

As a result, ideals and institutions of democracy is highly related and connected with the social, economic, and political contexts of the Ancient Greek era. Tribes and small villages merge with neighbour villages in order to establish security; secure times enables economy to flourish in terms of trade and agriculture; land owners-land labourers and traders-city labourers distinction creates conflicts between different social classes; these conflicts causes various institutions to arise in order to keep "status quo" in balance; new institutions assist lower, powerless classes to gain more rights than ever before; an external political power intervenes (Persians); the need for manpower can be provided at the cost of new rights/liberties. Social, economic, and political reasons that caused democracy can be briefly explained in this way. However, as the context was completely different than today's world, the idea and understanding of democracy is also different from what we understand as democracy. There are certain, important characteristics of classical democracy; although the names are same, the core and concept of these characteristics are, naturally, different. For instance, citizenship is limited to a small scale of population.

First distinctive characteristic of democracy in Ancient Athens -or classical democracy from now on, was its direct type. Ancient Greeks were participating in democratic processes without any need of *expert* representatives or mediators. It is important to mention that direct participation was related with all functions of the *polis*; including judicial functions. As there was no concept of specialized people – such as judges who serve under each power (i.e. legislation, execution, and jurisdiction); every citizen had a right to participate all these functions.

Citizens of Athens had; right to speak in their assemblies, right to become judges-civil servants. This brings us to second important characteristic of classical democracy; there was no difference between a regular citizen and civil servant. What does it mean? In modern states, citizens might join the state as a civil servant or public official by following some procedures. For instance, a judge must be graduated from law faculties or a civil servant is expected to graduate from public administration faculties. Furthermore, most countries apply different exams to candidates to measure their eligibility, such as KPSS in Turkey. In the classical democracy, all citizens could participate judicial or execution related duties just because they are citizens. They were eligible as long as they are citizens. This might be one of the most important differences of classical democracy.

In modern perspective one might think that handing over such a huge power to a regular citizen is a little bit "unorthodox". However, Ancient Athenians were, of course, thought this. All citizens could become public officials for a *relatively* short time. In addition, as all citizens could not avoid these responsibilities, selections were carrying out in different ways such as; rotation or lots. Ancient Athenians might be the first –and probably the last, society that leave the destiny of public positions to hands of the *lady fortuna*. Well, considering how populist leaders are ruling powerful countries today (govern-tweeting), lots or rotation might not be the most insane way. As seen, classical democracy was quite different than the modern democracy in terms of both practices and ideas.

On the other hand, democracy, from the beginning faced harsh criticisms. In the Ancient Athenian era, there were two major figures who criticized democracy; Plato and Aristotle. Modern democracy theorists drew their theories under the light of these criticisms as well as ancient democratic ideals. For them, applying classical democracy was impossible due to population problem, indeed. However, their understanding of democracy was based on Aristotle's and Plato's writings.

Therefore, classical democracy was *already* a thing that they would not apply to their context from the beginning.

First, in his theory of forms, Plato suggests two realms; the realm of ideas and the realm of physical/sensible world. In generic terms, the world we live in is just the reflection of the realm of ideas (allegory of the cave). Naturally, he raised some questions on what the ideal state and society are. In his half-utopic (or sometimes stated as half-totalitarian) state, Plato offered a different form of government; the rule of philosopher kings[4]. What was the meaning of philosopher king? For instance, can a butcher become a fighter pilot if he gathers adequate support from the public? Plato, naturally, cannot answer to this question, but he suggests that states should not be ruled by the people who are not eligible to rule. Gathering tremendous support from the public does not mean that a person should become the ruler. It is important to emphasize that Plato's eligibility criteria are not related with wealth, religion, or lineage. A ruler should be wise and understand the *idea of the good*. Plato suggest nearly 50 years of training for becoming a ruler. The degenerated form of philosopher kings is "populist tyrants". Plato also thinks rulers (philosopher kings) must have some attributes such as virtue. However, he adds that these attributes are not equally distributed among people. Untrained rulers who do not have the necessary attributes (populist tyrants) were not the "true navigators" (Held, 2006:37).

Aristotle, on the other hand, questioned Plato's view on tyrants and demagogues. It can be perceived as Aristotle shared the view of Plato's against the idea of inequality of the distribution of attributes among citizens. But Plato's *biggest* fear was a change from democracy to tyranny when demagogues started to *ignite* passions of the crowds (mobs). Plato was quite sceptical towards common mobs as he thinks that they always tend to follow leaders; leaders who are talented in giving speeches –

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[4] Despite the fact that the Roman Empire has seen its peak on his era, even Marcus Aurelius has "failed" in implementing philosopher king's ideas which Plato suggested. It is because that –also Plato suggested- having a philosopher king is not adequate for creating a society which matches the ideal of Plato's

skilful orators. On the contrary, Aristotle thinks that if demagogues use passions of the crowd through rhetorical ways, then rhetoric can be (and should be) used as a "tool" for illuminating the citizens, so that they won't follow demagogues. In his words "rhetoric is the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" (Rhetoric, Book II, and Part 2). So, Aristotle was aware of the importance of discussions. Furthermore, he sees that the goal of the discussion is something more than just being right. Discussion was a practical thing which cannot be avoided in democracies, as it enables philosophical attributes to be distributed through the way of discussion (or *deliberation)*. Aristotle also suggested that the citizens or mob, can reach a level of wisdom and virtue which can become higher than "already" wise individuals. As can be seen, his views are relatively more equal than Plato's.

It is important to emphasize that Aristotle might be the origin of *deliberative democracy* in Ancient Greece, as well. But rather than his political philosophy, his views on rhetoric and multitude are more related to deliberative democracy (Chambers, 2018:57).

However, Plato and Aristotle couldn't influence enlightenment philosophers directly. Their ideas strained through the Roman and Medieval era.

2.2.Roman Empire – Medieval Age- Rise of Republicanism

Roman Empire is the biggest and most influential empire in the history of the world. The importance of the military success had caused nobles and aristocrats to mobilize huge numbers of people in order to sustain the conquests. Conquests caused an accumulation in wealth in Roman Empire. These developments have various results in the political history of Roman Empire; for instance, the institutionalization of democratic mechanisms. One of the most famous figures in the Roman Empire,

Cicero, has focused on these democratic mechanisms. His basic question was about how to sustain the stability in the *res publica*. His focus was not to re-invent the *res publica* but to sustain it. Cicero, by following the Plato's way, suggested two important principles in order to sustain *res publica;* 1-Stability, 2-Training of the Rulers. As seen above, Plato suggested nearly 50 years of training in order to become a philosopher king. Plato also suggested an order, unity, and virtue combination for an ideal state. Cicero, in addition to that, focused mainly on the training of the rulers, as rulers usually follows their own interests in populist ways, rather than protecting the interest of the people.

It should be noted that *res publica* is used in many meanings throughout the history. Today, we usually understand republic from the term *res publica*. Yet, in the Roman Empire this term had another meaning which is "related with the public" or "the public-thing". Cicero's book *De Re Publica* is usually translated as "On the Commonwealth". Actually, Cicero uses this term as the Roman equivalent of Greek *politeia*. The term *res publica* is also related with the property rights and government. The main difference between *res publicae* and *res privatae* (things related with the public and things related with private) is the backbone of Cicero's thought. It is important to emphasize here that Cicero was one of the major opposition of Land Reform which is proposed by Servilius Rullus in 63 B.C. as Cicero thought that one of the duties of the state is to "guarantee the freedom of men on overseeing his property freely". It should be noted that the separation/difference of *res publicae* and *res privatae* is more important in Roman Empire than the difference between *oikos-polis* in Ancient Greece. Roman laws define a detailed property concept. Roman citizens have a *dominium* on their owned properties. One of the most important duties of the public authority is to protect this property regime. Therefore, citizens who are the owners of properties, have some sort of "freedoms" against the state. This private and public difference is quite important in terms of theoretical roots of deliberative democracy as well.

The rise of Christianity and institutionalization of it is the other major change in the Roman Empire. For instance, once the desired philosopher kings now turned into "other-worldly representatives" (Held, 2006:41). The reborn of the idea of republicanism in Roman Empire was in 11th Century A.D. when Aquinas tried to combine Aristotle's ideas with Christianity. On one hand, the city-republics was developing and becoming powerful in terms of economy and on the other the feudal structure of the Middle-Age Europe caused church to become more powerful. After the collapse of the Western Roman Empire in 476 there were no strong, powerful central authorities in Europe. Roman Church was the largest economic power and "relatively" central authority. Therefore, Roman Church was the only actor who is the representative of both *swords*. There are two important figures in the Middle-Age European democratic thought. First is John of Salisbury, and second one is Thomas Aquinas. John of Salisbury was the vanguard of using the word *politicus* in a time when Aristotle's *Politika* have not translated to Latin yet (Agaogullari et.al, 2011:250). According to him, God is the only source of the worldly and spiritual power. God has chosen the Roman Church as the bearer of two swords. As the Church cannot shed blood, it *transferred* the worldly sword to aristocratic princes. Therefore, the nobles, princes, aristocrats are nothing more than humble servants of the Roman Catholic Church. John of Salisbury is the first figure in Middle Ages who brought back Aristotle in terms of politics. However, the rise of Aristotle with the "sauce of Christianity" will be occurred when another important figure, Thomas Aquinas re-discovered him.

The importance of Thomas Aquinas lies in his interpreting of Aristotle in the Medieval Age. Thomas Aquinas accepts the Aristotle's *zoon politikon concept* in a religious perspective (Davies, 1992). In Aristotle's *zoon politikon*, the public life of the *polis* directs the private life of the *oikos*. However, Thomas Aquinas uses this term as *animal politicum et sociale* (political and social animal). This difference is the proof that Aquinas' principles are rather *wider* than Aristotle's political animal.

In other words, in Thomas Aquinas' definition, people and citizen are two different concepts. The question, then, *why* a person/citizen must be a good (ethical, virtuous) one?

Thomas Aquinas suggested that people should live together as this was a natural necessity. This necessity causes a political power to emerge such as directors/leaders. If political power is a result of the necessity of living together, then the existence of the political power is bounded by the limits of this necessity. So, leaders who have the political powers should concern the "common interest" of the people who are living together. This is the main proof of the separation between the state and the church in Thomas Aquinas. As the state is a result of living together, then it is irrelevant to the Church.

Instead of accepting the perspective of Thomas Aquinas, the Roman Church insisted on *plenitude potestatis*. In time, emperors and kings of the Medieval Europe, started to reject the power of the Church over them. Emperors like Barbarossa, Heinrich VI, Friedrich II, rebelled against the Papacy. Even though the emperors are excommunicated, they were quite powerful in terms of economy and military, excommunication itself did not have any strong impacts on them. Throughout the Medieval Age, opposition of the Papacy used Roman law and Aristotle's works against Papal influence all the time (Agaogullari et. al, 2011:267). The importance of the Roman law was in its concepts. Roman law prioritizes *res publica* and *imperium* concepts against the perception of feudalism. According to these concepts, only one, central power (kings or emperors) should exist in the country.

2.3.The Republican and Liberal Turns

2.3.1. Republican Turn

There are two important "traditions" that influenced modern democracy; republican tradition and liberal tradition. Indeed, the *essence* of democracy might lie in Ancient Greek and those traditions have their roots in classical democracy. Yet, their political philosophies, concepts, and perceptions are quite different than Ancient Greece.

Even though some researchers based the republican tradition to Ancient Greece and Aristotle's vision of polis (Rahe, 1992), the term *res publica* is related with Roman Empire, as seen above. The rise of republicanism in medieval and enlightenment age has also occurred in the Italian city states, as well. By the 11th century, Italian city states started to create city councils which had judicial and executive powers. Similar to previous institutions of classical democracy, these councils were also responsible for a limited period, accountable against the citizens of city states. As it was in Ancient Athens, citizens were males who had adequate level of property and/or born in the city states. Considering that the Europe was at the hands of feudalism, this structure is quite important. Also, it should be noted that the Europe's government structures were mainly separated into two paths; in one path powerful monarchies fed by feudal structures, at the other path relatively small commercial city states which are considered as republics. Cicero, as a major figure who paved the road for republicanism, sees the republic as a structure more than an association of men; it is a *union* under a "… common agreement about law and rights and by the desire to participate in mutual advantages" (De re publica, 1952). Furthermore, Livy was claiming that "… the expansion of republican power could be linked directly to respect for authority, religious and secular, and to the –modesty, fairness and nobility of mind- which belonged to the whole people" (Held, 2006:32-35).

Here, one may notice the emphasis on virtue of "men" or citizens. The citizen in republican tradition was the person who follows the virtuous ways as well as participates in political actions. Citizenship can be described as a term which has public responsibility and public good intrinsic to it (virtues) and being a political actor at the same time. The main difference of republican tradition from classical

democracy lies here; in the classical democracy political participation or civic virtue was intrinsic to polis' values; republican tradition added an "instrumentally useful tools for securing and preserving political liberty[5]" (Stanford republicanism; Skinner,1983; Lovett, 2005; Petitt;1989). Liberty, therefore, considered as a concept which is inherent to the public, or *res publicae*. Republican tradition, we might suggest, establishes a connection between liberty and public, here.

This connection also links the republican tradition with the liberal tradition. The citizen of the republic was perceived as an individual who possesses *liberties*. In his infamous article "Two Concepts of Liberty" (1969), Isaiah Berlin conceptualizes two different models of liberty; positive and negative. Positive liberty is, in Berlin's words, "... allowing an individual to act in the right manner such that the true self can be rationally realized; that is, to become one's own master" (Berlin, 1969:2). The republican tradition follows the idea of positive liberties and the emphasis, here, is on "collectivity".

In Berlin's conceptualization, the positive liberty has its roots in Rousseau's theories. Rousseau's theory of freedom claims that freedom of the individuals can be realized via political participation in the process in which individuals' community applies "... collective control over its own affairs in accordance with the *general will*[6]" (Ian Carter, Positive Negative Liberty Stanford). When it comes to Jean Jacques Rousseau, one cannot avoid discussing two concepts; general will and social contract;

> To find a form of association that may defend and protect with the whole force of the community the person and property of every associate, and by means of which each, joining together with all, may nevertheless obey only himself, and remain as free as before" (Rousseau, 2002:163).

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[5] Lovett, Frank, "Republicanism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/republicanism/>

[6] Carter, Ian, "Positive and Negative Liberty", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/liberty-positive-negative/>.

Rousseau defines the *problem* which related with the all social structures. In his theory of social contract, he proposes above "form of association" as the solution for democracies and/or living together. The notion of *contract* was not special to Rousseau. Roughly 100 years before him, Thomas Hobbes was the one who thoroughly conceptualized his theory of social contract (please see below). In Rousseau's social contract, individuals grant (or give up) their rights and freedoms voluntarily (or freely). This changes the whole notion of *contract* itself. For instance, in Hobbes' *Leviathan* people gave up their rights and freedom in order to emancipate themselves from the state of nature. In Locke's conceptualization, they grant these privileges to their *representatives* in order to protect their freedoms and properties. In Hobbes' and Locke's contracts, the contract is made between "parties". However, in Rousseau, an individual makes the contract in his/herself, initially. Then, rather than contracting, Rousseau's concept is related with *promising* (Rousseau, 2006:14). Furthermore, this act of *promising,* was not the result of a normative binding legal contract, on the contrary, it is encouraged by the **morality** of *pacta sunt servanda*.

Rousseau suggests that in the state of nature, we cannot mention the concept of morality, as the individual in the state of nature acts under the term "amour de soi". When individuals start to leave the state of nature as a result of *civilization* they start to act under the term "amour de propre". Roughly translating, both terms actually mean the same thing "self-love[7]". The main difference between them is the result of civilization; Rousseau claims that when the state of nature fades, people start to see themselves as others see them. This means people start to live how they would like to be seen. While actions of *amour de soi* are not cruel or bad as in the state nature, people do not pursue their "self-interests", actions of *amour de propre* are "subject to corruption".

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[7] In the Turkish translation, amour de soi translated as "kendinin sevgisi" while amour de propre translated as "özünün sevgisi".

Nevertheless, the idea of general will is directly related with the *amour de propre*. Both morality and general will are not natural to humans and abstract. Or in other terms, they are, indeed, general. First of all, the general will is not the "grand-total" of self-interests or private interests. The term general represents common interests rather than quantity;

> There is often a great deal of difference between the will of all and the general will; the latter regards only the common interest, while the former has regard to private interests, and is merely a sum of particular wills; but take away from these same wills the pluses and minuses which cancel one another, and the general will remains as the sum of differences (Rousseau, 2002:172).

The general will directly related with the common good or the good of society and it is the only way to establish equality. Equality, then, is the only way to create social contract. However, Rousseau states that some groups, parties, or individuals may pursue their self-interest (amour de soi) and he claims that these are the major threats to good of the society. He emphasizes that everyone should grant their self-interests to the whole society and should search for the common-good.

Democracy, for Rousseau, is considered as a "risky" structure, as the general will could be ignored under the pressure of self-interests. Furthermore, in a democracy legislative and executive functions should be separated. Therefore, the classical democracy cannot be considered as an ideal for above reasons. Instead of classical democracy, Rousseau suggests a political system in which legislation and execution is separated for a society who enjoys economic equality in an order that nobody can be a master of another, and all can enjoy equal freedom and development in the process of self-determination for the common good" (Held, 2006:48).

To sum up, positive liberty and the republican tradition that follows;

Sees politics as a constitutive process and a mediator in which individuals who carries ethical burdens of a good society come together and *create* better forms of government. As it was in Rousseau's thoughts, here, citizens are fully aware of their ethical roles, they know that they are in need for each other, and act under "amor de propre",

Positive liberties are the roots for republican tradition,

Nature of political process is not the rules of the market procedures as it is in the liberal tradition, rather republican tradition puts emphasis on values over preference (rational self-interest pursued choices). Therefore, an economic equality should be formed for a just republic i.e. citizens' self-interest should not be in the agenda when discussing public issues.

Another turn in the history of democracy is relatively more influential than the republican turn. Or in other terms, this turn *also* influenced republican ideas and thoughts as well as the whole social order; liberal turn. As discussed above, Berlin claims that negative liberties are related with first liberal philosophers such as Hobbes, Locke, and Mill. As expected, these important figures based their thoughts on classical democracy as well.

2.3.2. Liberal Turn

In one side, kings and emperors were gaining more political power by basing their existence to Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and Marsilius of Padua. One the other side, the downfall of the Church was causing the Reform Movement to emerge. Reform and the Renaissance "challenge the universal claims of Catholicism" (Held, 2006:56). In addition, rising importance of the trade, the shift in the production methods, was the symptoms of democracy which was not on the surface of history until the 18ᵗʰ century. We might mention the "liberal turn" in terms of democracy. The liberal turn or "liberal tradition" of political philosophy starts with two main

figures; Thomas Hobbes, and John Locke. Thomas Hobbes declared the *superiority* of the state against any other social organizations by giving the biblical name *Leviathan* to state. And John Lock prepared the first steps of the political liberalism.

There are two core concepts in Hobbes' theory; Social Contract and State of Nature. State of Nature, according to Hobbes, is the natural situation of the people. As there are inequalities between humans, one person cannot establish superiority on another; while one person is powerful, the other is more intelligent, or if a person carries these two attributes, then there are always *two* other person who can easily defeat him/her. Hobbes simply explains this situation as "*bellum omnium contra omnes"* (the war of all against all). The life of the human in the state of nature always contains a fear of death and terror. However, human is also a rational being, according to Hobbes. In order to avoid this fear, humans come together and establish an overarching structure; the state. It is important to emphasize here that Hobbes' theory is not related with historical, material facts. Hobbes calls this overarching structure as the *Leviathan*; a biblical sea monster. Thomas Hobbes' main goal is to focus on achieving and keeping the peace. His theory emphasizes the importance of political behaviours of individuals in order to avoid the collapse of the political order. Therefore, individuals or citizens might *willingly* give the use of their rights to an over-arching structure which has an authority use these rights on individuals' behalf. If all the people who form the society participates this *contract,* a power namely "sovereign power" can be established.

Thomas Hobbes' theory can be considered as the start of the individual-state conflict. Hobbes does not suggest individuals over state. However, he, by referring natural rights and transferring these rights to the state, acknowledges the individual as a concept in politics. The rise of the individual rights can be seen in Locke, rather than Hobbes.

John Locke is the one who clearly connects the liberalism with Western democratic thought. Locke, similar to Hobbes, designs a state of nature. However, contrary to Hobbes, he does not support "unlimited, arbitrary power of the state" even though the state *saves* the humanity from anarchy, and disorder (Held, 2006:60, Agaogullari et.al, 2011:484). In Held's words Locke finds "… hardly credible that people who do not fully trust each other would place their trust in an all-powerful sovereign to look after their interests" (Held, 2006:62). In order to understand the political power correctly, Locke focuses on how humans act in their state of nature. Locke sees the state of nature as the state of peace, equality, and freedom. Freedom, here, does not mean that the human's freedom on doing everything he/she desires, rather, it is the freedom of doing the thing which is allowed by the law of the nature. The law of the nature is independent from any state law or any tradition. It is a normative law which is intrinsic to the state of nature.

Equality in Locke means; possessing equal rights which enables people to establish their own freedoms without consenting any other individual's will or authority. All people have equal rights in executing the law of the nature. First condition of equality in Locke is the lack of any supreme will or political power which forces other people to obey. If equality is the lack of superior political *being*, then freedom is the act of living without obeying any other individual.

One of the most important concepts in the theory of Locke is *toleration*. Locke states that any individual, no matter a philosopher king, or tyrant, can perceive the reality as it is. Therefore, fanaticism or bigotry is dangerous as they act like they obtain the knowledge of *everything*. Locke suggests that people should trust their common sense and reason against fanaticism. Every person has common sense and reason, so every person has a potential to *develop*. The term "*tabula rasa"* of Locke, actually is his view on equality among all individuals, as initially all persons have an "empty mind". The overarching state, then, should not restrict this potential; rather it should

help/assist people to achieve this potential. Seeing the connection individual against state here is inevitable. The individual aspect of Liberalism is this connection.

Locke, as seen above, also trusted the rationality or reason of the humans. Human, as a rational creature, has tendency to choose what is best for him/her. Humans, as their nature requires, lives in a social context. So, human's rational choice should be "living in this social context as comfortable/good as possible". One of the rights that provide this comfortable/good living is the right to property (right to own property). If a human contributes *something* through his/her labour, then, according to Locke, he/she has a right to say, "this thing is mine". All things/objects are provided by God himself initially, if a human changes/contributes an object with his/her labour force, this means he/she adds something new, and a contribution to the object. Therefore, he/she can have a right to property on the object.

State, then, should protect the freedoms/rights of the people. If a person contributes an object which is given by the nature (or God), he/she has rights on it, such as selling. Nothing, including the State, can ignore a person's labour contributed property.

Mentioning one of the interesting interpretations of Locke's right to property, here, might be useful. C.B. Macpherson, in his infamous book *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (1962) suggests that Locke's views on labour and property actually provides an ethical and rationalist basis to capitalist developments in 18th Century England. Macpherson states that Locke's individual (human) is nothing more than a rational, interest-seeking bourgeois individual. According to him, Locke starts to distinguish property-owners and non-property owners in the state of nature. As the property owner is an individual who uses his/her reason/rationality, a non-property owner then, an individual who cannot use his/her reason, therefore he/she is not a "member" of the civilization as they are not the part of the social contract. Considering Macpherson's interpretation on Locke, we can

clearly see the relation between the economic developments (changes in the means of production) and political philosophy.

Although John Locke as known as the philosopher who paved the roads for representative democracy Montesquieu is the one who theorized "institutional innovations" for the achievement for representative democracy. Montesquieu's works derived from the political context of the 18th century France. As known, 18th century France was boiling with civil unrest; political, social, and religious. The king of France in the 18th century has more centralized power comparing the other European kingdoms. However, especially subsidizing the mercantilist policies empowered the bourgeois that will overthrow the monarchy in the following years. Montesquieu, among his contemporary thinkers, considered the empowerment of bourgeois.

Montesquieu rejects the idea of *unnatural* society which has been developed by the social contract theorists and he considers the society as a natural concept. Considering the society as natural means this in Montesquieu's theory; there is no need to explain the *norm* by using the *ideal*. Therefore, ethics or theological values should not be taken into consideration when explaining the society. Similarly, according to Montesquieu, there is no an ideal form of government. However, he categorizes the government types as "republic, monarchy, and despotism" (de Secondat Montesquieu, 1906).

Republics can be democratic or aristocratic according to Montesquieu. In both cases, virtue is the essential of democracy. The existence of democracy is a result of virtuous citizens. Naturally, sustain this virtue throughout the generations is quite costly as virtue can be provided by education. Furthermore, citizens can also pursue their individual interests, and this causes the virtue to fade away. When the virtue is lost, the democracy follows.

Montesquieu suggests that the democracy is an ancient type of government. He claims that in the modern life only a government type which is similar to constitutional monarchy of England can be considered. He favours a government type that is ruled by a monarch based on specified laws such as constitution. There should be mixed-regime in the monarchies that consists different power groups; nobles (aristocracy), clergy, the people. All these different power groups, in reality, are the political powers that *limit* the sovereignty of the monarch. In his words, "it is better administered by one than by many" (De Secondat, 2001:178).

The principle of the monarchy is the "honour". The principle of honour, in Montesquieu's theory, helps citizens to advance/shift between those power groups. If every citizen pursues the principle of honour, then every citizen can function in an optimum way. The resemblance between liberalism and the Montesquieu's principle of honour is uncanny, here. If every individual follows his/her interest, the common good can be achieved in general.

As can be seen, in Montesquieu's theory, individuals are important as well as power groups. But the main thing that Montesquieu emphasized is that the "separation of powers". Montesquieu rejects the idea that all the power (execution, legislation, and jurisdiction) should be in the hands of a monarch. The only way to establish a political freedom is to create a checks-balance system, in which all powers can limit the other.

Simply, the jurisdiction is the power which protects the *rights* of the people. The legislation is the power that has a right to create laws. The parliament has this power. In addition, parliaments not only have the power to create laws or deliberate policies, but they have a right to limit executive power. Then who forms the parliament is a vital question here. Montesquieu forms the legislation power in two chambers (houses) by referring to English constitution; one for nobles and for the people;

(the people are) periodically elected individuals of distinction serving as trustees for the electorate's interests (responsive to the latter, but not directly accountable to them). Between the two chambers the views and interests of all "dignified" opinion would be respected. The nobles would retain the right to reject legislation while the commons would have the power of legal initiative (Held, 2006:68).

Lastly, the execution is the monarch who has the right to rule and govern society. As discussed above, Montesquieu's principle of honour is quite similar with the liberal concept of "an effective society can be achieved if every individual should follow his/her interest". The importance of separation of powers and the principle of honour lies here. Montesquieu's thought was to create a proper *public* sphere by separating powers, and to establish a *private* sphere in which individuals follow their interests.

Considering that the separation of powers is so intrinsic to every democratic country, we can understand that how the idea of liberalism *infiltrates* to the idea of democracy. An essential, such as separation of power, itself is a result of the liberal thought.

Before moving forward to contemporary theories of democracy, John Stuart Mill will be discussed. Mill focuses on the relation between freedoms and equality. In his book *On Liberty* (1859) he proposes this well-known idea; freedoms or liberties can be limited by the state, only for preventing harm to others. An intervention to the freedom of an individual is *legitimate* (or justified) when the action of the individuals might harm the others. The freedom of an individual *ends* where the freedom of another individual *begins*. Nevertheless, Mill opposed to an "excessively interventionist state". Democracy is the way to limit an interventionist state (overly-bureaucratic) (Held, 2006:84-85). As known, one of the many consequences of the industrial revolution was the boom in population. According to Mill, the modern society cannot be in the form *polis* as it was in the Ancient Greece, as a result of this boom. The rise in the population has another risk, that Mill afraid of; losing the

"wisest and ablest" to the crowds. Therefore, using representation in democracies could solve; 1-the problem of population, 2- losing the wisest and ablest individuals to the crowds. Mill saw some advantages of the representative democracy in; monitoring and evaluation of the elected, using parliaments for debate mechanisms as the debate is central to democracies, and regular, competitive elections which can enable better leaders, politicians, or statesmen to *born*.

Another important concept of Mill's philosophy is the infamous *tyranny of majority*. Mill explains tyranny of majority as;

> … "the tyranny of the majority" is now generally included among the evils against which society requires to be on its guard. Like other tyrannies, the tyranny of majority was at first, and is still vulgarly, held in dread, chiefly as operating through the acts of the public authorities. But reflecting persons perceived that when society is itself the tyrant – society collectively over the separate individuals who compose it- its means of tyrannizing are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries (Mill,1966:3)

Mill, as can be seen emphasizes the one of the most antique critics of democracy in a different perspective. Aristotle's and Plato's worst fear was the government of mobs that are led by a demagogue. However, the thing in classical democracy was the *ruling*. Mill points a tyranny which does not come from state or authorities but the public itself. So, to say, an individual –a person whose beliefs are different than the majority and/or the state, should be protected against the state and the society.

The tyranny of majority should not be perceived as the inequality in voting. Mill, certainly, was aware that a thing/situation cannot be perceived as democratic for just the majority was demanding it. That is why; he suggested that right to vote should be a right for everyone, including women, after a thorough education. This education could be considered for a solution in inequality in voting. Another point that Mill pointed out about voting is that the representation of minority. In a democracy, minority cannot rule the majority and majority cannot establish a *tyranny* over the

other elements of a society. This does not mean that minorities should not be represented at all. In order to solve the representation of minorities' problem, Mill proposes "proportional representation". Even today, proportional representation is used in democracies around the world. Basically, if a party (or any other organizational form in a democracy) receives, for instance 10% of the votes, it should have 10% of parliamentary seats as well;

> In a really equal democracy, every or any section would be represented, not disproportionately but proportionately. As majority of the electors would always have a majority of the representatives; but a minority of the electors would always have a minority of the representatives (Mill, 1861: Ch. VIII)

But his emphasis on tyranny of majority was pretty much wider than voting; "there is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence; and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs as protection against political despotism" (Mill, On Liberty, p.3).

How the philosophers of liberal turn affected the idea of democracy then? Liberal thought emerged throughout the fall of feudalism and the rise of the market society and capitalism. From the beginning, the connection between liberal thought and the bourgeois (and industrial middle-class) was apparent. Main concepts of the liberalism were also *tools* for strengthening the bourgeois against monarchy. In the fight against feudalism and monarchy, bourgeoisie (which carried revolutionary characteristics then) created a new idea/ notion of society. In this new society all people had rights, irrespective of their bloodline. This change was the main transformation which caused feudalism became capitalism and monarchy became democracy.

The liberal thought, as seen, targeted the "natural" characteristic of feudalism and monarchy and proposed new concepts against it, such as; individualism, liberty (freedom), equality, and constitution.

The concept of individual was completely new thing considering the context of 18th century. People who were the mere subjects of a monarch now became individuals who have *natural* rights which are given by the God himself, as it is theorized in Locke. In order to have these rights, individuals should be free. Freedom or liberty in this sense means a type of freedom that every individual can act as per his/her own will. Every individual should have natural rights and freedom; therefore, every individual should be equal. They are equal in front of the law and they are equal in terms of politics. Lastly, every concept of liberalism should be protected under one general document in order to avoid different versions of tyranny; the constitution.

The free individual who has natural rights protected by a constitution and equal in terms of legal and political terms is the core of liberalism. To sustain this core, a form of government in which all people have right to talk, participate, and rule should be established. Democracy is the most suitable form of government as it enables all individuals to govern, if necessary. Then, if we update the Antique form of democracy as per the concepts of liberalism, a new, equal, free, and rational society can be established.

However, as the class which liberalism based followed the roads of capitalism, and the main actors (countries) of the liberal democracy were capitalists, the whole concept of liberalism-democracy-capitalism got "mixed up". Neither liberalism nor democracy can be reduced to capitalism. Nevertheless, capitalism and democracy are used as synonyms by some for a long time.

2.4.Representative-Liberal Democracy

The roots of the modern democracy are in the representation. Principles of democracy that appeared in the Ancient Greece merged with the ideals of Liberalism as a result of works of John Stuart Mill and John Locke. The representation in modern democracies is defined mainly by elections. In those elections, citizens who

have a right to equal vote, elect their representatives in a competitive election process. The concept of elections has changed the meaning of democracy "dramatically" (Fuchs, 2007:33). One of the most important principles of this dramatic change is *responsiveness*. In the democracies of Ancient Greece, there were no fundamental differences between the elected and electors. Any citizen could be considered as a civil servant or judge (please see above). Responsive acts of the elected are intrinsic to the modern democracies, as the differences between elected and electors are getting wider and wider. These responsive acts caused changes in the characteristic of the representatives and the meaning of participation. In representative/liberal democracies the power of decision making is left to the specialized/expert representatives.

The *demos* of the democracy or in other terms "the people" is no longer considered as possible rulers. The role of the *demos* has changed from *rulers* to control mechanism of the rulers. The *demos* in representative democracies do this responsibility by elections. They can reward or punish possible representatives, but they cannot be considered as rulers anymore, as long as they do not participate in the competitive elections. This is a major –and irreversible, change in the meaning of democracy. Or in other terms "whereas in antique democracy participation by the citizens in government was both means and end, in liberal/representative democracy it is now only a means to an end" (Fuchs, 2007:34). In the Ancient Athenian economic system, the main production was based on slaves rather than citizens' labour force. On the contrary, in the capitalism (which is the economic system of liberal/representative democracies); the production is based on only citizens. The concept of citizen became more general; rather than a small minority of males, all individuals considered as citizens in liberal democracy. If all individuals would participate the ruling process, then who would make the production? In liberal/representative democracies, there is another elite, special group of people who will do the responsibilities of citizens on behalf of citizens; politicians, bureaucrats,

parliament members. Other citizens, should vote when necessary, stay in the production line, and leave the *real citizen duties* to the elected representatives.

The representative democracy, then, can fully operate only if citizens (electors) and government (elected) fulfil their responsive guarantees to each other, as the responsiveness became the backbone of the representative democracy. In Robert Dahl's formulization, these guarantees separated into two sections; citizens' guarantees and constitutional guarantees.

Table 1. Constitutional Guarantees and Citizens'

Guarantees (Robert Dahl, 1971)

Citizens' Guarantees		Constitutional Guarantees
1- Citizens are able to formulate their own preferences,		a. The Freedom to from and join organizations,
2- Citizens are able to present themselves to their fellow citizens and to the government via recourse to individual and collective action,	→	b. The freedom of expression,
		c. The right to vote,
		d. The right to compete for support and votes,
3- Citizens are able to ensure that their preferences are weighed equally in the conduct of the government that is weighted with no discrimination because of the content or source of the preference	←	e. Eligibility for political roles,
		f. Alternative sources of information,
		g. Free and fair elections,
		h. Institutions that make the government dependent on the vote and other forms of expression of political preferences.

Therefore fair, free, just, and regular elections are central to the liberal democracy. The importance of the elections is also to prevent the risk of shifting to a corrupt form of democracy. Representative democracies have constitutional principles that

protect their *system* against corrupt forms of democracy. The liberal paradigm in the representative democracy, as seen above, has centralized the recognition of individual rights. This means that, even if a group –or political party have the majority in the parliament, there are some liberal, constitutional principles and rules that are constant and cannot be changed by the vast majority. One of the founding principles of representative democracies that its *ban* on decisions that can "harm" the core of liberal principles (Della Porta, 2013:15).

Although the representative democracy considered as the best way of democracy for a long time, it couldn't avoid crisis that are *actually* intrinsic to representation itself. In 1975, Crozier, Huntington, and Watakuni published their infamous book "The Crisis of Democracy". The writers questioned the representative democracy and discussed the possibilities of participation. Huntington, for instance, argued that the increase in the participation, damages the traditional representative institutions (1975:74 ff.). When individuals start to participate more to traditional representative mechanisms, they start to demand *changes* in the representative system.

Della Porta proposes three major problems/challenges against liberal democracy in line with Crozier et. Al. According to her; 1-There is a shift from representative institutions to execution device of the government, 2- There is a shift from nation states to International Non-Governmental organizations, 3- There is a shift from state to market (2013:24). The shift from representative institutions to execution device (government) is a similar concern with Huntington; as there is a critical decrease in the capacity of traditional representative institutions (or in other terms, they cannot meet the demands of the individuals) such as political parties, they are losing their importance as being the mediator between the citizens and the government. The distrust of the citizens towards traditional representative institutions appears in elections, for example. As the elections are the basis of the representation, distrust towards elections is the distrust against representation itself. Comparing the election

turnout rates with previous years supports this argument. Furthermore, citizens are changing their voting behaviours; while in 1950 only 11% of the voters were changing their decisions between consecutive elections; in 1990 this percentage rose to 26% (Della Porta, 2013:26). This statistics by itself does not prove the distrust towards representation. However, it shows us that citizens are becoming more flexible in their voting choices and always look for *new* entities. With the rise of the populism, relatively new political parties started to overthrow traditional political parties in power. Naturally not all newly established political parties came to power, but most of them joined coalition governments or gained "unexpected" seats in their respective parliaments[8]. Therefore, this is a concerning problem for representative democracy.

The shift from nation states to INGOs is another challenge for representative democracy. In the last decades number of international treaties and international regulations has increased. The "orthodox" representative democracy sees the nation state as the only sovereign power. However, the effect of the INGOs such as United Nations, recommends nation states to follow international rules and regulations. This means the national sovereignty is superseded by these norms. Or in other terms the increase in international norms causes international organizations to obtain more power. This challenge the "legitimation of liberal democracies as representing the will of their citizens" (Della Porta, 2013:29).

The shift from states to the market is a challenge related to welfare concern of representative democracies. One of the legitimization ways of representative democracies is to provide welfare to their citizens. A "proper" democracy should provide and protect individual freedoms as well as establish equality. Welfare is a good way to pursue this aim. Some researchers noticed that the neo-liberal paradigm of the capitalism ignored one of the main purposes of capitalism, which is the

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[8]https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2018/nov/20/how-populism-emerged-as-electoral-force-in-europe

general interest (Dore, 1998:244 quoted in della Porta, 2013). The general interest of the public is "conquered" by some elites and anti-egalitarian approach and these have become primary goals in democracies (Crouch 2003:9). In short terms, power of the state over market –such as intervention to economy when necessary, has been eradicated. Therefore the "power" of the states has shifted to neo-liberal global markets. However, the characteristic of this shift is questioned by some as it contradicts the ideals of capitalism.

Although the representative democracy is often criticized, there are some researchers who are supporters of representative democracy –with criticisms. For example, Nadia Urbinati in her book *Representative Democracy: Principles and Genealogy* (2010) searches under which conditions representation became democratic (p.3). Urbinati claims that representation does not necessarily exclude participation; on the contrary, participation and representation are related forms of democracy and they complete each other. Therefore, representation can play a role that connects "atomized citizens" and direct them to a "future-oriented" perspective.

Beside from relatively small numbers of supporters of representative democracy, some researchers sought new forms of democracies. Participatory democracy is suggested in the context of harsh criticism towards representative democracy.

As seen above, participation and representation usually perceived as the two poles of the representative democracy. If representation increases, participation decreases or vice versa. Participatory democracy as a model of democracy is shaped around two concepts; 1-Democracy beyond Elections, 2-Learn to participate by participating in. Representative democracy promotes elections above all. However, in participatory democracy the main idea is that the representation is not *representative* enough, if there is no participation from various interest groups. Whereas participation is seen as a constitutional liberal democratic right –such as voting, mechanisms for effective participation prevents different interest groups to join decision making processes.

First, then, a re-definition for what representation means; representation should not be limited to specialized/expert representatives; rather it should "bring decisions as close to the people as possible" (Della Porta, 2013:37).

The concept of equality differs in participatory democracy, as well. Representative democracy, indeed, promotes equality and sees it as an elementary factor. Equality in representative democracy, however, is formal (one vote equals one head). Defenders of the participatory democracy notices that equality is more than being equal in voting as there are various power and interest groups in society. These different power groups create power asymmetries that are failed to recognize by representative democracy Therefore, participatory democracy's goal is to balance mentioned asymmetries through participation. Or in other terms, in elections all citizens might seem equal; in reality various citizen groups have unequal powers in different subjects. Aim of the participatory democracy is that granting more decisional "power" to individuals who participate more (Della Porta, 2013:39).

As participatory democracy arose from the critics of the representative democracy, it proposes the interpretation of democratic principles. Interpreting the principles of the representative democracy gives normative character to the participatory democracy. Two main principles should be elaborated more in here; 1-Directness of citizen participation, 2- Deliberation in political opinion formation. As Barber critically states that basic principles of representative democracy are liberal indeed, but not "intrinsically democratic" (1984). Therefore, one of the main purposes of the participatory democracy is to provide more democratic basis/spaces for citizens rather than leaving democracy to liberal principles only. Participatory democracy can be described as the model of democracy in which citizens rule themselves directly in all subjects that affect their common lives (Fuchs, 2007:39). Strengthening citizen participation and *separating* liberal principles from democracy, shows the way for a "strong democracy".

As mentioned above, some traditional mechanisms of the representative democracy are specialized. This specialization causes "ritualistic" consequences in democracies. Rather than forming a public opinion, traditional mechanisms that became rituals manipulate the public opinion (Arnstein, 1969). Some researchers suggest ways for learning democracy in order to overcome this manipulation. For instance, schools of democracy are related with the second principle of participatory democracy; to learn participate, by participating. In generic terms, these schools do not represent a physical school that teaches democracy. Rather, the term has a wider –and stronger meaning. Participatory democracy calls for a space in which citizens participate in decision making processes that affects their lives. In these spaces, citizens can "learn" duties of citizenship and socialize in addition to participation. One of the examples of these spaces are "town meetings" as Tocqueville also suggested (1982, vol. I: 112). As participation points different social aspects, if citizens participate more, their behaviours and values change significantly (Bachrach 1975:50 quoted in della Porta, 2013:42). These value changes are the result of participation of different –sometimes excluded, social groups. Values, behaviours, and opinions can change if they face with a conflict. When different social groups start to participate more in decision making processes, the conflict with the other interest groups become inevitable. As seen above, the power distribution is unequal among social groups and participatory democracy's main concern is to include the excluded in order to introduce new subjects to political discussions. According to participatory democracy, political power should not be left to specialized representatives only, but it should be distributed more equally among citizens. Inclusiveness brings conflicts as well. However, conflicts cannot be external to participatory democracy as they are the proof of the participation of different social groups. The schools of democracy, then, are related with a wider perspective of democracy.

To wrap up, participatory democracy disagrees the idea that leaving politics to political elites or specialized representatives only. It claims that the democracy is

more than electing representatives or voting to predefined decisions in elections. As democracy is loaded with quite important ideas like equality or acceptance, it gets stronger when more citizens engage/participate in political action. Or in other terms, democracy must not be a system which established from top to bottom. On the contrary it must be established and *sustained* with the participation of large number of citizens (Pateman, 1970).

Participatory democracy encourages citizens to engage in political decision-making processes as well as public life. When citizens participate in community activities more, citizenship becomes more predominant. Therefore, participation strengthens a community understanding, as well. Increased political engagement causes development of new attitudes, values, and opinion. In participatory democracy, democracy is the consequence of these developed opinions, and values.

Naturally, citizens should have the necessary information on how to participate in to democratic or civic processes. In addition, they must obtain information about how to affect decision making processes.

Then participatory democracy is the model of democracy which has a meaning of "beyond elections" as well as "learning to participate by participating". Citizens in participatory democracy are not "spectators" who only observes and decides specified periods. Rather they are the actors of political engagement.

Participatory democracy was not the only objection to the representative democracy. Some scholars saw that the crisis was fundamental to the representative democracy and participatory democracy could not offer solid solutions to the crisis. There was a need for a new form of democracy which resides between the representative and participatory democracy; deliberative democracy is one of them. In the following chapter, deliberative democracy and the public sphere which is considered as the theoretical base of deliberative democracy will be discussed.

CHAPTER 3

PUBLIC SPHERE - DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

As discussed above, the crisis in the representative democracy (both in the concept of representation and representative institutions) caused new theories of democracy to emerge. One of these critics, deliberative democracy, is the main area of study of this thesis. As it is in other theories of democracy, deliberative democracy has its roots in different philosophical traditions. Researchers who study this theory often refer their theories to different sources from Aristotle to Immanuel Kant.

Similar to nearly all theories of democracy, scholars of deliberative democracy also referred to Athenian Democracy. For instance, John Dryzek mentioned that deliberative democracy has "antecedents" in Ancient Greece (2000:2). Gutmann and Thompson claimed that the roots of the deliberative democracy is in the fifth century Athens, by referring to Aristotle as stating that he is the initial philosopher who focused on the discussion between citizens (2009:8).

In the first chapter, Aristotle's and Plato's views on democracy have been discussed. Deliberative democracy theorists, as explained above, focus Aristotle more than Plato. Even though the Socratic Method has deliberative characteristics[9] in itself, Plato was not quite supportive to the democracy. His main concern was the degeneration of democracy by demagogues who influence *the mob* or citizens for

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[9] If we are to formulate Socratic Method briefly, it can be seen that it follows these steps; Claim and Reason -> Objection->Review of claim and Reason -> Finding the common ground (where every participant's initial opinion has changed).

their personal interests. Therefore, rather than finding a theoretical base in Plato's work for deliberative democracy, scholars consider Plato's concerns against democracy in a more *generic* way and focus on Aristotle's rhetoric.

Deliberative democracy theorists focus on Aristotle's views on rhetoric rather than his political philosophy for one main reason; the importance of the discussion. According to Aristotle, if demagogues use rhetoric for promoting their personal interests, more concerned citizens (such as philosopher kings) can use rhetoric for illuminating the citizens, rather than mobilizing them. As explained above, Aristotle emphasized the importance of discussions as a must in democracies. Through discussions, virtues and attributes mentioned in Plato, can be distributed to citizens, therefore they can reach a certain level of wisdom and virtue.

Indeed, some researchers such as Chambers (2018) refer to Ancient Greece for the roots of deliberative democracy. But principles and characteristics of deliberative democracy is actually shaped in the Enlightenment Age. In the Enlightenment Age new platforms appeared which were initially open trade or commercial platforms. In these platforms such subjects which related with the public concern were discussed, as well. These platforms were the first symptoms of a new domain which is completely different than the *ancient absolutist* state. These platforms became not only, but most important places in which matters related to the public being discussed (Habermas, [1962] 1991).

Briefly, in the 18th century, a new form of *sphere,* a bourgeois public sphere has emerged between the private (individual) sphere and public (state) sphere, as a result of major changes in economic relations and communication. In this new space, individuals participate in discussion in various places such as clubs, and salons, and discuss public matters in order to create a public opinion. The most important democratic change in here is that "… state actors become accountable to public opinion in a way never seen before" (Chambers, 2018:66).

3.1.   Public Sphere

Public Sphere is one of the most discussed subjects in social sciences. According to Weintraub "The distinction between public and private has been a central and characteristic preoccupation of Western thought since classical antiquity…" (Weintraub, 1997:1). As the term states "public", logically, there should be a private as well. Both terms are originated from Latin. Public or *publicus* means; 1-Belonging to the people corporately, public, and state 2- Authorized and/or maintained by the state/officials 3- Available to shared or enjoyed by all members of the community. Private or *priuatus* means; 1- Property restricted for the use of a particular person or persons 2- Not holding public office, unofficial 3- One who holds no public office (Dessau, Glare, Oxford, & Philologique, 1982). Yet, the use of public and private is not simply limited to Roman era. As Habermas mentions, concepts public and private contain Greek origins transmitted to us through Roman stamps. Here, Habermas' claim is to follow tracks of "public" and "private" in Greek *polis* and *oikos*. Greek city states' thought is to separate *polis* and *oikos* as two different realms. *Polis* was a "realm of freedom and permanence" by making everything visible to all citizens. Yet, the status in the *polis* was based upon status as the unlimited master of an *oikos* (Habermas, [1962] 1991:3-4). As can be seen, there is an interrelation between *oikos* and *polis* as well as public and private.

Immanuel Kant is generally considered as one of the first philosophers who emphasized the public and private distinctions.

Kant's perspective of public/private distinction can be considered under the republican-virtue model (Weintraub, 1997). The republican virtue model or classical model of public sphere follows the main distinction of public/private; private is related with *ownership* of the home or family, and the public is related with the political action.

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"Have courage to use your own reason" (1963:3) is the well-known starting sentence of Immanuel Kant's essay *What is Enlightenment?* Kant's main purpose of in this essay is to show the sheer importance of freedom of speech and thought. According to him the enlightenment is related to people's ability to use their "reasons". As known, there are two *reasons* which are central to Kant's argument; the public use of reasons, and the private use of reason. He made this distinction as he proposes some criteria, maybe "limitations" to the free speech. In general, he'd like to show that some people who are powerful in terms of politically (and religiously), should not raise their opinions while they are executing their duties. But naturally all people have their own "reasons". Therefore, powerful people can express their views when they are not on their duties.

> By the public use of one's reason I understand the use which a person makes of it as a scholar before the reading public. Private use I call that which one may make of it in a particular civil post or office which is entrusted to him (Kant, 1963:5)

So, the public, here, refers to a place where citizens can express their opinions freely as they are not limited by their duties. The private is the opposite form of it. It is the place where citizens *cannot* express their opinions freely, as they are limited by their duties.

Kant thought that all people are equal, even though small proportions of them have the necessary intellectual capacity. According to Chambers, this egalitarian approach refers to two important ideals of deliberative democracy;

> The first is that reason-giving is a way to treat one's interlocutor as free, equal, and deserving of respect. The second is that hypothetical rather than actual consent should be the standard of legitimacy, making reason-giving, justification, and argument in the public sphere more important than the ballot box in establishing legitimacy (Chambers, 2018:58)

Then, a public matter which concerns citizen can be addressed in a debate which might be more effective on decision in terms of legitimacy. Kant suggests that considering the "will" of the public reason should be vital in decision making, as

public use of reason separates itself from "particularities" and focuses on truth and common reason. In these debates, the reason should be "subject itself to critique (Kant, 1998:643)" as it functions with persuasion.

One of the most important things in Kant's thought that influenced Habermas (and many others) is that his understanding which perceives the public sphere as a place autonomous from the state. Autonomy from the state still is one of the criteria of deliberative democracy. Here, Kant suggests that public sphere has its own institutions (not official as it is in the state institutions), and it has distinct discourses from the state. According to Kant the public indicates developments in politics, as the public use of reason might (or should) claim a political purpose/message. Modern age signifies a separation of politics into two spheres; authority of state and public discourse. Then, participation to the second political sphere (which is the sphere of public discourse) creates a public sphere that autonomous from the state's power (Sezer, 1998:25-27).

Politics, then, should *occur* in the public sphere under the form of publicity. For this, citizens should be able to participate in the public discussion by leaving their roles in the private sphere. Similar to Rousseau, Kant argues that independent citizens should be legally and economically free; again, he should be his own master and he should be a property owner[10].

Hannah Arendt can be considered as one of the first modern scholars who focused on the concept of public sphere. Rather than looking the enlightenment principles first, Arendt seeks the roots of the public sphere in the Ancient Greece by introducing the concept of *vita activa*. According to Arendt, humankind has three important activities; labour, work, and action. Only action *needs* different parties/other people, and it is intrinsic to the structure of the society:

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[10] This criterion can be considered as excluding non-property owners. However, one might argue that Kant's (and Rousseau's) views on property ownership are about preventing "the search" of self-interest when participating in public discussion. Again, this is a controversial subject.

> … labour is the activity which corresponds to the biological process of the human body… Work is the activity which corresponds to the unnaturalness of human existence, which is not embedded in, and whose mortality is not compensated by, the species' ever-recurring life cycle… Action, the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter, corresponds to human condition of plurality, to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the World. While all aspects of the human condition are somehow related to politics, this plurality is specifically the condition – not only the *condito sine qua non,* butt the *condito per quam* of all political life (Arendt, 1958:7).

As it is intrinsic –and even constitutive factor of the society, the action is the only activity that is able to create public sphere. Arendt has two focuses here; distinct and equal individuals. According to her, in order to understand and *communicate* with each other, humans should be equal and distinct from each other. As can be understood, a difference or a distinction should exist between individuals to –so to say, create the agenda of a discussion. If all individuals were the same, there would be no necessity for discussion, talking, or communication. However, people/individuals are not same and quite different from each other in reality. Communicating, then, should be at the centre of a society in which distinct people are living together. Similarly, individuals cannot communicate with others who are not equal to them. For communication, equality should also exist in a society.

For Ancient Greek philosophers and Roman philosophers to some extent, important thing was being present in the public life; in *agora* or *forum*. Presence in these public areas connected with principles of deliberation and then democracy. Private sphere, on the other hand, was the thing which enables people to participate public sphere; if a "man" has property or he is the master of his *domus* or *oikos* he has a right to participate public affairs (Papacharissi, 2010:28).

So, people who are equal to but distinct from each other, creates a public sphere "through speech and action" (Arendt, 1958). In this public sphere, the public is explained as the place where speech/communication and action occur while the private is the place where necessary things for human's survival occur such as labour

and work. In this public sphere, individuals create a political and collective realm in which they use the "communicative action".

Then what should be the basis of individuals who created a public sphere through speech and action? Arendt, by referring Kant, mentions the "faculty of judgement" here. In the public sphere, individuals should not follow their own interests as this will damage the core of the public sphere. Individuals, by putting themselves in other individuals' shoes, can *emancipate* themselves from their own interests. This is the principle what makes political processes (Arendt, 1968:241).

Jürgen Habermas is another –and probably the most famous, figure who theorizes the public sphere. Habermas' work is based on Enlightenment and Modern ages, contrary to Arendt, and he uses historical developments such as developments in communication for analysing the development of the public sphere.

Habermas based his public sphere theory on above-mentioned Kantian principles of the use of public reason in which citizens come together and discuss, argue and analyse public affairs. Following the Roman Era, during the Middle Ages, concepts of public sphere and private sphere was not distinct from each other as separate realms. The major change occurred in representation, as authorities represent themselves *before* the people rather than *for* the people, in these ages. When commercial relationships, such as traffic in commodities and news become more *mobile* in time, these relationships started to dissolve so-called "old" social order (Habermas, 1991:15). The increasing importance of towns in long range trading, rising power of the merchants and traders, growing effects of companies were; 1- a result of shifts in communication and economic relations, 2- caused new forms of social orders to emerge (or a change in the meaning of public). Rather than pointing the authority of a *granted prince* –as it was in Middle Ages, public started to refer to another authority or apparatus which has economic power on the granted authority.

Simply explaining, the dissatisfaction of known markets pushed merchants (and states) to search new markets, exploration of new markets caused relatively fast traffic of commodities and news and created more demand for new markets, expansion of the exploration required political guarantee from the state in terms of funding, this new form of funding created a new type of taxation in which the personal treasure of the public representative (princes, lords etc.) separated from public's (state's) treasure, this, eventually caused accountability of state actors as it indicates co-sharing the risks (Habermas, 1991:14-17).

Habermas also locates public sphere between the private realm and the state. According to him the public sphere is;

> … a sphere which mediates between society and state, in which the public organizes itself as the bearer of public opinion, accords with the principle of the public sphere, that principle of public information which once had to be fought for against the arcane politics of monarchies and which since that time has made possible the democratic control of state activities (Habermas, 1974:351)

The importance of public sphere lies in its characteristic of catalysing various discussions of public affairs. Enabling discussions of public sphere in a publicized arena revives and reproduces the democratic traditions. Similar to Arendt, Habermas also emphasizes the importance of distinction between individuals here.

Discussions in the public sphere enable "rational-critical" discourse of public affairs which are related with common good. According to Habermas, the rational-critical discourse is a result of development in communication technologies, mainly in the press. Initially the developments in the news or press were related with the private sphere interests; they contained information on prices, markets etc. However, in time, press started to carry a more public related role. By the 18th century, public opinion was one of the most important concepts in the press. Private individuals who are under the influence of press (or public opinion) started to come together and

discuss public affairs in specific locations. These were the first signs of public sphere or as Habermas defines; literary public spheres.

> As soon as privatized individuals in their capacity as human beings ceased to communicate merely about their subjectivity but rather in their capacity as property-owners desired to influence publica power in their common interest, the humanity of the literary publica sphere served to increase the effectiveness of the public sphere in the political realm (Habermas, 1989:56).

So, the press and the search for common interest, started to create a new form of sphere; a sphere neither in the state's political sphere nor completely in private sphere. Habermas claims that particular interests should be a part of this public sphere.

The public sphere which Habermas theorized fell as a result of radicalizing capitalism and "the rise of mass culture and mass society" in 19th century –re-feudalization of society (Habermas, 1991). Magazines and newspapers became *instruments* which serve wealthy elites, the idea of the public separated from its enlightenment meaning; rather the public became something under the threat of being manipulated by media (TVs, and radio). The press started to aim more consumable contents in books, magazines, and newspapers (such as tabloid newspapers or yellow press).

According to Habermas, liberating purpose of the enlightenment can be realized once the public sphere is revived. Habermas proposes concepts such as *communicative action* and *discourse ethics* in order to re-establish the public sphere in the modern society.

Before briefly explaining these two concepts it is important to re-emphasize that Habermas' main concern is related with communication. Why communication is so important? As can be understood by now, communication is far more something which enables individuals to talk/reach to each other. For instance, let's consider our

regular day; unless we are not an introvert who prisons himself/herself into a house, we usually talk with people in any day; with our co-workers, friends, taxi drivers, shopkeepers, neighbours, barbers etc. Among those conversations, how many of them are we really understand to each other? Or we just wait for *our turn* to talk. We talk to each other, but most of the time these talks are just *opportunities* for us to tell our problems. We are in some kind of a communication, indeed, but could being in the lowest level of possible communication counts as communicating?

In order analyse the problem, Habermas suggests two action types; *communicative action* and *instrumental (purposive)-strategic action.* Communicative action's goal is to establish a proper understanding and consensus. Instrumental-strategic action, on the other hand, focuses on practical achievements. It is quite similar with the republican views on politics but with one major difference; Habermas adds communication to the public side. As communicative action can stand by itself, it can be considered as more fundamental (Finlayson, 2005).

Habermas also connects communicative action and instrumental-strategic action with the concepts of *lifeworld* and *system.* According to him, modern societies are structured on these two concepts. While lifeworld is the place of communication (and communicative action, naturally), the system contains instrumental-strategic action. Money and power are the two leading elements of the system or naming correctly economy and administration (state) (Habermas, 1987). As Habermas categorizes his perspective of power in two forms, namely communicative and administrative power (Habermas, 2015), suggesting that power is only related with the system might not be correct. Rather he suggests that democracy's goal is to transfer communicative power which resides in the lifeworld, to administrative power which is in the system. There seems to be a major problem here; the colonization of the lifeworld. But first, let's elaborate the lifeworld and the system.

The concept of lifeworld is not originally created by Habermas but another philosopher, Edmund Husserl in 1936. The lifeworld is the place (or sphere) in which "informal and un-marketized" principles of social life *sway*; household, cultural norms, expectations, daily political "talks", family, media etc. These principles create source for shared meanings for concepts which belongs to this world;

> … and a social horizon for everyday encounters with other people. This horizon is the background against which communicative action takes place. The phenomenological metaphor of the horizon is instructive. A horizon designates the limit of a human being's field of vision under normal conditions (Finlayson, 2005:52).

The lifeworld then is the background for principles that leads to communicative action and protects the social order by defining the limits of the social. The lifeworld by promoting the communicative action reduces the risks of disagreement. Reducing the risk of disagreement or removing disagreement is vital in the lifeworld.

The system is the sphere where state and economy reside. Or in other terms it is the more complicated concept that most teenagers and university freshmen rebel against. State administration, capitalist economy, political parties, and mass media etc. can be considered as institutions in the system. The elements of the system create some paths in the social life; paths that individuals feel like they must follow as they are pre-set or pre-established. Here, the instrumental-strategic action is the main form of action. Individuals try to influence other individuals in order to reach their interests.

Democratic politics fail if the system starts to influence or shape the lifeworld. Habermas calls this process the colonization of the lifeworld (Habermas, 1987). The colonization of the lifeworld is quite similar with the fall of the public sphere in the late 19th century. The elements of the system might disintegrate the elements of lifeworld. For instance, the economy (capitalist economy) might damage culture; the administration might damage the meaning of family. One thing to emphasize here is

that Habermas claims that the system depends on the lifeworld; "as the lifeworld is the place where communicative action resides, and the communicative action is prior to instrumental-strategic action, then lifeworld is prior to system" (Finlayson, 2005:56).

So, when the system gets more wider and have more influence on the lifeworld, or in other terms, principles of the lifeworld gets driven by the principles of the system, social problems/crises occurs in the lifeworld. As the lifeworld is prior to the system, crises in the lifeworld directly affect the system. Habermas categorizes five major crises when lifeworld is colonized by the system;

1- Decrease in shared meanings and mutual understanding (anomie),
2- Erosion of social bonds (disintegration),
3- Increase in people's feelings of helplessness and lack of belonging (alienation),
4- Consequent unwillingness to take responsibility for their actions and for social phenomena (demoralization),
5- Destabilization and breakdown in social order (social instability) (Finlayson, 2005:57).

In order to prevent these crises Habermas tries to connect or establish ways between the system and the lifeworld. First, as explained above, modern societies (and states) usually follow the way of liberal bourgeois democracy (or representative democracy in a narrower meaning). So, on the hand liberal and egalitarian rights exist in modern societies, on the other hand liberal state promotes the market-central rationality inside the *public sphere*. This can be considered one of the major causes of the crises in the system and the lifeworld. If the perception of private and public sphere could change in liberal perspective following the citizen participation, this problem can be solved.

Habermas categorizes liberal and republican democratic traditions in *Between Facts and Norms (2015)*. Here, Habermas suggests that liberal and republican tradition

approach society in two dimensions; private and public. He links his theory to republican and liberal traditions, but also creates a distinction from them; he suggests a three-dimensional model of society which elements are, economic, political, and civil. Politics, then, is a process which enables individuals to realize their dependency to each other and creates a possibility of solidarity between individuals by discussion and deliberation (Keyman, 1999:140)

So, we might suggest that beginning of the deliberative democracy lies here.

3.2.   Deliberative Democracy

The term "deliberative democracy" is first used in the early eighties by researchers such as Joseph Bessette (1980), and Cass Sunstein (1985). Initial formulations of deliberative democracy were focusing on the re-reading the U.S. Founding Fathers' views on contemporary representative democracies; what are the roles of different interest groups, do private interests prevents common good, what is common good; is it the accumulation of private interests or is it a result of a discussion of common citizens.

Some researchers focused on the legitimacy and preferences problem in the earlier times of deliberative democracy (Manin, 1987; Cohen, 1989; Elster, 1986). Here the discussion was around questioning republican perspective of citizenship and/or participation. The concept which creates legitimacy was the deliberation that all citizens might participate in. Roots of the legitimacy were not in the social contract or already determined wills of the citizens, it was in the deliberation. Therefore, decision making processes should be deliberative, if they are to be democratic. Decisions considered as deliberative as a result of reason exchange between citizens who treat each other with respect. Decisions considered as democratic as decision taking processes enables citizens to participate discussions in an equal level and with

mutual recognition, or in other terms they are democratic as long as they are inclusive (Cohen, 1989).

Jürgen Habermas is not the first philosopher who came up with the idea of deliberation. However, his theories and ideas are the ones that create base for deliberative democracy. As mentioned above participatory democracy arose as result of the crisis in representative democracy. However, in a relatively short time, participatory democracy trend went to a decline as a result of the very reasons of crisis that created participatory democracy. Below Google Ngram figure shows how participatory democracy fell throughout the years and how this decline pushed researchers to search for a new way of democracy, or if we call it by name, deliberative democracy.

Figure 1. Google Ngram results of representative, deliberative, and participatory democracy.

As seen, initial formulations of deliberative democracy resemble with the republican traditions and the importance of communication between citizens to some extent. That is the reason why Habermas is one of the most prominent figures of deliberative democracy.

First, deliberation is the main communication and understanding in a discussion between equals. It is not just communication or talking, it is the "… mutual communication that involves weighing and reflecting on preferences, values, and interests regarding matters of common concern (Bachtiger et.al. 2018:1). Then, Deliberative democracy, before anything, should carry those characteristics. It is a type of democracy that includes democratic practices in which participants came together, discuss, and after careful consideration, come to a conclusion. Deliberative democracy also includes a procedure of common legitimization in which participants provide reasons for their opinions, listen –and hear opinions of others, and re-think their initial perspectives, considering new statements and arguments.

The resemblance is uncanny between the Habermas' theories of communicative action and furthermore discourse ethics and deliberative democracy. Deliberative democracy is both internal and external in Habermas' theories. First, it is internal, as it is a new type of democracy to re-establish the link between system and the lifeworld, or in other terms it is a solution against the problem of colonization of the lifeworld. Secondly it is external, as it can be considered as a new turn in democratic theories other than republican and liberal.

Deliberative democracy takes various concepts from both liberal tradition and republican tradition. Concepts such as popular sovereignty or general will are the main concepts of republican tradition of democracy. Deliberative democracy recognizes these concepts. On the other hand, concepts like private interest are related with liberal tradition of democracy. Deliberative democracy also recognizes private sphere (and private interests) or more general individual freedoms. However, it is beyond those traditions. (Lubenow, 2012:58).

One of the most important differences is the perspective of common good in deliberative democracy. The concept of common good is discussed in the initial formulations of deliberative democracy, however, when John Rawls participated the

deliberative turn in late 90s, the common good became more important in deliberative discussions. First, the public reasoning is political, as it should originate from a common public basis. Therefore, citizens should avoid appealing their individual opinions which can be considered as controversial. Citizens should appeal to "principles that can be shared by fellow citizens (Gutmann and Thompson, 1996). This perspective is ironically quite controversial. Naturally, what should and shouldn't be discussed in the public deliberation was one of the most important questions in deliberative democratic theory from the beginning. If an individual who should not claim his/her thoughts, ideas, preference just because it is thought as controversial, what is the logic behind deliberation? For instance, according to Seyla Benhabib, even basic human and political rights are not outside of the public discussion (Üstüner, 2007:324). However, Rawls' suggestion is not related with what should be discussed, rather he focuses on the essence of the subject which is under discussion and he suggests that "the common" should be the main consideration in the public discussion. If each individual follows their particular interests (or sectional interests, as deliberative democracy is not about individuals only) in the public discussion, this causes an unsuited situation for Rawls' just society. So, the common good should be pursued in discussions under any circumstances (Cohen, 1989:18).

In the liberal model of democracy, the democracy itself is the mediator between private interests (private sphere or sometimes *the society*), and the state (administrative sphere, as explained above). So, the whole concept of politics in liberal tradition, reduced to a narrower meaning; transmitting the interests and preferences of the individuals who resides in the private sphere to the administrative sphere or state. In the republican tradition of democracy, the concept of politics is much wider. Politics does not necessarily follow the interests/preferences or the market. Rather, it complies with the "… structures of public communication oriented by mutual understanding, configured at a public space (Lubenow, 2012:61). That is

the main reason why republican tradition is more similar to the "original meaning of democracy"; it institutionalizes the use of public reason. So, the concept of democracy in deliberative democracy positions itself between those two traditions and as seen, it is more normative than the liberal tradition while less normative than the republican tradition (Habermas, 1994).

Deliberative democracy sees the democracy as an overarching concept over public sphere, inter-subject dialogue, and daily life and the main difference of deliberative democracy is its contrast to *aggregative* form of democracy (Bachtiger et.al. 2018; Della Porta, 2013). In very generic terms, aggregative forms of democracy are "counting the heads/votes". This does not mean voting is not important in deliberative democracy, rather it is not the only principle. The importance of a deliberative discussion prior to voting is vital, as it helps people in *forming* their opinions. One of the main concepts of the deliberative democracy is, therefore, *forming* or *transforming* the opinions of participants of the deliberative discussion (Elster, 1998:1)

One might criticize deliberative democratic ideals as they are too "idealistic", or he/she can inquire the possibilities of where the deliberative discussion to be held? First, we need to accept that like all theories, deliberative democracy is naturally proposing the ideal, and then it seeks ways to reach it. As we'll see in the methodology part of this thesis, scoring a full score from the Deliberative Quality Index is literally impossible, as no discussion or deliberation can be *that* ideal.

There are some concepts and standards for deliberative democracy which are pointing the ideal. As mentioned above, deliberative democracy is a theory that still develops. So, most of these standards have been either "challenged, or revised".

Table 2. Standards for deliberation (Bachtiger et.al. 2018)

Respect
Absence of Power
Equality
Reasons
Aim at Consensus
Common Good Orientation
Publicity, Accountability, Sincerity

In a real life no one sees himself/herself as a disrespectful person. Instead we tend to see ourselves in a more respectful status more than we are in real, we treat ourselves as we are "merciful gods". However, when it comes to a real discussion, things become *Gerousia*-like, the loudest become the right.

The standard of respect in deliberative democracy is about intimate listening (or in other terms active listening) and trying to understand what other participants say. It is "putting yourself in other participant's shoes". The effect of "faculty of judgement" is visible here. As explained above in the Public Sphere section, Arendt sees this *empathy* action as the core of politics. Respect is one of the dimensions of Arendt's "faculty of judgement". The standard of respect also means that the aim of the deliberation is not "destroying" or "silencing" others, it is about understanding each other.

The ideal of respect is at the core of theories of deliberation (Gutmann and Thompson, 1996) and that is why it is not revised by deliberative democratic theorists, it stayed as is[11].

The standard absence of power comes from Habermas' (and Arendt's) public sphere theory. In general, it means that use of force must not be in the deliberation. Participants cannot force each other to accept the opinions which they support. The only "legitimate" way of coercion in deliberation is "having the better argument". Habermas explains this as the "non-coercive coercion of the better argument". Similarly, Arendt –by referring Kant, emphasizes the importance of this ideal. The other dimension of "faculty of judgement" can be considered as this the absence of power.

> This phrase appeals to the Kantian idea that reason operates in a different way from coercion and that only through reason can we coordinate our actions in a way that respects each person's freedom and equality. In this phrase Habermas captures a central component lying deep in most theories of deliberative democracy: reason-giving is both a means of arriving at better outcomes and a way of recognizing each participant as equal and free. The procedural conditions of the "ideal speech situation" are a counterfactual conceptualization of what would have to be the case if we were to say that only pure argumentation is going on. But the world has a lot more going on in it than pure argumentation, and all actual argumentation is embedded in and constrained by many factors in the empirical context (Chambers, 2018:67).

Yet, as the French philosopher Michel Foucault suggested, the limits of the power is greatly expanded. We analyse the power relation even in the words we choose. So, can a deliberative discussion be independent to coercive power? The answer to this is, unfortunately, negative. However, the aspiration of a deliberative discussion free from coercive power is still an aim that deliberative democracy sets.

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[11] For one small critic please see (Bachtiger et.al, 2018:5).

The standard of equality also derived from the both Habermas' (2008) and Cohen's (1989) works. Mainly it means that each individual should be equal when proposing their own ideas/opinions. It includes "the respect", "equality in communication –i.e. all participants should have to be "equally free" when expressing their opinions", and "inclusion –i.e. every participant who has shared interests/opinions should be included to the deliberative discussion".

The standard of equality is one of the concepts of deliberative democracy that is revised by subsequent scholars. As the earlier interpretations of equality refer to equality in terms of influence, some scholars claimed that equality in influencing political decisions cannot be fulfilled. Instead, they suggest a new understanding of equality which is "equal opportunity of access to political influence" (Knight & Johnson, 1997; Bachtiger et.al. 2018). It is important to capture here that the revisions of standards are usually more realistic and more comprehensive revisions. For instance, the standard of equality is started to understand as a more realistic, doable standard, rather than seeking the ideal. Providing the opportunity to access to political influence is "relatively" easier than establishing a situation where all influences are equal.

In a deliberative discussion, people's main purpose is to find support or convince others for that their opinion/interest is "legitimate". Naturally, participants should provide and express reasons for that. The concept of reason-giving is related to Habermas' Public Sphere theory. Kant was the initial philosopher who mentions the public-private use of reasons. Habermas' *initial* public sphere theory is characterized by the use public reason. Later, Habermas added "non-coercive coercion of the better argument" and *feelings* (emotions) to some extent; "feelings have a similar function for the moral justification of action as sense perceptions have for the theoretical justification of facts" (Habermas, 1990:50).

That is the point where critics raised their voices in the standard of reason giving. Even though Habermas stated that he sees emotions as a driving effect, most scholars criticized the importance given to rationality. Critics claim that the emotion has a supportive role in deliberation. For instance, empathy is quite useful when it comes to understanding the other participants. Or using humour and stories are assist participants when they are expressing or defending their opinions in deliberative discussion. The role of emotion should not be central to deliberation. Benefitting from it is another thing, using it for forcing opinions is another. In my opinion, even though the emotions play an undeniable role in deliberation, they can always be used for "appealing to emotion" that critically damages ideals of deliberation such as the sincerity –and therefore deliberation.

Agreement is the concept that originally mentioned by Habermas and Cohen. In the *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* Habermas mentions agreement as a result and aim of a "rational critical public debate". An idealistic approach to agreement can be seen in Habermas's works. But later he reviewed his idealistic approach and claimed that the agreement should be a *part* of the debate, as participants seek consensus in the public debate in which they can compromise and bargain their preferences/opinions (1989).

Furthermore, Cohen as well mentioned the search for agreement in his works. He stated that an ideal deliberative discussion should aim an agreement that is persuasive to all participants. However, if this cannot be established, the deliberative discussion should move to voting (Cohen, 1989:23).

The importance of consensus lies behind the deliberative democracy's view on voting. As stated above deliberative democracy is a contrast to aggregative democracy which is basically counting the votes. Voting, naturally, is important in deliberative democracy as well. Yet, deliberative democracy tries to reach "results" without voting, excluding Cohen's statements.

Common good is a relatively complex concept, yet a central one to the deliberative democracy. It is also revised by later scholars. I presume that the *veil of ignorance* is still quite vital when discussing public good. As it is in the dictionary form, the public good is the conditions that have advantages for everyone. In *Theory of Justice* John Rawls discusses the original position in which all participants are unaware of their statuses, abilities, classes, etc. in the society. Individuals, therefore, behind a veil of ignorance which disables them to see their "real" positions. Rawls suggests that this concept can result in a discussion where its decisions are in advantage to everyone (Rawls, 1971).

The revision on this concept is rather individualistic. According to Mansbridge et al. (2010) the deliberation's main motivation is self-interest. Therefore, self-interest plays an important role for participants who would like to participate in deliberative processes. If self-interests of participants are limited by concerns of other participants' rights, it can "sometimes" replace the motivation of reaching the common good. We might say that, we cannot expect all participants who participates the deliberation carry the "divine" responsibility of public good. Rather they can participate to deliberation by pursuing their self-interests, as this pursue does not contradicts with other participants' rights.

Publicity is the concept which requires deliberation to be accessible by the public when it requires. Seeing the more "practical" way on deliberation is possible in the concept of publicity. If a deliberation is about discrete and strategic, the publicity is not an appropriate concept of deliberation (Habermas, 1989:100, see Bachtiger et al. 2018:9). If a decision-taking process requires discretion, a deliberation can be developed without publicity, as well. The critics towards this concept state that if the public cannot reach these processes, how come we know that a deliberation is established "behind the closed gates"? As expected, we cannot know whether the aggregative democracy is fully operating behind the closed gates. Therefore,

discussing this is irrelevant. Furthermore, some theorists suggest that if deliberation is to be held in privacy, it may promote the quality of deliberation (see Chambers, 2004; Warren and Mansbridge et al. 2016; Bachtiger et al. 2018).

Accountability is a concept which is neither revised nor challenged, as it plays a central role in nearly all democratic theories.

Sincerity is a concept that requires all participants of the deliberation should be sincere to each other, as insincerity can damage the deliberation process.

Even though there are some ideals/standards are not revised or reviewed, most of the deliberative standards are subject to change or revision. This means that there is no consensus on deliberative ideals. This seems ironic at first sight; even scholars who work on the deliberative field cannot establish a consensus on the ideals of deliberative democracy. But, on the contrary, this is the heart of deliberation. Deliberative democracy is a concept and a form of democracy which is always contested. This contestation keeps the deliberation in deliberative democracy discussions alive.

If it carries the above-mentioned standards of deliberation, deliberative democracy can be pursued in every location, informal or formal. For instance, deliberative democracy can be pursued in various institutions of government, courts, legislation, executives etc. Since the main motive behind is to win elections or re-elect, most notable formal deliberation location is the, of course, parliaments. The distinction between government and opposition become less visible, the deliberative practices become more central to parliamentary discussions. Furthermore, the executive branch appeals to deliberation when deciding the policies for the common good. Similar to parliaments, in the coalition governments, deliberation become more frequent way in the executive branch (Steiner et al. 2004). Local administrations are also the places where deliberation can be pursued, in a more direct way. Especially

town hall meetings can be defined as one of the examples of deliberative democracy often pursued (see Bachtiger et al. 2018:9-15).

On top of formal/institutional places, deliberation can be occurred in many civil society organisations. Or if we follow Habermas's theory of Public Sphere, it can be emerged in public spheres.

However, in the context of this thesis, deliberation also pursued in online. As it was in not-online forms, there are formal and informal places of online deliberation. Time to time local administration, institutions, or government establish a website or a portal in order to invite citizens to participate more deliberative discussion about the decisions. As can be seen below, in the online deliberative democracy chapter, turnout to this formal call is low comparing the informal ways of online deliberation.

The informal online deliberation occurs in websites which are established by public users not by the government, including Reddit, Twitter, Facebook, various forums, various political forums, and websites like Ekşi Sözlük.

CHAPTER 4

E-DEMOCRACY AND ONLINE DELIBERATION

4.1. A Genesis: Electronic Participation

In the first years of 1970s, the use of broadband cable TV and portable videos has become more common than any time of the history of the world. This created a new possibility that offers people to participate in democratic discussions from their houses. Coleman (2009) mentions that some initiatives immediately took action in this new area. For instance, in Canada, an initiative called *Challenge for Change* enable people to record their opinions in video format and showed them in public meetings. Similarly, in U.S. a project called *Multiple Input Networking for Evaluating Reactions, Votes, and Attitudes* has been developed. This project's main aim was similar, enabling people to have discussions, and decide on common issues. Another example is that, in the Hawaii, some researchers started to implement "tele-vote" experiments (See, Coleman, 2009). Furthermore, Dahlberg (2001) mentions the *Qube Experiment*. Qube was an electronic device and network system that enables people to participate cable programmes, or public affairs shows. According to Dahlberg, this experiment made available "the electronic town hall meeting" idea of the e-democracy.

Nevertheless, the rise of the e-democracy was "really" happened when the internet became more popular among citizens. It is hard to disagree with Margetts when she

suggests that among other technological developments the internet has the most vital connections with democracy (Margetts; Oxford Handbook of Democracy: 543).

4.2.   Internet as the New Public Sphere

As discussed, Habermas argues that the public sphere of the enlightenment vanished throughout the 19th century and he proposed ways for revitalizing it in his works. When the internet became more and more accessible in the late 90s, researchers on different study fields (from political science to communication) inquired that whether the internet could create a public sphere or not. As it is in any other topic, some supported the democratic potential of the internet (Papacharissi, 2002; Kling, 1996; Dahlberg 2001), and some stayed sceptic towards it (Hill & Hughes, 1998). Nevertheless, the *potential* is remained a solid discussion topic. In general, democratizing potential of the internet in public sphere perspective can be discussed under two themes; Access to Information and Reciprocity (Papacharissi, 2010:120ff).

Access to information, as can be understood, means new and easier ways for obtaining the information. Information matters, as in a rational-critical discussion and debate in the public sphere, individuals should base their opinions to the information they have obtained through media or other sources. So, one of the most critical concepts in the public sphere discussion is information. Then, a network which can provide necessary data for the information in just seconds should make the access problem easier. We call this network; the internet. Access to information (and data) was considered a major problem before the internet. Millennial generation listened lots of stories about how their parents, or relatives suffered before the World Wide Web; they were forced to go to libraries, and do their homework by looking at a book, rather than a screen.

It is a little bit ironic that easy access to information caused more problems than it should have solved. First, the problem was not accessing the information; rather it was accessing the right type of information. In 2016, Oxford Dictionaries have selected the word *post-truth* as the word of the year. It was quite important because the post-truth era is usually considered as the era in which truth, right, and facts became unimportant. Disinformation waves in the internet might be the major reasons that post-truth became so intrinsic to our daily lives. Briefly, access to information is important, and it enables lots of people to reach relevant information, but accessing the correct information is much more important.

Furthermore, increase in the access to information does not directly affect political participation etc. First, still nearly half of the world does not have access to internet[12]. However, considering the trend throughout the years, this problem might not be *that* important in the future. Another thing is that, individuals use the internet for entertainment purposes, rather than using it as an encyclopaedia. This is another obstacle before access to information (Papacharissi, 2010:121). Nevertheless, internet is the greatest human invention which enables people to reach infinite number of information, so far.

Reciprocity is one of the main subjects which has been discussed under the context of this thesis. Online discussion groups, forums etc. caused individuals to talk with each other irrelevant to geography, culture, country etc. So, the internet considered as one of the best communication mediums which enhances reciprocity in public sphere-like discussions (Howard, 2006; Kobayashi, Ikeda & Miyata, 2006). Naturally, there are some objections against reciprocal character of internet. First one is language. Still, English is being used as the *unofficial official language* of the internet. If we want to talk about a global public sphere, the language is a problem. But language might be ignored for more local, country-wide, or sometimes regional

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[12] https://www.statista.com/topics/1145/internet-usage-worldwide/

uses of the internet. Another problem for reciprocity is this; for a healthy public sphere, talking is not enough. Talking or discussion should be directed towards conversations. Social media supported individuals to share/express their opinions. But most of the time, people do not conduct conversations with other users; they just *throw* their opinions and leave (or get into a fight, considering most of the Twitter). Again, internet caused a reciprocal context than ever before.

Even though we consider all the objections and obstacles before it, the internet due to its flexible, variable, and asynchronous nature, still the most revolutionary thing in terms of communication in human history.

4.3. The Rise of the E-Democracy

As the internet become more important in our lives, researchers started to link it with democratic processes. There are various researches made on the relation between the internet and democracy in late 90s and early 2000s. As mentioned above, some of these researches saw the internet as a catalyser in governance relations. Some suggested it has an important impact on political participation and democracy. Of course, in a "universally democratic" world, the character of this impact was the one that matters. For instance, in a world that even the most democratic systems are "plagued by corruption" and democracy is being used as a legitimization for non-democratic actions (Dahlberg & Siapera, 2007:1), can the internet become the solution? Or in other terms, the internet can strengthen democracy?

Similar to other notions, e-democracy has a brief dictionary meaning which researchers and academics cannot agree on. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica "e-democracy is the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance and in some accounts replace representative democracy". The writer of this article in Encyclopaedia Britannica is Andrew Chadwick who had published the *Handbook of Internet Politics* in 2009, with his fellow researcher Philip Howard.

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The *Handbook of Internet Politics'* writers are mostly from communication field rather than political science. There are different meanings and definitions of e-democracy as both communication theorists and political scientists approach the notion differently (Margetts, 2013:544). For instance, the impact of new technologies in social movements –such as Arab Spring, showed that there is a need for focusing the relation between democracy, communication, and social movements. Nevertheless, the researches on social sciences are rarely focused on this relation. While democracy studies focus on representative institutions, media studies treat technological developments as a separate power (2013:86 ff.).

Since the internet has nearly no limits, it created different visions in the society. It enabled the society to benefit from its "fruits". Researchers usually focus on two levels of e-democracy. First one is government-citizen relation. The second one is citizen to citizen communication and decision making with the assistance of the internet.

International organisations such as OECD or European Council focus on governance part of the e-democracy. For instance, OECD published the book named "Promise and Problems of E-Democracy" in 2003 and main focus area of it is online citizen participation and online consultation (OECD, Promise and Problems of E-Democracy, 2003:9). Similar to Chadwick, OECD report suggests the importance of governance via ICT as well. It is important to mention the difference between e-democracy and e-government here. E-government is to strengthen citizen participation to governance and public affairs by using ICT (Breindl and Francq, 2008:15). E-government can be named as e-governance or e-administration as well. The latter, additionally, means state services which can be executed via internet. Briendl and Francq explain the difference between e-democracy and e-government activities as "top-down (e-government)" and "bottom-up (e-democracy)" practices (2008:15).

As can be seen, most definitions focus on the ICT part of the e-democracy. However, is excessive use of ICT in democracy enough for establishing e-democracy?

If, for example, citizens use electronic applications to vote faster, does it create solutions for problems in representative democracy? We can easily say that it does not. On the other hand, most e-democracy researchers claim that their understanding of e-democracy proposes solutions for crisis in democracy or representation.

Margolis and Moreno-Riano (2009:7) state that the internet can revitalize democracy in two ways; 1-In terms of governments' use of ICT developments in order to ask/consult citizens about their opinions, 2- In terms of citizens' use of ICT to communicate better about civic affairs and public policies. Moreira et.al (2009:24-25) focus on "decentralization of sovereignty" and "re-inventing representation" in similar way. As the internet has a power to shift democratic processes and institutions by ignoring physical distances, it also allows horizontal distribution of power by using virtual organizations and political networks. Therefore, the so-called traditional representative democratic institutions such as political parties have no power on fostering or creating identities or political ideologies anymore. This causes the monopoly of the traditional institutions on sovereignty to break slowly. Yet, political actors and traditional institutions adapt to this power shift and they promote new –mainly- web based political processes. As Coleman suggests, this actually is the need of re-inventing the political representation (Moreira et.al. 2009:25, Coleman, 2003 -OECD). E-democracy points new ways for representatives or governments to "survive" with this new trend. As can be seen, e-democracy also shows a way for governments to make themselves more inclusive, more responsive. E-democracy can foster chances for all interests to be heard as well as it enables all citizens to raise their voices, even if they haven't participated politics before. As Moreira et.al (2009:25) suggest e-democracy is not "about an amplification but also an inclusion of those who have not participated".

Coleman (2003) points similarities between e-democracy and Athenian agora. Of course, as he also states, the democratic character of Athenian democracy is nothing like modern understanding of democracy. The internet usually perceived as the agora where civic gatherings occurred in an "all-embracing public sphere". In this point, the internet as seen as the supplementary mechanism for the representative democracy as the idea of direct democracy is slightly "naïve" and rather implementing technological developments to the current democratic processes, waiting for the collapse of the constitutions and traditional representative institutions are quite "speculative" (Coleman, 2003). However, the perspective of the governments that thought the e-democracy would bring them effectiveness in terms of services, disappointed public as well. Additionally, politicians saw websites as their mere advertising platforms, and they understated what public demands/wants from them by using these channels.

Traditional democratic institutions such as parliament, is the proof of remote political representation and centralisation of power. Deliberation that legitimizes power is the deliberation by elites (Coleman, 2003:148). Strong symptoms exist in order to "modernise" these out-dated political processes. First, parliament have a tendency to detach itself from public, second, measuring public opinion by using scientific research are failing to mirror what public really thinks as there are numerous variables in forming public opinion, third, mass media is failing to include public to political processes, and fourth, the public is getting more and more hungry in terms of participating to political process (2003:149). Focusing these four items more will be better in the context of this thesis.

First, the remote representation was the idea of what parliamentary government system was founded upon. Initially, the parliament was the place where deliberation occurred by the sovereign elites. The only duty of the public was electing. In time, parliamentarians (legislation) have lost their deliberative and sovereign characters against executive governments. As Coleman states, by the end of the 20th century,

both legislation and public are in disappointment against representative institutions. Parliamentarians feel "idle" while public feel disregarded. This is the time that suggestions for modernisation of parliament to overcome this disconnection occurred (2003:149).

Secondly, the use of opinion polling was quite important since 1930s when forming and implementing policies. Opinion polls had two main traits, first one is to forecast voting behaviour, and second one is to act as a guide when evaluating public values. However, according to Coleman, opinion polls may cause incorrect results, if the content and context could not be described very well. For instance, deliberative democrats such as Fishkin (1997), find out that the citizens came to different conclusions in opinion polls when they are informed about the content and context. Coleman states that this is a proof of the distinguish role of the deliberative democracy in "…dialogical, evidence-based relationship between representatives and represented (2003:149).

Thirdly, the medium of the mass media has changed incredibly when television, a new communication device had entered our lives. Television of course helped the democracy in terms of accessibility and transparency; however, it also created a strong bond between media experts and politicians. Despite the attempts of the media in fostering interactivity between politicians and the public by audience discussions, and phone-ins, public continued to distrust politicians' intentions (Coleman and Ross, 2001).

Fourthly, the public has changed in an "unexpected" way. According to Coleman (2003:150 ff.), citizens started to show less respect to traditional institutions, and they became more confident; they started to show disloyalty to their ideologies; and they started to trust their own experiences rather than political experts or bureaucrats. As mentioned above, they became hungrier when it comes to political participation by raising their voices through the media. This caused a consumerism trend, as well.

As Coleman points, "reality TV shows", enabled citizens to discuss their arguments "in their own voices" rather than making them spectators to the deliberation process made by sovereign elite.

To explain in more brief terms, the common sense that thinks politics must adapt were looking this adaption in four ways at the beginning of the 20th century; 1- Modernisation of the parliament, 2- Rising interest in the research of deliberative democracy, 3- The media's attempt to include public to politics in a more interactive way, and 4- the Public's interest (Coleman, 2003:150). Despite the attempts of establishing e-democracy in various places, Coleman states that these attempts are less focused, not resourced enough, and not connected to constitutions. Even after 16 years, in 2019, it is hard to disagree with Coleman in these terms. However, the interaction between technological developments and democracy continues. Potentials of the e-democracy are far more than Coleman forecasted in 2003.

As mentioned above, one of the reasons of the e-democracy to rise is the "crisis" in representation. Focusing on this crisis and re-inventing of the representation would be useful.

Some researchers suggest that the democracy is in a crisis and there is an increase in discourse of democracy crisis since Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki (1975) published their well-known book "*The Crisis of Democracy: On the Governability of Democracies*". This perspective suggests that the Western democracies are becoming more and more separated from the so-called traditional institutions of representative democracy (Norris, 2000). Some research suggests that there are strong evidences such as party dealignment, low turnouts in countries that voting is not compulsory, raising differences and their severe consequences between different social groups, passiveness –or apolitical character of the new generations. For instance, Harraka (2002) suggests that the generational change in U.S has dissolved the participation in large numbers to various associations, diminished the social capital, and weakened

the capacity of networks. In addition, political parties have seen membership to them slowly faded, and the public increasingly detached from political issues. Unsurprisingly, there are plenty of answers from different sources that explain this crisis with neo-liberalism, post-modernism, capitalistic wealth accumulation, etc.[13]

Nevertheless, focusing the crisis of representation would be more practical rather than focusing a relatively wide object such as the crisis of democracy. Below, the revision to representation via e-democracy and ICT will be explained.

Coleman mentions 5-way information flow in effective representative democracies; 1-Government to Citizen, 2- Citizen to Government, 3- Representative to Citizen, 4-Citizen to Representative, 5- Citizen to Citizen (2003:150). According to him, in the current representative democracies, these information flows are blocked. Government to citizen information flow can be effective through television and newspapers or in other terms; mass media. However, citizens find mass media less trustworthy as a result of continuous government intervention. Citizen to government information flow is inadequate due to suspicion towards government inclusiveness as citizens believe that they have no or little impact on government. Representative to citizen information flow is poor except election campaigns. Citizen to representative flow is limited as they cannot raise their concerns, opinions etc. if they don't have strong lobbying activities. So, citizen to representative flow is highly related to lobbying. Lastly, citizen to citizen information flow is the "basis of a healthy civil society" but apparently, citizens would not like to discuss policies due to lack of networks and places to discuss them (Coleman, 2003:151).

Coleman suggests new ways to open these information flows in order to "re-invent representation", 1-Trusted Spaces, 2- Constitutional Integration, 3-Meaningful Interactivity, and 4-Zones of silence-Zones of Deafness (2003: 152).

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[13] See E-Democracy in Action, 2016.

One of the main pillars of democracy is trust. Coleman states that citizens do trust democratic processes such as elections. Nevertheless, as the information flows in representation become more clogged, a need for more "expansive democratic spaces" arises. According to Coleman, internet has an important potential to deliver a democratic "sphere" in which above-mentioned information flows can become effective. He suggests that providing *cyber deliberation spaces* as a public service will enable to online trusted spaces to expand more. There must be three key areas for online deliberation, *consultation, deliberation, and decision-making* as citizens will focus on different aspects (2003:153).

Constitutional integration is related with the inclusion of e-democratic processes into the rules and legislations of governments. According to Coleman, contemporary politicians, representatives, bureaucrats, and civil servants cannot be stay outside of the e-democratic sphere (2003:154).

Meaningful interactivity is about preventing false news, sources, and disinformation. As the developments in ICT lift the wall between the source and the receiver, naturally all information online is under the threat of disinformation. It is difficult not to admire Coleman's foresight here. Even in the late 2010s disinformation, false news etc. are one of the biggest challenges that social media and e-democracy faces. Coleman suggests following some specific rules and procedures in order to prevent this challenge.

Zone of silence and zone of deafness are two interesting "metaphors" that Coleman used in his work. He refers to Ugandan politics when explaining "zones of silence" and "zones of deafness". Zones of silence are the areas that its residents have nothing to say due to their disconnection from the traditional means of communication. On the other hand, zones of deafness are areas –and institutions, that always speak for themselves and have tendency to not to listen other voices (Coleman, 2003:155). Fishkin (1991) points out a similar thing that citizens' need for a mass media in order

to raise their voices. If the mass media ignores some views, a "full realisation of political equality" will fall short. According to Coleman, there are some ways to overcome these zones by using the internet or in other terms the new mean of the communication. For instance, as the lack of data is one of the main reasons of "public silence" internet can be used to issue "information as a common resource" (2003:156). Additionally, creating new opportunities for the voices that unheard will enable e-democracy to operate better.

In some perspectives –such as Aström (2001), Caldow (2004) and Nair (2007), e-democracy is *the* platform where use of information and communication technologies and exchange of opinions, views merges. In this merged platform, democratic procedures follow certain paths. First, various government institutions, political parties, municipalities, NGOs, INGOs, make their contents, legislations, decisions they would like to take accessible via internet. Citizens can have information about these contents and start to create their own views. This phase is called information disclosure phase (Nair, 2007). Following that a bilateral relation between citizens and relevant institutions is established. Citizens who are in search for more information about political parties, initiatives, NGOs, etc. visit their websites, and download related contents and institutions update their data as per the feedback from the citizens. Strengthening interactive relation by using coordination mechanisms and synchronous communication follows the bilateral relation. In this process, politicians run their campaigns online by focusing media communication. In the, citizens can participate in political decision-making processes online with the assist of Customer Relationship Management Tools, 7/24 (Caldow, 2004:5) or Computer Supported Cooperative Work (Nair, 2007). These perspectives focus on the impacts of the ICT over democracy and to what extent they shape the political processes. According to this perspective, each development in the field of communication shapes social and institutional relations in various ways. For instance, Bonchek's research (1997) can also be seen as an early example; by

studying Usenet Forums, he suggested that the internet will change communication and participation as it is cheaper than mass media and enables many-to-many flow of communication.

Focusing on the technology and communication side helps us to categorize these views under technological perspective (Parvez & Ahmed, 2006) or more preferably, liberal-individualist perspective (Dahlberg, 2011). Above perspectives claim that individuals or citizens collect the data they need in order to *weigh* what political institutions think about continuing political problems. Then, citizens provide their feedbacks (a different form of public opinion can be used here) and elect or choose option which is the closest to their views. Before anything, the connection between liberal democracy and this perspective is visible. Also, individuals here, still the Schumpeterian individuals who know how to follow their interests in the most rational way (Dahlberg, 2011:858).

Some researchers focus on the social perspective of the e-democracy. In this perspective, main areas of study contain; key issues in current democratic models, researching desired political systems, and the effect of technology on achieving new systems of democracy. Important figures in direct democracy are usually in this social perspective such as Benjamin Barber. Social perspective recommends that the technological developments –especially in communication, should act as a catalyser in order to enable different possibilities in citizen participation. Under the social perspective, another sub-perspective of e-democracy called social constructivism is proposed (Parvez & Ahmed 2006:617). Social constructivist perspective's focus is on human effect on how technology will develop. It also suggests that the technological developments are not the result of deliberative actions made by individuals, on the contrary, these developments are the result of a process which includes various actors from governments to telecommunications suppliers.

Online deliberation or online deliberative democracy is considered under the concept of e-democracy. According to Dahlberg (2011), for instance, it is one of the four main pillars of e-democracy. In the following section, online deliberative democracy will be elaborated.

4.4. Online Deliberation

Habermas (1989) states that public sphere in deliberative democracies stands on discursive spaces that shaped by communications media. Hauser, similarly, mentions public sphere as a discursive space in which citizens discuss their mutual interests, and decisions. Many researchers such as Fernback (1997), Dahlberg (2001), Hauben and Hauben (1998), and Gimmler (2001) claim that the internet is a "model medium" for fostering above-mentioned spaces. Davies and Chandler (2012) emphasize that online platform strengthens citizen deliberation. Even in the early years of the internet, there were various e-democracy initiatives that claim themselves as mechanisms for "deliberation"[14]. According to Michael Hauben and Rhonda Hauben (1998) there are thousands (in 1998 it was thousand, but in 2019 we can easily say that it is billions) different conversations –especially in politics- online and this is a proof that deliberative spheres are born from cyberspaces. As seen above, deliberative democracy's understanding of political interaction is rather different than other democratic views. Deliberative democratic view calls for political discussion and dialogue in which individuals (citizens, participants, and political actors) can claim their ideas, defend them, and come to a decision about common issue to enable the good for all. This dialogue and discussion convert private individuals to "public oriented individuals". Additionally, dialogue provides a "common" background that helps participants to come to an agreement regardless of their differences. Briefly, deliberative democratic model stands upon individuals'

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[14] For more examples see (Dahlberg (2001) and Clift (1999).

ability to be "persuaded" by various rational arguments, leave their personal interests behind, and come to a common decision (Dahlberg, 2001:167).

Deliberative democracy has three distinct advantages when discussing e-democratic processes. First, deliberative democracy's claim is related to a need for justification of the legitimacy of the state and civil society. There should be a discursive space and practice that results in justification of the state and civil society. The "validity" of this justification created by a rational discussion and it contains the consent of all participants. Therefore, the first advantage of the deliberative democracy is its *normativity*. Secondly, as deliberative democracy considers differences in a more pluralistic view or in other terms "as it sees the diversity as valuable in itself" it has the advantage of *plurality*. Lastly, in line with the first advantage, as the deliberative democracy takes both parliaments –as the institutionalized part and public sphere into consideration it has the advantage of *legitimation* (Gimmler, 2001: 23-25).

As the information has an important role in deliberative democracy, the internet might create the equality of access to information and enables various means of access to it. Furthermore, the internet can foster the political interaction which is another criterion of the deliberative democracy. Political interaction together with the equal access to information enables individuals to become active in political decisions. Internet provides interactive technological developments which are completely different than old communication technologies such as TV, and radio. Therefore, e-democratic practices like "Teledemocracy" are not in the concept of online deliberative democracy as they have resulted in one-way participation (Gimmler, 2001:32). However, as seen above, initiatives like "Minnesota E-Democracy, Iowa E-Democracy, and UK Citizen's Online Democracy" enabled online deliberation (Dahlberg, 2001:168, Gimmler, 2001:33). In these initiatives, "healthy" debates are made, political discussions are fostered, and information of the administration, parties, and NGOs are shared with participants.

The reason behind that why deliberative democracy sees the internet as an enabling mechanism of deliberation, is the internet's offer for a wider rational communication. Multiple researches (Jannsen and Kies, 2005, Fung and Kedl, 2000, Dahlberg, 2007) emphasize that principles of deliberative democracy can be applied to online interactive spaces in which rational debate can become a medium. Still, the fear of staying inside of "the politics as usual" is a strong claim in these researches. Dahlberg (2007), by referring Clift, emphasizes barriers in front of the online deliberative democracy such as conflict or difficulties in finding the middle ground.

Since it became more popular, the internet provided spaces for asynchronous discussion "boards". As seen above, deliberation means more than "talking". And "talking asynchronously" sounds like it is going to create more problems. Yet, when text-based characteristics of online deliberation mechanisms combine with anonymity, online deliberation processes can reduce social dominance (Price, 2009:42). Online discussions enable a more equal discussion space in terms of participation of low status individuals, as well. Furthermore, as a result of the asynchronous discussion, in the process of decision making, individuals create more solid ideas and comments compared to the face to face communication as they have more time. Researchers have a tendency to focus on asynchronous designs for this reason. However, some suggest that synchronous discussion is closer to the "ideal speech situation". *Experiencing* the reciprocity is also more possible in synchronous discussions. Strandberg and Grönlund, on the other hand, claim that the online deliberation has a higher quality when it is asynchronous (2014). So, what could be the mechanisms for fostering deliberative discussions online?

The internet provides wider mechanisms for deliberation such as forums. In these online forums –as deliberative democracy wishes; democratic practices can become more effective than traditional representative democratic mechanisms such as voting. Here, the important thing is to strengthen cooperation, discussion, and agreement

(Loveland and Popescu, 2011:687). There are various forums online that focus on different topics from Star Wars to plane crashes.

In the context of this thesis the focus will be on Ekşi Sözlük, a forum like-structure in Turkey, similarly focuses on various topics. However, main focus will be on political issues in terms of deliberation. As a very generic definition, an internet forum is a discussion website in which participants or members (usually anonymous) can discuss various topics in the form of posted messages.

As expected, not all political forums of forums that contain political discussions are serving their duties as deliberative mechanisms. Online deliberative democracy has characteristics that need to be applied to online discussion mediums-forums. There are two important pre-conditions and seven criteria –will be discussed in methodology chapter for deliberative democracy.

4.5. Preconditions of Online Deliberation

There are two main preconditions for online deliberation; 1- Preconditions related with participants, 2- Preconditions related with the design of online deliberative platform (Strandberg and Grönlünd, 2014).

At the early stages of the internet studies, one of the main questions in researchers' minds was the accessibility of the internet. Still some researchers continue to ask this question (Delborne et al. 2011), the problem of quality rather than access seems more important. As of June 30th, 2019, 4.5 billion people have access to the internet[15] which is more than 60% of the world's population. Quality of this usage, on the other hand, is quite controversial. For instance, in an online deliberative platform, can people who have ability to use the computer or internet rule the discussion? Or will they have same conditions with an 80-year-old pensioner who has no idea about the internet except following the news or making all-capital comments on his/her relatives' walls. In some researches this point is proved. People who are not

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[15] https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm

computer literate enough, showed lack of interest in online discussion (deliberation) (Strandberg 2015, Strandberg and Berg, 2013). It is essential to establish conditions for people to be computer literate enough or removing the disadvantages of the computer-illiterate people when creating an online deliberative platform. However, by looking at the internet usage statistics over years and how the internet became a central concept in our lives, I suppose that computer-illiteracy might be irrelevant in the upcoming discussions.

Second precondition can be considered as a more institutional precondition. Design of the deliberative place is a remaining problem in deliberative democracy studies; from moderation to participation, physical placement to effective communication. Design of the online deliberative platforms is just another level of this problem. There are three levels of this precondition; 1- Asynchronous or synchronous communication, 2- Anonymity or non-anonymity, 3- Moderation (Strandberg and Grönlünd, 2014).

In an online deliberative platform, whether the discussion should be asynchronous or synchronous is a vital question, as one of the most important concepts in deliberative democracy is "the ideal speech situation". The common view is that the ideal speech situation can be actualized in only synchronous discussions. Indeed, considering the reciprocity, synchronous discussion is closer to it. Some researchers claimed that as synchronous discussions are similar to *real* life discussions, online deliberative designs should follow this way (Albrecht, 2006; Luskin, Fishkin, and Iyengar 2006). However, in 2006 (date of the researches) the distinction between real life and the internet was quite visible. In 2019, on the other hand, the internet became our reality (only 900 million had access to the internet in late 2005 and only 100 million people was using social media sites in 2006 comparing 3 billion users in 2019[16]). Therefore, focusing on "what should be more ideal to reach the ideal" rather than "what is similar to real, might be similar to the ideal" is more important. Asynchronous discussion, then, became more relevant to the online deliberative platforms. It is proven that the quality of online deliberation rises when participants use asynchronous discussion technique, as they can have time for formulating their

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[16] https://ourworldindata.org/internet

statements, or finding relevant information (Coleman and Moss, 2012; Strandberg and Grönlund, 2014).

Discussion on anonymity follows similar contextual path to synchronous-asynchronous discussion. Early works on online deliberation suggested that anonymity reduces the participation to online deliberative discussions (Stromer-Galley, 2002). Furthermore, being anonymous also creates opportunity for users to be more disrespectful. Below, in the discussion session, we will see how criterion respect damages the quality of online deliberation in Ekşi Sözlük. On the other hand, Strandberg and Berg (2015) claimed that anonymity has no negative impact on the discussion quality. Anonymity, in my opinion, is highly contextual thing. Considering "half-democratic" or autocratic regimes, being anonymous online actually braces/supports people to say what they think. If disrespectful statements such as swearing could be regulated by a moderator, anonymity is a thing that endorses deliberation.

Can a moderation which regulates/facilitates an online deliberative platform, increase the quality of deliberation? Surprisingly, most researchers seemed to agree on this subject. If there is a moderation that is familiar with deliberative democracy and design of the deliberative platform, the discussion converges to theoretical ideals of the deliberative democracy. Researchers claimed that there are two main roles of the moderation; assisting participants on any issue and guaranteeing that the discussion stays in pre-defined deliberative guidelines (Strandberg and Grönlund, 2014).

CHAPTER 5

METHOD & RESEARCH

5.1.Methodology: Empirical Turn in Deliberative Democracy

From the beginning of the century, researches on deliberative democracy started to follow an empirical turn in order to test the claims of deliberative democracy. Some researchers suggested that as deliberative democracy is a normative theory, empirical approach is not fully applicable to it (Dryzek, 2010:9). Nevertheless, there are plenty of works focus on empirical side of the deliberative democracy which follow Habermas' words (2006:411) of "the deliberative model of democracy … appears to exemplify the widening gap between normative and empirical approaches toward politics"

Mainly there are two sub-groups of empirical research of deliberative democracy; design and quality. While studies on design of the deliberative democracy focus on conditions of the platform in which deliberative democracy occur (please see preconditions of deliberative democracy above), quality studies focus on communicative process of deliberation. According to Strandberg and Grönlünd (2014) empirical research on quality of deliberation (or communicative process of deliberation) has received little attention, both in online deliberation and *real* deliberation. However, there is a small distinction here; as it was seen throughout the thesis, deliberative democracy researchers frequently emphasize different versions of deliberative democracy; institutional (or official) and non-institutional (unofficial).

Indeed, there are only few works that focus on quality of deliberation in a platform which is designed for deliberative democracy. On the other hand, as it is in this thesis, there are relatively more researches which focus on quality of deliberation in non-institutional fields such as online forums, websites etc. (Jonsson and Aström, 2014). Focusing on non-institutional or not-intentionally designed for deliberative platforms are more useful in the context of our research question.

As it was explained above, the internet might be considered as a new public sphere. Deliberative democracy is a way to revive the long-dead public sphere ideal. Therefore, looking for whether the symptoms of deliberative democracy exist in the virtual arena is a good way to test the claims of these views. As Steiner et. al. explained in *Deliberative Democracy in Action,* where they focus on measuring parliamentary deliberation;

> "The starting point for this instrument (Deliberative Quality Index) is the idea that real acts of deliberation can be placed on a continuum that runs from no deliberation, at one extreme, to ideal deliberation, at the other extreme. Thus, while philosophers may view deliberation as an all-or-nothing affair, we view it as a continuum. Real speech acts can fall anywhere on this continuum. The question is how closely they approximate to the ideal speech act" (2005:55).

Deliberative democracy stresses procedures that individuals come together, communicate with each other in a respectful and sincere way, provide solid statements for their own opinions and listen to other people's opinions about the issue being discussed. Individuals who participated in a deliberative process should focus on mutual understanding. Participants' main concern in deliberative democracy is about what they must do/how they should act in a particular subject as together rather than acting as an individual. Persuasion or "non-coercive coercion of the better argument" plays an important role in here. More than anything, communication including deliberation to a certain level is important.

The question here is that what is the *essence* of democracy? Is it representation by some specialized elites in parliaments in which minority of the people seek solutions for the majority as it is in the liberal perspective? Is it direct participation of the citizens to the public duties in turns as it was in classical democracy? Is it voting or aggregation? Or is it deliberation rather than anything else? Academics in the deliberative democratic field consider that the democratic *conversation* between citizens is the crucial thing here.

As discussed above, public sphere is a place where citizens gather and discuss particular issues. Some researchers claim that (Papacharissi 2002, 2012; Singer, 2009) internet has a potential in revitalizing the public sphere in a virtual way. As the internet might overcome obstacles such as physical participation, and it has distinct advantages in speed and relatively low costs, it has broadened the participation opportunities to discussions. More than anything, internet ease the process of democratic relation between citizens; "the essential democratic relationship is not between leaders and citizens but between citizens and citizens" (Barber, 2006:6). Even before the internet's horizontal structure established, researchers were aware that the one of the major problems in democracies is the limited chances for citizen discussion (Dewey, 1991).

For a healthy democracy, the quality of communication (and deliberation) is much more important than "the ability to communicate" (Ruiz et al., 2011:4). As the internet creates platforms for critical-rational discussions are held, it is also considered as an extension of a public debate in the public sphere which Habermas defined it as a rational and ethical procedure for social construction and a "tool for change" (Habermas, 1992). Online discussions, then, can be seen as virtual public debates.

If deliberative democracy is considered as central to the concept of public sphere, and if the internet is perceived as a new (or extension of) public sphere, then

deliberative democratic procedures should exist in the internet. This is the perspective that this thesis focuses on.

As the deliberative democracy is popular for approximately 30 years and is still receiving lots of attention from researchers all over the world, the consensus on deliberative democracy's concepts cannot be established yet (Delli Carpini, Cook, Jacobs; 2004). The involvement of the internet and the empirical turn in the deliberative democracy also obscured the discussions. Nevertheless, four main recognized principles are usually recognized which are derived from Chambers (2003). As all deliberative democracy theories contains an objection to liberal-representative and vote-centric democracies, they centralize talking, communication, and will formation rather than aggregation. Those four principles shaped under this statement (Friess & Eilders, 2015:321).

First, deliberative democracy brings forward accountability rather than consent in the legitimation of decision-making processes. In Chambers words "accountability is primarily understood in terms of 'giving an account' of something that is, publicly articulating, explaining, and most importantly justifying public policy "(2003:308). Second principle is related with some certain rules that defines how to communicate in deliberative processes. As per this principle deliberation should be rational, interactive, and respectful (Friess & Eilders, 2015:322). Third principle related with the outcomes of the deliberation. It is agreed that the deliberative democratic decision-making processes should have effects on policymakers. Lastly, fourth principle is that considering public sphere as the normative space for deliberative democracy as per Habermas' works (1989, 1996).

When studying deliberative democracy, we may expect to find above principles in the special platforms that are designed for deliberation. Studies conducted by Jonsson and Astrom (2014), Strandberg and Berg (2015) can be considered under this focus. On the other hand, most researchers focused on daily internet discussions

(Graham 2012; Jensen 2003; Stromer-Galley 2007). In these studies, principles-above might not be exist all-together. Nevertheless, as it is in deliberative democracy theory, studies as such, look for an ideal platforms or how ideal platforms should be like. However, in this thesis those four principles can be seen despite the thesis' focus on everyday politics.

So, if the online discussions can be seen as the new forms of public sphere, deliberative democracy can be pursued in the internet with a special focus on above principles. The question of *how* individuals communicate with each other in online platforms emerges here. Focusing on whether the theories and principles of deliberative democracy can be found in online platforms also important. The quality of this communication directly affects the extent of online deliberation and practical base of deliberative democracy in the internet.

Then the main question of the thesis can be described like; "to what degree and how writers in Ekşi Sözlük accomplish the ideals of deliberative democratic discussions online". The infamous question of "so what" might be asked in here; so what, if the writers of Ekşi Sözlük fulfil the ideals of democracy? What will be changed in our lives?"

First, we should accept that the internet became a constant in our lives. Our communication and even our lives depend on it. If we could detect symptoms of deliberative democracy in any website which is not especially designed as a deliberative platform, this proves that deliberative democracy can be possible as a new –maybe only form of democracy in this new of public sphere. As the internet removes the *necessity* of representation in democracy, more participatory, more equal, or more updated forms of democracy can be applied to it.

The tendency is towards changing decision making procedures online via e-government, e-democratic or e-municipality systems. So, if e-democracy is more likely to be around in the near future, why should follow traditional liberal

democratic procedures in it? If deliberative democracy provides more participatory more equal ways for democracy, then it might be proposed as *the way* for future democracy. One of the best ways of finding whether deliberative democracy exists in online spaces is to measure the quality of discussion held in those websites by applying ideals of deliberative democracy to them. Then, by considering how and why quality is high or low in those discussions, scholars, governments, NGOs etc. who work on deliberative democracy field can design deliberative democratic platforms accordingly.

Naturally the extent of deliberation in online discussion changes subject to subject. Therefore, it becomes important to compare various topics and provide answers accordingly. What affects the quality of deliberation; identities, nationalities, general issues, gender or something else? If the score of deliberation is low in discussions which focus on gender, what is the main reason of it? For instance, is it disrespectful statements? Do the level of respect changes from subject to subject? Then does it prove respect should be a must for the design of deliberation? Or are there other things that also cause low scores in gender-focused topic? Measuring the quality of online deliberation can answer these questions as it also helps us to compare various topics and answers.

Lastly, one might consider that whether the scheme –or index, can be applied to any discussions or any topic online. For instance, could we receive the similar scores if we apply the scheme on "14 Aralık 2018 Beşiktaş Galatasaray Maçı"? Considering the indicators, getting the similar results might not be possible in any topic such as this. On the other hand, for more daily-political or social topics, high or low level of deliberation can be seen. After all, the aim of this thesis is to prove the symptoms of deliberative democracy can be pursued in any discussion in any website.

5.2. Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme

In order to answer the question of "to what degree and how writers in Ekşi Sözlük accomplish the ideals of online deliberative democratic discussions" we should first define the ideals of deliberative democracy as the indicators of our scheme.

As discussed in the deliberative democracy chapter, deliberative ideals are reviewed or revisited by the scholars throughout the time. While Type I standards usually considered as more rational standards, Type II standards involved communicative side of the deliberation (Monnoyer-Smith & Wojcik, 2012:27). Bachtiger et al. (2010) counts; equality, justification rationality, common good orientation, respect and agreement, interactivity, constructive politics, and sincerity among Type I standards. Type II standards on the other hand related with "all activities that function as communicative influence under conditions of conflict" (Warren, 2007). Those standards are; storytelling and deliberative negotiations.

Above studies were for measuring deliberation in parliaments or town-meetings rather than measuring online deliberation. Therefore, standards of measuring online deliberation are also reviewed by some scholars. As it is in other area of studies, online deliberation can be measured in various ways; from direct measurement (interviews, surveys) to content analysis or discourse analysis.

In the context of this thesis, a micro-analysis of deliberative quality measurement is used by analysing users' comments. Black et. Al, define micro-analytic approach as "an increasingly common approach to study political deliberation" (2011:6). As it is an increasingly common approach, there are numerous studies that create their own indexes in order to measure the quality of online deliberation.

Especially in the non-institutional field of online deliberation, there are many studies that create their own indexes but remained loyal to the cores of the standards of deliberative democracy. Following Jonsson and Astrom (2014) there are six main

categories under non-institutional arena. 1- Studies on USENET groups. These studies were more popular in the early years of the internet as USENET was one of the few platforms for online discussion groups back then. Donath (1999), Papacharissi (2004), can be considered under this category. 2- Anarchic Forums. Main study on this category is conducted by Jensen (2003). In his work, he compared two forums; first one is created by the government and the second one is a private -or anarchic in his terms-. He compared these forums in order to measure which setting is more compatible with deliberative democratic dialogue. 3- Organizational Forums. Milioni's (2009) and Tanner's (2001) works can be considered under this category. In their works both Milioni and Tanner focused on whether online forums in specific issues (such as Chilean's reactions online for Pinochet's arrestment) can be considered as public spheres in which a deliberation occur. 4- Blogs. As the internet became slowly a mainstream after 2006, blogs suddenly became one of the most important arenas online. As expected, some scholars focused on whether blogs in the internet carries the potential of deliberation or not. Koop and Jansen (2009) in their work analysed Canadian partisan blogs and applied some tests in order to measure potential of deliberation in those blogs. Their focus was mainly on Type I standards such as equality and constructive discussions. 5- Mail groups. As one of the pioneers of online deliberation, Dahlberg (2001) focused on the existence of e-democracy in Minnesota E-Democracy platform. In his study Dahlberg investigate how internet can be used in order to enhance or strengthen public sphere. 6- Chat rooms. Weger and Aakhus (2003) focused on chat rooms in the internet, as it was also a common platform at the early years of the internet. In their work, they focused on discussions and arguments in chat rooms and explore the possibilities of deliberation in here.

In the field of non-institutional researches, one of the most important focuses is on the quality of the deliberation. As Jonnson and Astrom stresses more than half of the works in the field of empirical deliberation, focus on measuring the quality of

discussions online (2014:6). Most of the scholars in this field tend to focus on case studies and content analysis when measuring online deliberation (Koop & Jansen, 2009; Wilhelm, 1998; Klinger & Russman, 2011; Tsaliki, 2002; Black et al. 2011). Some scholars such as Klinger & Russmann or Black et al. proposed their versions of quality indexes.

In this thesis, a reviewed index will be proposed as a combination of previous studies' indexes. The reason for creating a new index is that to apply previous studies' criteria to the context of Ekşi Sözlük. Criteria that are selected for this thesis, is explained above in the online deliberation chapter.

5.2.1. Data

In this thesis, 3,706 Ekşi Sözlük entries under three different topics are examined as per the social and analytical dimension of deliberation. Three topics have selected for this study. These topics are; 1- A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees (Suriyeli Sığınmacılar İçin Referandum Yapılsın[17]) –1323 entries, 2- We demand unisex public toilets (Cinsiyetsiz Tuvaletler İstiyoruz[18]) 685 entries, 3- January 1st 2019 Plastic Bag Tax (1 Ocak 2019 Plastik Poşetlerin Paralı Olması[19]) 1698 entries.

Each entry was analysed and coded using the modified version of "Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme" which is developed by Gastil and Black (2008). The basic unit of analysis for the analysis is an Ekşi Sözlük entry. Entries were examined in the chronological order in Ekşi Sözlük. Entries were examined from the beginning of the topic until June 1st, 2019. The data in total contain 3,706 entries across 3 topics.

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[17] https://eksisozluk.com/suriyeli-siginmacilar-icin-referandum-yapmak--5402987

[18] https://eksisozluk.com/cinsiyetsiz-tuvaletler-istiyoruz-kampanyasi--5757532

[19] https://eksisozluk.com/1-ocak-2019-plastik-posetlerin-parali-olmasi--5746847

In Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme, two dimensions of deliberative discussion is defined namely Analytical Dimension and Social Dimension (Black et al. 2011). Under that dimension, there are total 7 criteria for measuring the online deliberation. Each entry was scored on seven criteria of two dimensions of deliberation. In all criteria, a higher point means higher quality of deliberation.

5.3.   Criteria of Online Deliberation

The goal is this thesis to measure quality of online deliberation in topics in Ekşi Sözlük. As seen in the Deliberative Democracy Chapter, there are some requirements for a deliberative democratic discussion to occur. For instance, while Rawls focuses on the concept of common good, Habermas' main focus is on communication. Some researchers, in order to measure the deliberation quality (both online and offline), have proposed various criteria based on Habermas' and Rawls' works.

For instance, Schneider (1997:72) proposed four criteria in an idealized public sphere; equality, diversity, reciprocity, quality. Similarly, Jensen (2003) suggests six criteria; form, dialogue, openness, tone, argumentation, reciprocity. As an early study, Wilhelm lists five criteria for a virtual public sphere; topography, topicality, inclusiveness, design, deliberation (2002). Janssen and Kies (2005:326) -by referring to Dahlberg (2002) - state that an ideal online deliberative space has following characteristics; Reciprocity, Justification, Reflexivity, Ideal Role Taking, Sincerity, Inclusiveness, and Autonomy from state and economic power.

As a consolidation, Strandberg and Grönlund claim that an online discussion should have following pillars in order to be considered as deliberative; inclusion, rational-critical, reciprocity, and respect (2014:366). In the context of this thesis, a combination of above-mentioned criteria/pillars will be used for measuring the

quality of online deliberation. Gastil and Black (2008) suggest that deliberation have two dimensions; analytical dimension and social dimension. While participants propose their ideas based on *well-reason* they are in the analytical dimension of deliberative democracy. Furthermore, participants should consider the public, or their social environment in a deliberative discussion. This consideration is called "the social dimension of deliberation". While measuring the quality of online deliberation, 7 criteria -4 analytical 3 social- is proposed. Analytical criteria are; 1- Creating an Information Base, 2- Prioritizing Values, 3- Identifying Solutions, 4- Weighing Solutions,

Social criteria are; 5- Common Good Orientation, 6- Respect, 7- Reciprocity. As can be seen, all selected criteria are derived from both Rawls' and Habermas' theories. Below, those criteria will be elaborated.

5.3.1. Analytical Dimensions:

5.3.1.1.   Creating an information Base

As seen in the standards of deliberation section, one of the bases of deliberative democracy is reasoning. However, in the revision of those standards, some researchers proposed individual experiences, story-telling, emotional experiences should be considered as a part of reasoning (Black et al.: 2011; Polletta & Lee: 2006; Bachtiger et al.: 2009). According to these researchers, a fact should not be the only way to create information base (and reasoning). In this context, a post or statement that includes personal experiences, stories, or facts counted as it has a deliberative information base.

Scores: (0, 1)

Entries that creates information base, for instance entries that contain stories, facts, personal or emotional experiences were scored as "1". If the entry contains no information as such, was scored "0".

> Example[20]: It is overrated. Just take your cloth bag and go shopping. There is no need for a *mumbo jumbo*. When I was in Germany, I was always carrying a cloth bag and put all the things I bought in it. (Writer emphasizes that he was in Europe). Just today I've witnessed a situation in Turkey: I went to BİM Markets at the morning (going to Europe doesn't mean that I'm rich), you know BİM Markets, they are usually crowded. There was a 5-6 person line at the cash. The guy who was at the front of the line, was paying for his things, and the cashier asked whether he wants a plastic bag or not and informed the guy that they are subject to fee as of today. The guy said "Never mind, cancel that", and went to the baked products aisle and while we were watching him with curiosity, took some plastic bags which were already there and came back to the cash. He put the things that he bought and left the market. You can't see this in Europe. We over-react everything.

As the entry provides a story, example, and personal experience, it is scored as 1.

5.3.1.2.   Values

Gastil and Black (2008) propose that the participants identify and prioritize some values of their own while participating in a deliberative discussion. This prioritizing and identifiying should consider a wide range of values in order to "… fully grasp

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[20] abartılan olaydır.

yanına bez çantanı al git ve alışverişini yap. bu kadar tantanaya ne gerek var anlayamıyorum.

ben almanyadayken yanımda sürekli bez çanta taşıyordum. marketten aldıklarımı çantaya doldurup yoluma devam ediyordum. (yazar burada avrupa'da bulunduğunu vurguluyor)

daha bugün türkiye'de karşılaştığım durum:

sabah bim'e gittim. (avrupa'da bulunmuş olmam zengin olduğum anlamına gelmiyor tabiki)

bim'i bilirsiniz genelde kalabalık olur, kasada 5-6 kişilik bir sıra vardı. sıranın en önündeki abinin işlemleri yapıldı sıra ödemeye geldi. kasiyer çocuk poşet ister misiniz diye sordu adam ver dedi.

çocuk 25 kuruş daha fazla ödeyeceksiniz bilginiz olsun deyince adam boşver boşver iptal et onu deyip koşar adımlarla unlu mamül reyonunun oraya gitti. ben dahil herkes adamı meraklı gözlerle izledik.

ekmek dolabının kenarında asılı ince poşetlerden üç beş tane aldı ve kasaya geri geldi. aldıklarını poşetlere doldurdu, yoluna devam etti.

bakın bu avrupa'da olmaz*

her şeyi çok abartıyoruz cook - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/85209615

the values and interests of different people affected by the issue being deliberated".
Participants, therefore, reflect their values and to be *influenced* by the others'. If a
post or statement includes a value statement such as good, bad, unethical, wrong,
irrational etc. it counts as it has prioritized or identified values.

Scores: (0, 1, 2)

This indicator was scored in the range from 0 to 2. If there is no explicitly expressed
value in the entry, it was scored as 0. If the entry had a value statement but the writer
did not establish a link between the expressed value and the issue being discussed, it
was scored as 1. If the writer established a link, then it was scored as 2.

> Example[21]: It is an existing profit method in Europe for years. It nudges
> people t not to use plastic bags, but it serves capitalism and profits under the
> name of environment. Of course, the main reason is to increase the profits of
> the super market chains. It is ironic that neo-Marxist politics are serving the
> capitalist system.

As the writer established a link between environment policies and neo-Marxism,
entry is scored as 2.

5.3.1.3.   Identifying Solutions

In a deliberative discussion, the discussion by itself is not adequate for reaching
consequences as deliberation is not simply exchanging ideas. Participants of a
deliberative discussion should have some solution proposals for the issue being
discussed. Identifying and hearing solutions has another importance for the
deliberative democracy; it enables participants to hear other people's solutions who

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[21] yıllardır avrupa ülkelerinde hali hazırda uygulanan kar methodu. insanları plastik poşet
kullanmamaya nudge etmesi bir yana, bu tekniğin çevrecilik adı altında kapitalizmin yoğurduğu ve
kesinlikle kar amacı güden bir uygulamadır.
asıl amaç tabiki büyük market zincirlerinin kar marjinini arttırabilmek adına her türlü yönteme
başvurmasından başka birşey değildir.
neo-marxist   politikaların   kapitalist   sisteme   hizmet   ediyor   oluşu   ironik   -
https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80002204

are not on their *side*. This means focusing numerous, different options in terms of solutions as there are many solutions from many propositions.

Scores: (0, 1, 2)

The entry was scored 0, if it did not have any proposal of solution. A score of 1 is given for the entries which proposed new solutions for the discussed issue. If the entry made additions or revisions to a previous entry, then it was scored as 2.

> Example[22]: It's one of the most sensible topics that posted recently. With a careful regulation, we should send back these refugees to their homes. It should benefit our not-so-good economy, as well. At least it addresses the public conscience. Why we still consider people who went to their country at Bayrams and come back as refugees. This is strange, in my opinion.

As the entry proposed a new solution for the issue, it is scored as 1.

5.3.1.4. Weighing Solutions

Naturally, proposing solutions is not adequate for the deliberation. Participants should see the pros and cons of the solutions proposed by weighing them. Weighing solutions is vital for deliberative democracy as it "reassesses biases toward different solutions by seeing how others weigh pros and cons" (Gastil & Black, 2008).

Scores: (0, 1 ,2, 3)

If the entry did not have any content that indicates its weighing solutions, it was scored as 0. If the entry focuses to positive sides (pros) of a solution, it was scored as

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[22] son zamanlarda açılan en mantıklı başlıklardan biri.dikkatli bir düzenleme ile bu sığınmacıların, planlı bir şekilde geri gönderilmesi sağlanmalıdır. ekonomimizin geldiği noktada, yapılacak bu hamle önemli bir tasarruf olacaktır. en azından kamu vicdanına hitap eder. bayramda memleketine gidip, sonra tekrar dönenlere hala neden mülteci/sığınmacı olarak bakılıyor, bu durum bir tek bana mı acayip geliyor bilemedim - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91154081

1. If it focuses to negative sides (cons) of a solution, it was scored as 2. If the entry focuses pros and cons of a solution, then it was scored as 3.

> Example[23]: The most important problem of the country is refugees, even more than the economy. This problem is taking us to the abyss. It could destroy the Republic of Turkey in 10 years. We have to take precautions immediately. It is threatening the sociological and demographical integrity of the country. It directly affects the bad economy. One who doesn't take precautions for this situation, is a traitor before the history.

As the entry focused only negative sides of the proposed solution, it is scored as 2.

5.3.2. Social Dimensions:

5.3.2.1. Common Good Orientation

Common Good Orientation is the first criteria of social dimension of deliberative democracy. As said, these criteria are derived from Rawls' and Habermas' theory. Common Good Orientation is mainly stressed in John Rawls' theory. This criterion focuses on whether a post or statement has a reference for the common good. In addition, common good can be understand in two ways; utilitarian and least advantaged-focused. Utilitarian understanding of common good is making a statement for the greatest number of people. Least advantaged-focused common good, as can be understood from its name, focuses statements which have references considering the least advantaged people of the society (Baechtiger et al., 2009:5).

Scores: (0, 1, 2)

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[23] ülkenin; ekonomi dahil bütün sorunlarının en üst noktası mültecilerdir.

bu sorun, ülkeyi uçuruma götürür. 10 yıl sonra türkiye cumhuriyeti'ni yıkabilir. şu an önlem alınması gerekir.

ülkenin hem sosyolojik, hem de demografik bütünlüğünü şu an bile tehdit etmektedir.

ekonominin giderek batmasına birinci derecede etki etmektedir.

buna önlem almayan şu anda iş başındaki yönetim, tarih önünde vatan hainidir. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91676816

If the entry has no explicit content for the common good orientation, it was scored as 0. If there is a narrow group interest, or a neutral reference, it was scored as 1. If the entry focuses on least advantaged groups or considers the greatest number of people (utilitarian), it was scored as 2.

> Example[24]: I've supported the Syrians in the first three months, but now everybody should go back to his/her home. Who wants Syrians to stay and why?
> 1- Vampires who want to exploit Syrians as a cheap labour force.
> 2- Perverts who want to marry underage Syrian girls.
> 3- Perverts who want Syrian second-wife.
> 4- Blind people who are not able to see the upcoming demographical and socio-economic problems.
> 5- Crime organizations that benefit from the Syrian refugees.

As the entry focused on the disadvantages of the Syrians, it is scored as 2.

5.3.2.2.   Respect

Respect is an essential for deliberative democracy. As it will be seen in the method section, respect has the only criterion that reflects negative scores, as it can damage the deliberation more than any other mentioned criteria. For instance, a statement which does not mention common good can still score high deliberative quality levels. However, a disrespectful statement/post, no matter how comprehensive it is,

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[24] suriyelileri ilk 3 ay ben de destekledim ama artık herkes evine dönmeli.

suriyelilerin kalmasını kimler, neden ister?

1. ucuz iş gücü olsun deyip insanları sömürmek isteyen vampirler.

2. 18 yaşından küçük suriyeli kızlarla imam nikahıyla evlenmek isteyen sapıklar.

3. suriyeli kuma isteyen sapıklar.

4. ileride oluşabilecek demografik, sosyoekonomik sorunları göremeyen körler.

5. savaştan kaçmış, kimlik bunalımı yaşayan, parasız gençlere yasadışı, etik dışı, gereksiz işler (fuhuş, hırsızlık, kapkaç, yaralama...) yaptırmak isteyen suç örgütleri - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91675477

damages the deliberative discussion. If participants avoid from being *antagonistic* deliberation can occur in a more quality way.

Scores: (-1, 0, 1)

As mentioned, respect is the only indicator that has a negative score. If there is a disrespectful statement in the entry such as racist comments or swearing or if the entry contains antagonistic or sarcastic statements, it was scored as -1. Regular statements without swearing etc. was scored as 1. However, if the entry contains openly respectful statements for instance addressing other writers with a respectful way, it was scored as 2.

> Example[25]: Best Arab is the one who goes back to his/her desert. Go away. We should keep this proposition at the agenda.

As the entry contains racist statements it is scored as -1

5.3.2.3. Reciprocity

Reciprocity is, in dictionary meaning, a behaviour in which two people or groups of people give each other help and advantages. According to Jansen and Kies, reciprocity is the criteria for measuring whether the discussion is "real" enough (2005:327). In online forums, reciprocity might be 1- the number of replies a message gets 2-the number of "favourites" a message gets 3-referring to or being referred from other posts, 4-Initiating new discussions, 5- Simply sharing/expressing opinion.

Scores: (1, 2)

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[25] en iyi arab çölüne dönmüş arab'dığğr..git burden. gündemde tutulması gereken önerme - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91652130

Reciprocity is the last criterion and if the entry did not refer to a previous message or the writer just simply shared his/her opinion, it was scored as 1. If the entry; asking questions in order to receive responses, or quoting another entry, it was scored as 2.

> Example[26]: Alright, a liberal and a humanist arrived: as if we are saying that borders are unnecessary. Why borders exist? What is the number one priority of a state? What, if not its citizens? Do not include humanist and liberals into this one. No one wants Syrian refugees in this country, except idiot Arabic pro-ummah supporters. Only government's wrong choices are the reason that not sending the Syrians back to their home; they do not deliberate with Assad, seeing Syrians as leverage in elections, populating the ummah. There is no relation between this situation and liberty and humanity.

As the entry shared an opinion without a referral to another entry, it is scored as 1.

5.4. Scoring

All entries were scored for each criterion. Then, in order to be more understandable, given scores divided to maximum score of the respective criterion, and multiplied by 100. For instance, if the entry received 1 point from the Reciprocity criteria, 1 is divided to 2 (maximum score) then multiplied by 100; (1:2) x100= 50,00.

For instance, a utopic entry should have maximum scores from all the criteria. Therefore, a utopic entry's total deliberative quality score should be 100.

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[26] açılın hem liberal , hem de hümanist geldi: sanki biz sınırlar gereksiz diyormuşuz gibi.sınırlar niye var?bir devletin önceliği nedir? kendi insanı değilse ne?hiç hümanist veya liberalleri katmayın bu işe. bu ülkede bir aptal arap ümmetçisi azınlık dışında hiç kimse, ama hiç kimse suriyelileri istemiyor.savaşın yüzde 99 bittiği suriye'ye , suriyelilerin gönderilmemesinin tek sebebi iktidarın yanlış tercihleridir. esat ile masaya oturmamak, bu suriyelelire bir koz gibi görmek, ümmet nüfusunu arttırmak gibi yanlış tercihler. olayın özgürlük ve insancıllıkla ilişkisi yok - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91646535

Table 3. Utopic Entry

Information Base	Values	Solution	Pros-Cons	Common Good Orientation	Respect	Reciprocity	Quality
100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00

On the other hand, a "dystopic" entry should have minimum scores from all the criteria, then it's score should be 0,00.

Table 4. Dystopic Entry

Information Base	Values	Solution	Pros-Cons	Common Good Orientation	Respect	Reciprocity	Quality
0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	-50,00	50,00	0,00

Entry[27]: I asked myself "is it a necessary". Is men's toilet a privilege, so some people demand something like that? For instance, there could be a third option for the homosexual individuals. We can enable them to use any toilet they want.

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[27] yani ne gerek var diye düşündürdü açıkçası. erkekler tuvaleti bir ayrıcalık mı ki böyle bir istek var? mesela eşcinsel bireyler için bu ikisi haricinde bir üçüncü alternatif oluşturulabilir yahut diledikleri tuvaleti kullanabilmeleri sağlanabilir. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/82692362

Table 5. Scoring Example-1

Information Base	Values	Solution	Pros-Cons	Common Good Orientation	Respect	Reciprocity	Quality
00,00	00,00	50,00	00,00	100,00	50,00	100,00	42,86

Entry[28]: You can hear more SJW nonsense in Turkey day by day. These people f**ed the legitimate struggle for rights both in Europe and U.S. (pls. see: are you aware of the danger)

Table 6 Scoring Example-2

Information Base	Values	Solution	Pros-Cons	Common Good Orientation	Respect	Reciprocity	Quality
0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	-50,00	50,00	0,00

5.5. Ekşi Sözlük as an E-Democratic Platform

In this chapter Ekşi Sözlük and its mechanisms will be explained. Then, the reasons for why Ekşi Sözlük is chosen and why certain topics are chosen will be elaborated.

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[28] sjw zırvaları her geçen gün daha sık duyulmaya başlanıyor türkiye'de de.bu tipler amerika'da ve avrupa'da solculuğun da, akademinin de, her türlü meşru hak mücadelesinin de içine sı***lar.(bkz: tehlikenin farkında mısınız)- https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80315185

Ekşi Sözlük –Sour Dictionary in English, founded in 1999 by Sedat Kapanoğlu. According to Kapanoğlu, he inspired from the dictionary that obtains all information of the universe in *Hitchhiker's Guide to Galaxy* when coding Ekşi Sözlük (sub-etha is the name of this dictionary in the novel). The name "Ekşi (Sour)" comes after the song "Sourtimes" of Portishead. As *sub-etha* has the knowledge of everything in the universe, the motto of the Ekşi Sözlük is "sacred source of knowledge – kutsal bilgi kaynağı". In the novel, sub-etha is a form of communication which is faster-than-light rather than a sole dictionary. It is used in the galaxy as a way of conveying information, including news and updates[29]. So, Ekşi Sözlük is not just an *encyclopaedia like* website, it is more likely to be a dictionary in which users provide their knowledge on different issues/discussion.

We might say that Ekşi Sözlük's interface is quite similar with other online forums. But it represents something bigger than regular forums. Zeynep Tüfekçi (2012) defines Ekşi Sözlük as "Wikipedia, a social network, and Reddit rolled into one. It has been around since 1999 and birthed an online free speech culture in Turkey, allowing Turks to say what they wanted on the Internet, despite legal restrictions on speech".[30]

According to Ekşi Sözlük's 20th Anniversary Documentary, 35 million individuals visit Ekşi Sözlük monthly. Alexa.com –a website which conducts web traffic analysis worldwide, statistics also shows that Ekşi Sözlük is the 620th most visited website around the world and 10th most visited website in Turkey[31]. Considering that Ekşi Sözlük content is only Turkish, the worldwide rank 620th is quite high. Similarly, Ekşi Sözlük is one of the most famous websites in Turkey.

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[29] https://hitchhikers.fandom.com/wiki/Sub-Etha

[30] https://www.forbes.com/sites/alexkantrowitz/2013/07/10/how-the-founder-of-turkeys-original-social-network-explained-it-to-his-microsoft-co-workers/#6d827de25b9a

[31] https://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/eksisozluk.com

Why Ekşi Sözlük is significant in the context of this thesis then? First, e-democracy, let alone online deliberation, is not a subject of research in Turkey. As of June 14th, 2019, there are 8 postgraduate theses in Turkish national thesis database. The lack of research in e-democracy is related with the lack of implementations of E-democracy or e-governance in Turkey. Therefore, analysing *formal* implementations of e-democracy is difficult. Another reason is that the formal implementations (government formed forums, for instance) are usually considered *bad* research fields as users tend to not to participate in these implementations (see E-democracy chapter).

Ekşi Sözlük is the largest and most known forum-like website in Turkey. It is located 10th in the most visited websites in Turkey and there is no other forum-like website on top of Ekşi Sözlük in that list. Ekşi Sözlük also enables readers to reach various topics. Its range of topics is the widest among other forum-like websites in Turkey.

Secondly, Ekşi Sözlük offers users and readers to see what other people think about certain subjects more than any other website. For instance, in the Ekşi Sözlük 20th Anniversary Documentary, the creator of Ekşi Sözlük ssg states that "not everybody belongs to the same puzzle. One opinion follows another opinion which the exact opposite of it is, and they can exist at the same platform. This existence affects people in a very positive way because people liked this". The writer, *guru*, also mentions that "it (Ekşi Sözlük) shows people, including me, that other persons can think completely different than me. It helps me to learn the value of freedom of discussion". Similarly, the writer *cadi* says that "despite people are not the part of the same puzzle, these different parts create a puzzle anyway. This puzzle is a result of different opinions. Writers in Ekşi Sözlük have changed and contributed to my opinions"[32].

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[32] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5By7Dmyfwo&feature=youtu.be

The writer *georgeprekazi28* writes in the topic of "Why Ekşi Sözlük" as; "I don't know, I really think that this place is a little version of Turkey. I accept that there are mostly leftists in here, but generally it makes me happy knowing that there are people from everywhere, every opinion, and every thought[33]".

Additionally, under the same topic, the writer *sozlesmeli zabit katibi* states that "the idea of writing my thoughts freely is so good. You feel enchanted as a result of this freedom. Writing is freedom. I'm here to feel free"[34].

In their article, Turgut and Aslantürk have interviewed with Ekşi Sözlük users, and measure Ekşi Sözlük's potential of being a public sphere (2015:139). As a result, despite the gender-specific language is quite popular and this creates different *publics,* they claim that Ekşi Sözlük enables an equal opportunity to talk and express user's opinions.

As can be seen, Ekşi Sözlük is the most famous and biggest online platform in Turkey, which enables users to express their opinions freely, interact with other opinions, and then discuss on various subjects. This gives Ekşi Sözlük a unique characteristic for focusing online deliberation.

As seen above, involving a discussion or a change in your initial opinion is not adequate for an ideal deliberative democracy. The *results* or *decisions* of the online discussion should affect decision makers, in local or national level. This is where Ekşi Sözlük's most important effect comes up. Discussions on Ekşi had numerous effects on social, political, and cultural situations. In 2018 Turkey had Presidential Elections on June 24th. During the campaign period, Ekşi Sözlük (as can be guessed) crawling with lots of topics about elections. However, one of the topics stayed at the top of left frame until the election night; "Suggestions for Muharrem İnce and his

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[33] https://eksisozluk.com/entry/61173151

[34] https://eksisozluk.com/entry/71537793

advisors –Muharrem İnce ve Danışmanlarına Duyurular[35]". Muharrem İnce was the opposition's *main* candidate for the presidential elections and Ekşi Sözlük writers created this topic upon his candidateship announced. In total, more than 5,000 entries have been posted to this topic. Muharrem İnce and his advisors used Ekşi Sözlük writers' suggestions in their meetings all around the country. For instance, the writer *unfug* suggested[36];

> Please do not say my brothers from AKP when addressing AKP voters. Instead, say my brothers who have voted AKP previously and unhappy now" or "my brothers who have voted AKP before. Only this way you might clear their AKP identity.

After this suggestion has become the one of the most favourite entries in the topic, most probably one of his advisors noticed the entry and suggested it to Muharrem İnce. As expected, his speeches in the meetings have changed as per this suggestion. Additionally, Ekrem İmamoğlu who was the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality Candidate in March 2019 Mayoral Elections, used the same terminology in his meetings as well.

Another example of Ekşi Sözlük's power to set the agenda is Sözlük's efforts on Murat Eren, a captain from Turkish Armed Forces who has put on trial in 2006 with the charge of assassination to the Prime Minister of Turkey. Ekşi Sözlük writers brought the subject to *daylight* in 2016, claiming that Murat Eren is being kept in prison for no reason for nearly 10 years. In the topic "The Captain who is forgotten in prison – Cezaevinde Unutulan Yüzbaşı[37]" became a trending topic in June 2016 and received countless attention from writers. The subject immediately carried to the

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[35] https://eksisozluk.com/muharrem-ince-ve-danismanlarina-duyurular--5654201

[36] https://eksisozluk.com/entry/77623103

[37] https://eksisozluk.com/cezaevinde-unutulan-yuzbasi--5157684

national media[38]. As a result, just after two months of posted topic, the captain who is forgotten in the prison, released in August 2016[39].

In the age of social media, nearly all social media platforms can affect the national or local agendas. However, compared to Twitter or Facebook, Ekşi Sözlük is placed in a different level in terms of reachability. Anyone can register to Twitter or Facebook and start posting or twitting about anything in any given time. Ekşi Sözlük, as explained, has a unique membership system. Therefore, it is free from Twitter trolls or fake Facebook posts to a certain level. I'm saying "to a certain level" here as it is a known fact that Ekşi Sözlük is not free from trolls. But their effect is relatively limited comparing to other social media platforms.

As a result, Ekşi Sözlük is the most influential forum-like platform in Turkey. The discussions held in Ekşi Sözlük have affects in *real world* most of the time. Therefore, it is a very good platform to measure online deliberation in Turkey.

Following Zıraman's classification (2018) I will elaborate Ekşi Sözlük's structure in four categories; 1-Frames, 2-Topics, 3-Entries, 4-Writers.

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[38] http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/herkes-cikti-bir-tek-o-kaldi-40175265

[39] http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/video/murat-eren-cezaevinden-cikti-36135232

5.5.1. Ekşi Sözlük Frames

There are 3 frames in Ekşi Sözlük. Top Frame, Left Frame, and Right Frame.

Figure 2 Frames of Ekşi Sözlük

Top Frame: As can be seen, top frame shows categories of topics from politics to literature. If the visitor clicks on any of specified categories, only related topics will be shown in the left frame. For instance, if the visitor only would like to see topics in politics, he/she just simply click on politics channel, and then choose any desired topic he/she would like to read, write or visit. If a visitor or user would like to search a certain topic, he/she might use the "search" button located in the top frame, and then related topics is shown in left frame as well. Top frame is the only fixed frame in Ekşi Sözlük.

Left Frame: Left frame might be the most famous frame in Ekşi Sözlük, as all "trend" topics is shown in here when visitors entered the Ekşi Sözlük. In the left frame, there are 50 topics, sorted by entries written on them on the day of visit. For instance, when March 31st Elections held in Turkey, first topic in the left frame –as can be guessed- was "31 Mart 2019 Türkiye Yerel Seçimleri". There are some numbers in the right of the topic which indicates entries written to this topic on the specific day. For instance, if a user visits Ekşi Sözlük on January 2nd, 2019 and sees the topic "January 1st Plastic Bag Tax -419" that means there are 419 entries written on the topic on January 2nd, 2019.

The other function of the left frame is that showing the results of selected categories or the search. If a visitor clicks on a specific category or search a specific topic, left frame shows the most related topics.

Right Frame: We can explain the right frame as the main frame of Ekşi Sözlük, as all written entries is shown here. All entries of any topic can be seen here. If a user would like to write an entry, he/she can use the box below of the right frame and then write his/her entry.

Right frame also enables users and visitors to sort entries different that chronological order. In the right frame there is a button named "Şükela". The name "şükela" comes after a chocolate brand in Turkey and it is the "degenerate" name of the brand. It means, in general, good or chocolate like. As can be seen in the below figure, user and visitors can sort entries in "şükela" mode. It also helps to sort entries as "all şükela" which shows the most liked entries, or "daily şükela" which shows today's most like entries.

legal entry örnekleri

şükela: tümü | bugün   başlıkta ara ▾   takip et   1 ▾ / 2 »

sozlukte her $eyin tanim olacagini zanneden gafillere serpi$tirilebilecek orneklerdir. misal:

1) ba$i sonu geyik olan içinde tanim barindiran entry'ler. ornek:

ba$lik: elma

entry: "abi cok guzel $eyler bunlar ama bu bir meyvedir nietcede yani oha felan oluyorum siz boyle deyince."

faidesi: geyik yapmayi saglar.

Figure 3 Şükela Mode

5.5.2. Topics

There are no subject limitations when posting/opening a topic in Ekşi Sözlük, but the limitation of 50 characters. Accepted users can post any topic in any subject. The range of topics can be from quantum mechanics to feeling hungry. According to Zıraman the number limit of topics is 6, 12 x 10^{37} (2018:182).

In general, there are 3 types of topics in Ekşi Sözlük; 1-Trending topics, 2-Informative Topics, and 3-Daily/general topics.

Trending topics are usually related with up-to-date news, situations, events, or "controversial" statements. For instance, when Turkish Supreme Electoral Council (YSK) cancelled the Mayoral Elections of İstanbul in May 6th, trending topics were related to this subject or relevant subjects such as "YSK". Naturally, trending topics are not only focused to political subjects. As another example, when the football coach Abdullah Avci signed a contract with Beşiktaş, the trending topics became

relevant topics such as "Abdullah Avci, Beşiktaş, and Abdullah Avcı'nın Beşiktaş ile anlaşması (Abdullah Avcı's contract with Beşiktaş".

Second topic type is informative topics. Informative topics are the *backbone* of Ekşi Sözlük, as initial idea of the Sözlük is to provide information about nearly everything. In these types of topics, users and visitors might find information about what they are looking for. If a user or visitor would like to obtain information on French writer Marguerite Yourcenar, he/she just simply writer her name on the search button in the top frame, and then read or enter, information about her. As mentioned above, the "şükela" mode is the best way to obtain information from informative topics, as users and visitors can sort entries according to most liked ones.

The third topic type is daily/general topics. As there are no subject limitations in Ekşi Sözlük, daily/general topics can be related to, theoretically, everything. One of the most famous topics of Ekşi Sözlük is "1 Temmuz 2004 Karnımın Acıkması (July 1st, 2004 I'm Hungry)"[40] is the best example of daily/general topics.

As can be seen, the freedom of topic posting in Ekşi Sözlük helps users to create topics in any subject.

5.5.3. Entries

Entries are the heart of Ekşi Sözlük. Only accepted writers can write entries and create topics. Ekşi Sözlük has some rules in writing entries and they are specified in "legal entry örnekleri –legal entry samples"[41]. The administration of Ekşi Sözlük also specified what the inaccurate entries are in the topic "hatalı entry örnekleri – inaccurate entry samples"[42]. As of February 21st, 2019, there are 36.133.532 entries

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[40] https://eksisozluk.com/1-temmuz-2004-karnimin-acikmasi--961221

[41] https://eksisozluk.com/legal-entry-ornekleri--104910

[42] https://eksisozluk.com/hatali-entry-ornekleri--71087

in Ekşi Sözlük[43]. While measuring online deliberation in Ekşi Sözlük, only legal entries are considered as data.
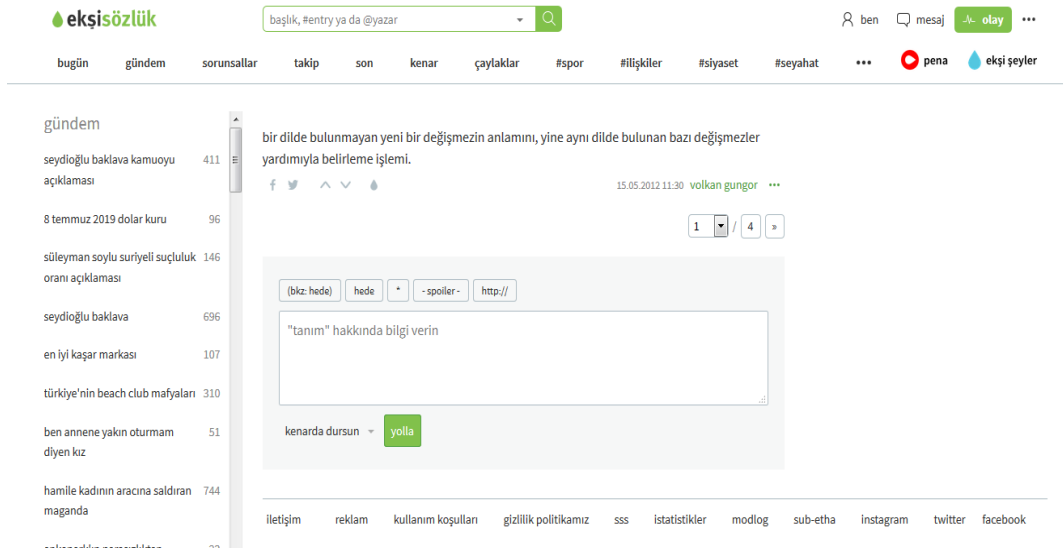
Figure 4 Entry Box in Ekşi
Sözlük

Writers may also use five different entry shaping functions (Zıraman, 2018:185). These are; 1-Bakınız, 2-Gizli Bakınız (*), 3-Hede, 4-Spoiler, 5- Http://.

Bakınız means "please see" or "see" in English. The button *bakınız* simply directs users or visitors who click on the *bakınız* to the related topic. For instance, under the topic of Cuban Cigars, if there is a *bakınız* button such as "(bkz: romeo y julieta)", when a user clicks on it, it directs user to the topic "romeo y julieta".

*Gizli Bakınız (*) – "*hidden please see button" has the same function with *bakınız* button. The only difference is that users hide the topic which they would like to direct users in a "*" character. For instance, under the topic of Cuban Cigars, if a writer comments "There are various brands of Cuban cigars. I'm smoking the best

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[43] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5By7Dmyfwo&feature=youtu.be,

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one* right now", visitors can click on the "*" character and directed to "romeo y julieta" topic.

Hede is not a Turkish word, however in the Ekşi Sözlük terminology it means "şey (a thing)". It has the same function with *bakınız* or *gizli bakınız*. It appears as a highlighted word in an entry rather than indicating as (bkz:XX). For instance, "**romeo y julieta** is one of the best brands of Cuban cigars". If a user clicks on the highlighted word, he/she automatically directed to the topic of "romeo y julieta". Ekşi Sözlük writers also use *hede* function when they would like to emphasize something in their entries.

Spoiler is, as can be understood, the button for warning readers about spoilers. Below figure shows the use of spoiler button in Ekşi Sözlük. Please be informed that it has a real spoiler from the TV show *Game of Thrones*.
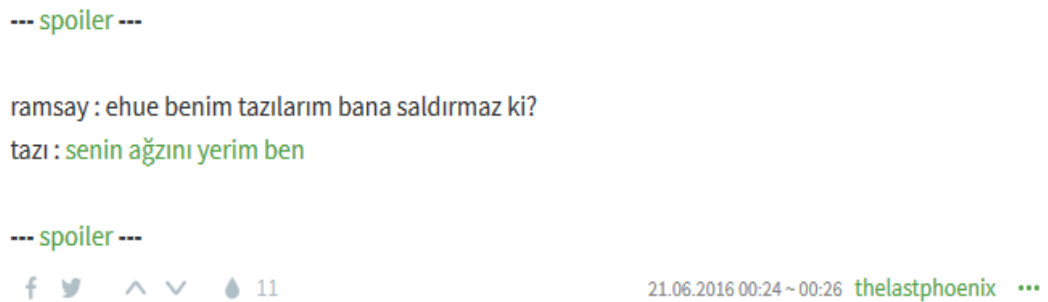

Figure 5 Use of spoiler function
in Ekşi Sözlük

Last entry shaping function is "*http:// "*. This function helps writers to direct readers to a website.

url yazarken aslında bkz vermeye gerek yoktur...
(bkz: http://www.yahoo.com/) yazmak ile http://www.yahoo.com/ yazmak arasında fark
yoktur... (7 karakter hariç...)

f y ^ v ♦   17.03.2005 15:25 huzursuz ...

Figure 6 use of http:// function in
Ekşi Sözlük

Entries can be edited or deleted after a writer posted them. Entries can also be
deleted by Ekşi Sözlük moderation, only if they are not entitled as legal entries, upon
a complaint from another user.

5.5.4. Ekşi Sözlük Writers

There are 115.852 writers in Ekşi Sözlük, according to "Ekşi Sözlük's 20th Year
Documentary[44]". As stated above, only writers are entitled to create topics, post
entries, and communicate with other writers. It is important to emphasize here that,
Ekşi Sözlük bans another user registration from the same IP address (Zıraman,
2018:187). That means, 115.852 is the exact number of registered writers, there are
no duplications[45].

To become an Ekşi Sözlük writer, individuals should write 10 entries as per the Ekşi
Sözlük rules and regulations, in addition the registration. A registered user who
wrote 10 entries or never written any entries so far –but registered, named as *çaylak*
(rookie) in Ekşi Sözlük. After *rookies* completed their 10 entries, they should wait
for the confirmation process in order to become a writer. As there are huge numbers
in confirmation process, the wait time can be extended up to 2 years (maybe more).
Time to time Ekşi Sözlük administration can decide to accept writer *en masse*. For
instance, they accept many woman writers in International Women's Day.

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[44] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5By7Dmyfwo&feature=youtu.be,

[45] Naturally there are numerous ways to ignore this ban. However, users usually do not choose to ignore the ban,
as their all registered accounts can be deleted, if the moderation finds out a user have more than single account.

5.6.   Analysis of Topics

As defined above, focus of this thesis is to find answers for question of "to what degree and how writers in Ekşi Sözlük accomplish the ideals of online deliberative democratic discussions". Overall results of the quality of deliberation show us that the quality differences between topics are quite large. "1 January 2019 Plastic Bag Tax" topic has the highest score of 29,85 where "We Demand Unisex Public Toilets" scored the lowest, 18,35. The difference of 11,50 between lowest and highest scores seems rather large. On the other hand, scores of "A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees" and "January 1st, 2019 Plastic Bag Tax" can be considered normal compared to other studies.

Table 7 Scores of Topics

	Information Base	Values	Solution	Pros-Cons	Common Good Orientation	Respect	Reciprocity	Average Score
We Demand Unisex Public Toilets (N= 685)	43,64	16,71	5,55	4,47	1,09	-11,80	66,71	18,05
A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees (N=1323)	46,24	26,15	12,20	1,08	0,29	23,09	59,08	24,13
January 1st Plastic Bag Tax (N= 1698)	76,42	25,99	16,68	4,30	1,86	20,22	59,39	29,85

Considering the subjects of these topics, is this difference expected? First, the focus difference of the topics is obvious. While "We Demand Unisex Public Toilets" is related with gender –and therefore identity, "A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees" is related with nationality and a controversial problem which always been in the agenda of Turkey for nearly 9 years. On the other hand, "January 1st Plastic Bag Tax" topic focuses on a less controversial (compared to Syrian refugees), regular daily political issue. Indeed, even the plastic bag tax became an important

discussion topic in Turkey and in the context of Ekşi Sözlük most of the opposition writers stated that the tax is not related with saving the environment. However, plastic bag tax can be considered as one of the less controversial subjects. Let's elaborate results by starting with the lowest score[46].

5.6.1. We Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Unisex public toilets or all-gender toilets is a relatively new topic that is discussed in Western countries such as U.S., U.K., Canada or France. From the beginnings of 2010s the use of all-gender toilets became quite common in companies, educational institutions –especially universities, and public institutions. The reason behind using all-gender toilets is to create more inclusive and welcoming places for all genders. As the gender discussions are receiving lots of attention from many scholars, seeing the practical applications of these discussions is expected. While defenders of the use of all-gender toilets claim that administration, government etc. should not ask for gender in order to use a toilet[47], opposition states this usage might increase harassment or safety problems for people –especially transgender people and women. This topic, rather than addressing up-to-date issue, it addresses a more general or even long-term social problem.

The first entry of the topic in Ekşi Sözlük posted on 15.08.2018 at 22.03. Although there were many discussions on Ekşi Sözlük about gender problems[48] -especially the topic "the red pill" receives lots of attention from writers since 2016, this topic can be considered one of the first examples of practical demands or suggestions in Ekşi Sözlük. Following the posting of the topic, approximately 450 entries posted in the first 24 hours. The rest of the entries –nearly 200, are posted from 17.08.2018 to 01.06.2019. This shows that the main discussion about this topic is held in roughly

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[46] There are some examples from topics is used under each indicator. Some of these entries are cropped –without changing the meaning, some of them are in whole. All examples have links to the respective entry.

[47] https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/29/gender-bathrooms-cooper-union-college-new-york

[48] https://eksisozluk.com/the-red-pill--2283485

one day. This intensity represent that the writers just shared their opinions without a solid consideration. In the scheme, we can track this as well. Therefore, we may expect that high scores in values, common good orientation, and solutions indicators while low scores on creating an information base –as majority of the writers wrote their entries in the first 24 hours.

The indicator "creating an information base" received 43,64 points. While 387 entries received no points as they do not share any information base for their argument, 297 of them received 1 point.

In the deliberative democracy, participants of the deliberative discussion should create information bases for their arguments. If the argument is solid enough i.e. it is supported with personal experiences, emotions, facts, news etc. its chance for being the better argument increases. In this topic, we see that majority of the writers did not prefer to share any information base. As expected, this decreases the quality of deliberation.

Table 8. Creating an Information Base –
Frequency- We Demand Unisex Public

Creating an Information Base (Value)	Frequency
0	387
1	297

Writers who shared their information base in the topic usually shared their personal experiences supported with scholarly-discussions, for instance[49];

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[49] "yurtdışında bazı okullarda uygulanan yöntem. olmasının başlıca iki sebebi vardır; cinsiyetine bakılmaksızın herkesin ihtiyacını en kısa yoldan giderebilmesidir. böylelikle derslerine geç kalmak gibi sorunların ortadan

It is a procedure that is used in some schools abroad. There are two main reasons for this procedure; first one is enabling people to use the toilets without looking their gender. Second reason is removing barriers for transgender people whether they should use men's or women's restrooms. Two reasons are logical but damaging also. Cultural factors may damage the execution of this procedure. In addition removing the private space between genders may cause some misunderstandings or direct assaults (please see, harassment) or (please see, defamation). For these reasons I tend not to support this regulation.

Some writers who oppose this request also shared their arguments supported with their experiences. While most of them focused on the harassment side of this situation, some of them provided more conservative -or liberal conservative perspectives[50];

Feminists and LGBTI members are missing an important point. This is not the most important thing right now. Look, in order to shape/change the society first you should be a part of the society. You cannot change perspectives of the people from top-to-bottom like this. Things that you've requested are the results of a shaped society. You cannot change the regulations first and then change the society. If you want to fight against sexism, then you should protest people who used their genders for earning money. You should support transgenders who are at the hands of prostitution. If you can assemble and organize LGBTI events, maybe you can find decent jobs for them, as well. By dancing on the streets you cannot earn respect; rather you should start to improve yourself. I'm not unfamiliar with your community. I have a friend who is a transsexual and sells books on streets. You can be more like him. You are trying to change place you s***t,

kaldırılması hedeflenmektedir. ikinci sebep erkekler tuvaletini mi kullanacak ya da kadınlar tuvaletini mi sorusunu akıllara getiren transgenderler için polemiği ortadan kaldırmak. iki sebepte mantıklı olduğu kadar bir o kadar da sakıncalıdır aynı zamanda. kültürel faktörler bunun uygulanışını sekteye uğratabilir. diğer bir yanda cinsiyetler arasında özel alanın kaldırılması bazı yanlış anlaşılmaya ya da direk saldırı kabul edilecek olayların yaşanmasına neden olabilir. (bkz: taciz) ya da (bkz: taciz iftirası) için steril olmayan bir alan oluşturabilecek kapasiteye sahip olması bunu destekleme fikrimin önüne geçmekte." - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/82689453 @ozgursoul @sozluk

[50] feminist arkadaşların ve lgbt'li arkadaşların atladıkları çok önemli bir husus var.her kuşu öptün bi leylek kaldı cümlesi durumlarını çok güzel özetliyor.bakın arkadaşlar. toplumu dönüştürebilmeniz için öncelikle onun gerçekten parçası olmanız gerekiyor. böyle değişiklikleri öyle tepeden inme getiremezsiniz. istediğiniz şeyler dönüşmüş toplumun sonucunda oluşacak şeyler. önce bunları değiştirip sonra toplumu dönüştüremezsiniz.probleminiz cinsiyetçilikse önce cinsiyetini para kazanmak için kullananları protesto edeceksiniz mesela.trans birey olduğum için iş bulamıyorum ben de fuhuş yaparım diyen translardan temizleyeceksiniz sokakları. lgbt toplanmalarında gök kuşağı posteri açıp gezecek kadar organize olabiliyorsanız kendinize ve kendiniz gibilere düzgün yollardan para kazanmasını sağlayacak mekanlar, meslekler de oluşturabilirsiniz.toplumun size saygı duyması için sokakta soyunup dans ederek değil, kendinizi bir şekilde geliştirerek savaşacaksınız.yanlış yapıyorsunuz. uzaktan öyle konuşmuyorum. trans ve kitap satarak bir şekilde hayatta kalan bir arkadaşım var. yapan bir şekilde yapıyor. önce kendinize saygı duyun, sonra bu toplum da size saygı duyacaktır. ondan sonra tuvalet de unisex olur. yemek yediğiniz yeri değiştirmeden sı*** yerin peşine düşüyorsunuz, yapmayın. kavganızı bir çok şekilde değersizleştiriyorsunuz. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80308722

before changing the place where you eat. You are reducing the importance of
your fight.

Majority of the writers who scored 0 in the indicator "creating an information base"
tended to focus on absurdity of this request. When we compared the general quality
of people who scored 1 and 0 in the indicator "creating an information base", we see
a huge difference of 17 points.

Table 9. Creating an Information Base – Quality of
Deliberation- We Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Creating an Information Base (Scores)	Quality of Deliberation
0	10,41
1	27,92

This means that the writers who shared their experiences (whether negative or
positive towards the subject) or created an information base about what they have
written, scored much higher levels of quality of deliberation. But, compared with the
other studies, and topics, 27,92 is still a low score in quality. There are two reasons
of this situation; first, majority of the Ekşi Sözlük writers opposed to this suggestion
and even though they create an information base about their arguments, some of
them scored low on Respect or Common Good Orientation. We will discuss the issue
under the respective indicators.

The second indicator is values. In this indicator, entries are scored whether they
emphasized a value about the subject such as good, bad, unethical, just, fair,
irrational etc. One might expect that when it comes to discuss gender related issues,

the score of values should be high. However, the coding scheme shows us that the values are not emphasized in the topic. Ekşi Sözlük writers decided not to share or emphasize values of their own on this subject.

Table 10. Values – Frequency- We Demand
Unisex Public Toilets

Values (Score)	Frequency
0	547
1	47
2	91

As seen, most of the writers (N=547) did not share any values including negative values such as "unethical or irrational". When we look at the level of quality of deliberation in the indicator values, there is a similar correlation between score and the quality of deliberation.

Table 11. Values – Quality of Deliberation- We
Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Values (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	14,62
1	22,18
2	36,55

This table shows us that writers who indicated their values in the entries scored much higher points in the quality of deliberation. 36,55 is actually a quite high score in the

quality of deliberation. This scores also proves the theory of deliberative democracy in terms of values; if participants of the deliberative discussion emphasize their values (no matter they are positive of negative values) the level of deliberation increases.

Third indicator is proposed solutions for the issue being discussed. Here, entries are scored as 0, if they have not proposed a solution, 1 if they proposed a new solution, and 2 if they revise or review a proposed solution. Before discussing this indicator, in both studies that this thesis followed, indicator "proposal of solution" received the lowest scores (Black et al. 2011; Klinger and Russmann 2014). Therefore, as a presupposition we might claim that people do not propose solutions in online discussions.

Table 12. Proposal of Solution – Frequency- We
Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Proposal of Solution (Score)	Frequency
0	610
1	75
2	0

First thing to be noticed here is that no Ekşi Sözlük writer is scored 2 points under this indicator. This means that no one proposed a solution which revises or reviews another solution. However, in the entries which scored 1, we see that some writers proposed more inclusive solutions, even though they are opposed to the use of all-gender toilets[51];

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[51] medeniyet vesaire tamamından bağımsız olarak desteklemediğim düşünce. lgbt bireyler için 3. tuvalet daha mantıklı. lgbt ile bir derdim yok. ama erkeklerle böyle bir ortak kullanım istemem. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80322532

I do not support this regulation. It is a much more logical solution to have another third restroom for the LGBTI individuals. I have no issue with LGBTI. Rather, I don't want to use the same toilet with men.

Some writers, on the other hand, proposed more general proposals. When they are *ignoring* the main discussion, they emphasized another problem such as dirty public toilets[52] (similar to a common fallacy called "whataboutism");

We should change the proposal as "we demand clean toilets". We cannot find clean toilets in the country apart from malls.

Table 13. Proposal of Solution – Quality of
Deliberation- We Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Proposal of Solutions (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	16,56
1	29,98
2	00,00

In this table we can see the quality of deliberation under the indicator "proposal of solutions". As seen, there is also a huge difference between entries who proposed a solution and not. As we do not have any entries which scored 2 point, we cannot assume whether those will receive high scores in quality of deliberation or not. Nevertheless, this indicator also proves that when statements are supported with proposal of solutions, the quality of deliberation increases.

The fourth indicator is "Weighing the solutions" or pros-cons of a proposed solution. Like it was in the solution indicator, vast majority of the entries did not weigh

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[52] temiz tuvaletler istiyoruz olarak değiştirilmesi gereken kampanyadır. ülkede avm'ler dışında temiz tuvalet bulamıyoruz: - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80317373

solutions at all. 11 of them focused on the positive sides of a solution while 37 of them focused on the negative sides. Only 3 out of 685 entries focused on the both positive and negative sides of a proposed solution.

Table 14. Weighing Solutions - Frequency- We
Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Weighing Solutions (Score)	Frequency
0	634
1	11
2	37
3	3

As it was in the whole discussion, negative siders focused on issues such as harassment, hygiene, and unethical behaviour. Furthermore, some writers emphasized the injustice in sexual assault trials[53];

> This proposal is just inviting perverts to rape people. And they need extenuating circumstances; "she was using the same restroom with me". Forget the common toilets, it will be adequate we just use same classes, same public transportation.

Even though there are only 3 entries that weigh both pros and cons of a solution, all of them focus on cultural issues vs. gender perspective discussions[54];

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[53] he gel bana o tuvalette tecavüz et diyosun yani sen yurdum sapıklarına. onlar aynen böyle anlar çünkü olayı. hafifletici unsur da hazır hem, "benimle aynı tuvaleti kullandi hakim bey, tahrik oldum." bizim buralara göre değil o işler. ortak tuvaleti geçtim, ortak işyerini, ortak sınıfları, ortak toplu taşımaları rahat kullanalım yeter.- https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80312623

[54] özellikle trans gender'ların ihtiyaç duyduğu ve talep ettiği kampanya.tüm tuvaletlerin cinsiyetsiz olması, içinde yaşadığımız dünya, toplum ve toplumsal cinsiyetlerin getirdiği ötekileştirme ve bu ötekileştirmenin yarattığı zarar verici davranışlar nedeniyle pek de mümkün değil.

hijyen başka bir konu.

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> Especially transgenders are demanding this proposal, and they need it. Considering the current context of the world, it is difficult to establish all toilets to be unisex. But we should also consider the hygiene.

When we compare the indicator-quality scores, we see a correlation similar to other indicators. Quality of deliberation is quite low –lower than the topic's average, while entries who are scored at least 1, received high scores in the quality of deliberation. As seen, there is a small difference between positive side (scored as 1) and negative side (scored as 2).

Table 15. Weighing Solutions – Quality of
Deliberation- We Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Weighing Solutions (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	16,71
1	35,28
2	33,13
3	57,14

Why entries focused on only positive sides of the subject have more quality in terms of deliberation. The main reason is respect. Writers who focused only positive side of the proposed solutions are generally supporters of the use of all-gender toilets in this topic. On the other hand, people who emphasized the negative sides are generally against the use of all-gender toilets. When we compare the level of respect between these two scores, we see that the level of respect in the entries scored as 1 is 22,72. While in the entries that received 2 points, the level of respect dramatically decreases to -8,33. As emphasized, majority of the entries focused on issues such as

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-https://eksisozluk.com/entry/82689453

hygiene, harassment, or sexual assault. The language of the Ekşi Sözlük writers when they are mentioning their concerns are quite offensive. Therefore, the level or respect –and the quality of deliberation, is lower than the other entries.

The fourth indicator is the infamous common good in deliberative democracy. As this topic's main focus is on gender equality, the expectation is that the common should be mentioned here. Unfortunately, writers of Ekşi Sözlük mentioned other concerns when discussing this issue rather than common good.

Table 16. Common Good Orientation –
Frequency- We Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Common Good (Score)	Frequency
0	677
1	1
2	7

As seen, only 7 entries mentioned least advantaged groups in the discussion[55];

> It is a campaign which is demanded and supported by all egalitarian individuals, mainly LGBTI+, in order to establish equality between individuals in any level.

Approximately 98% of entries did not refer to any common good orientation in their entries, not even simple sentences like "think about the transgender people". This should be considered as a major problem because most writers, apart from who sincerely concerned by the possible harassments, tend to mock with the suggestion.

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[55] bireyler arasındaki eşitliği her kademede ve her anlamda mümkün kılmak amacıyla başta lgbti+ toplumu olmak üzere tüm eşitlikçi bünyeler tarafından talep edilip desteklenen kampanyadır. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80306207

In deliberative democracy, humour can be considered as a strengthening tool for stating reasons or establishing arguments. Furthermore, some suggest that even offensive humour can foster democratic potential of the discussions as it fosters the disagreement (Papacharissi, 2004).

In the recent episodes of South Park, creators Matt Stone and Trey Parker point out the inequalities in Women's Sports as transgender people started to participate in the contests. Of course, the main problem here was not the *right* of transgender people to participate contests. Rather it is the absurdity of the situation. Already on-going discussion on transgender athletes flamed up after South Park episode. So, humour can be used for fostering the discussion in such situations rather than sacrificing humour on behalf of political correctness. On the other hand, entries in Ekşi Sözlük were far from this kind of humour. There are plenty of examples in the topic "We Demand Unisex Toilets" which can be considered as homophobic or badly-offensive[56];

> Why are you still discussing? The one who start the topic is a transgender.
> And his purpose is to act like a f***t.

This is an important point that scholars or designers of deliberative platforms should consider. Participants should be encouraged to base their arguments to common good thought. As the internet is not the friendliest or kindest environment –if we remember social media related suicides for instance- moderating offensive, racist, homophobic statements bear a vital role.

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[56] yahu neyi tartışıyorsunuz arkadaşlar ! başlığı açan travesti. maksadı da ib*** yapmak.ben diyor bursa çocuğuyum diyor, her yerde **** diyor yani. dostlar" alış-veriş"te görsün yani, onun niyeti (kıps) - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80318832

Table 17. Common Good Orientation – Quality of
Deliberation- We Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Common Good (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	17,63
1	7,14
2	60,20

When we compare the scores and quality of deliberation, this point shows the importance of common good orientation in deliberative discussions. Entries that emphasized a common good reference scored 60,20 points in the quality of deliberation which is the highest score among indicators in this topic. We can claim that if participants of deliberative discussions consider the common good orientation, the deliberation level dramatically increases. Also, it shows how important that common good orientation should be one of the constants in deliberative democracy.

Respect is another important indicator. Again, the majority of the writers used disrespectful statements in their entries. While there are no explicitly respectful statements, 260 entries can be considered as neutral entries in terms of respect.

Table 18. Respect – Frequency- We Demand
Unisex Public Toilets

Respect (Score)	Frequency
-1	425
1	260
2	0

When it comes to discuss gender-related subjects, the expectation is much lower scores in the respect indicator. Especially online discussions, -and if there is anonymity- are not the best places on earth for finding respect. Another expectation is that if there is a respect, the quality of the deliberation should be much higher. Below table suggest that the respect does not create a vast difference in quality of deliberation.

Table 19. Respect – Quality of Deliberation- We
Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Respect (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
-1	11,70
1	28,36
2	0,00

Still there is a 10-point difference between topic's quality of deliberation and respectful entries' quality of deliberation. But even though the entries considered as respectful (or not disrespectful at least), some of them scored low points in quality.

The main reason behind this is that some writers could not understand the mentality of the suggestion. While some of them tried to make cold jokes about the subject, some of them automatically correlate the subject with homosexuality (only homosexuals want this suggestion)[57];

(Please see: adding homosexuality to the agenda)

As expected, entries such as the example scored low points in the quality of deliberation as they do not indicate information base, values, or common good orientation.

Last indicator is reciprocity. While reciprocity should be sought in deliberative discussions, in the online platforms it is hard to measure it. In the study of Klinger and Russmann, reciprocity is measured by looking whether a statement is a monologue, initiates a discussion, or responds to another message. In this thesis, the scoring of the reciprocity is done by looking whether an entry is a monologue or asking questions or quoting another entry.

Table 20. Reciprocity – Frequency- We Demand
Unisex Public Toilets

Reciprocity (Score)	Frequency
1	455
2	230

Here, we can see that the approximately 65% of the entries are written in the form of a dialogue. They did not quote another entries, asked questions, or response previous entries.

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[57] (bkz: homoseksüelliğin sürekli gündem yapılması) - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80312841

Table 21. Reciprocity –Quality of Deliberation-
We Demand Unisex Public Toilets

Reciprocity (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
1	16,44
2	21,26

The difference between scores of indicators and quality of deliberation in this topic is medium. Furthermore, there is not strong evidence that if an entry scores high points in reciprocity it should have high score in quality of deliberation. Indeed, the table proves that. However, while only 50 entries that scored 2 in indicator reciprocity received 30 or more points in general quality, this number is 40 in the entries that scored 1. Reciprocity, in this topic, cannot be considered as a distinctive indicator.

5.6.2. A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees

Let's move forward to our second topic; "A referendum call for Syrian Refugees". Rather than a gender focused identity discussion; the focus on this topic is nationality-based identity. The nationality perspective here should be elaborated. First, different than the other nationality-based discussions on internet –or any platform (including discussions which carries racist elements) there is one distinctive thing; the refugee status. Turkey still hosts the biggest refugee population in the World, approximately 3.6 million people. Refugee crisis in Turkey continues to be a problem since 2011. Rather than just comparing the advantages and disadvantages of nationalities, in this topic there is a real advantage; host community- refugee difference. For instance in a topic named "Türklerin Yunanlardan Tırstığı Gerçeği (The fact that Turks afraid of Greeks)" the discussion is held around two equal status of nations. Here, the statuses are not equal.

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Secondly, this topic carries an important focus in terms of democracy. Its name is not "We demand deporting of Syrians" or "We don't want Syrians", rather it is named as "A referendum call for Syrian Refugees". Of course, there are plenty of discussions on democratic characters of referendums. The main point is not whether the referendums are democratic or not. It is demanding a democratic way related with Syrian refugees.

In the indicator "Creating an Information Base" we see that the scores are close to each other. Roughly 55% of the writers did not create an information base while 45% of them did.

Table 22. Creating and Information Base –Frequency- A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees

Creating an Information Base (Score)	Frequency
0	712
1	611

Writers when creating an information base supported their arguments with various resources under this topic. Some of them reminded historical events such as 6-7 September 1955[58];

> Doing something like this may lead to a point of no return, I warn you. Responsible people should solve this issue in peace. The danger I'm talking about is this; if a referendum is conducted and majority of the people voted for sending the Syrians back to their countries. Who could prevent violence acts against Syrians from that point? It is a very dangerous road.

[58] bu ülkede böyle bir şey yapmak geri dönüşü olmayan, kara lekelere neden olabilir aman diyim. bu işten sorumlu kimse oturup düşünüp, sulh içinde mülteci sorununu çözmelidir. bahsettiğim tehlike de şudur, velev ki yapıldı böyle bir referandum, ve suriyeliler gönderilsin sonucu çıktı diyelim. bu noktadan sonra suriyelilere yönelik bir şiddet eyleminin kim nasıl önünü alacak, aman deyim çok tehlikeli bir yola girilmiş olur.

bu tip olaylar rumlara 1955te, 1934te de yahudilere karşı yaşanmıştır.

atatürk, "aman paşam bizi burda istemiyorlar" diyen yahudiye, "bu millet beni istemezse ben de burda duramam" demiştir.

sıkıntı olur. suriyelileri suriyeye sulh içinde sağ salim yollamanın yolları aranmalıdır. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91154323

These types of events happened in 1955 against Greeks and 1934 against Jews. Atatürk answered, "if the people don't want me in here, I'll leave as well" to a Jew who asks him "they don't want Jews in Turkey". There will be problems, we should search peaceful ways.

Some of them mentioned the concepts of international law such as refugee and migrant[59];

Migration and International Protection are different statuses. It is mentioned as impossible to conduct such referendum, but it is quite possible. We provided temporary work permits for these people, and we are still providing. Again, we provide temporary shelters/protection for them. We can say "that's it from us" at any point. The aids they received, homes they reside, I'm sure they are registered. But this is a more realistic objection; AKP use refugees as a leverage against EU. That is the reason they don't want to send them back. I mean it is a scream like "I'm about to open the gates"… If some raise their voices against AKP's authoritarian acts, they'll play this card against EU (please see: If you go forward, we'll open the gates)

As mentioned in this entry, there are different statuses in terms of refugee law that the Republic of Turkey accepts. Syrians and stateless persons who came to Turkey from Syria were provided a different form of protection namely "temporary protection". There are some differences in temporary protection and international protection; for instance, people who seek temporary protection in Turkey cannot be punished as they have entered Turkey through illegal ways. Non-Syrian individuals, on the other hand, should apply for international protection regime. International protection applicants cannot be punished for using illegal ways in entering Turkey, as well. As seen, the main difference is individuals' origin. In both cases, Turkish authorities are subject to determine individuals' statuses[60].

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[59] iltica ve geçici koruma farklı statüler. başlıkta olmaz o iş denilmiş ancak gayet mümkün. biz bu insanlara geçici olarak çalışma izni verdik / veriyoruz. yine geçici olarak korunma / barınma sağlıyoruz vs. haliyle bi noktada bizden bu kadar diyebiliriz. iş suriyelilerin tespitine gelince de çok zor olacağını sanmıyorum. aldıkları yardımlar, oturdukları evler dolayısıyla çoğunluğunun kaydı vardır.ha ama şu daha gerçekçi bi itiraz: akp suriyelileri ab'ye karşı koz olarak kullanıyor, bu yüzden asla gönderilmelerini istemez. yani "vallaha açaram kapıları ha!" gibi bi çiğlik.. eğer iktidarın otoriter eğilimlerine karşı batıda itirazlar yükselirse bu kartı oynayacaklar, oynuyorlar da (bkz: daha ileri giderseniz sınır kapılarını açarız) -https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91154806

[60] For more information please see, https://help.unhcr.org

There are more *sophisticated* entries which are supported with news or statistics. Some of the writers, especially the ones who does not support the proposed referendum, supported their arguments by emphasizing the on-going war, or regime's autocratic practices towards Syrian's in Turkey[61];

> It is an absurd request. You can continue to think like "Syrians go their countries in Bayrams, so why they don't live there". But the reality is completely different. Not few, but many people know this fact around the world. If you send all refugees back to their country, there will be only blood, torture, and barbarity.
>
> There are many entities in the region, and each are supported and armed by different states. There is an entity which Turkey openly supports. Assad, ISIS, and FSA are trying to receive support from local people. They kill, rape, torture, prison people who don't support them. There are many armed groups that I even don't know its name.
>
> There are institutions worked in Gaziantep in which national and international staff are employed. They receive psychological support monthly in order to prevent psychological damage for interviewing refugees. I mean saying "let's just send the refugees, we don't care what will happen to them" is cruel. Because everybody knows that there will be problems when we send them back. You can, however, ask you government why it allowed such a refugee influx to the country. And press the government to cease its support to various armed groups in there.
>
> Note: in this Bayram, only 22 thousand Syrian cross the border. Only 22 thousand among millions of refugees in Turkey. Most probably they are the ones who are connected with the armed groups there. It is good to create a perception as such.

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[61] saçma istektir.siz hala suriyeliler bayramlaşmaya gidebiliyor, o zaman neden ülkelerinde yaşamıyorlar seviyesinde olayı algılamaya devam edebilirsiniz. ama gerçekler böyle değil arkadaşlar. bu gerçeği dünyada birkaç kişi değil tüm dünya biliyor. dünyadaki tüm suriyeli mültecileri, suriye'ye gönderdiğiniz zaman, olacak olan: katliam, işkence ve vahşettir.

bölgede bir çok farklı oluşum var. ve her biri ayrı bir devlet tarafından destekleniyor, silahlandırılıyor. ki türkiye'nin de açık şekilde desteklediği grup var. esad ayrı ışid ayrı öso ayrı, insanları zorla kendi saflarına çekemeye çalışıyor, kendisi gibi olmayanları öldürüyor, tecavüz ediyor, işkenceden geçiriyor. hapishanelerde sürünüyor insanlar. daha adını bilmediğim nice grup var.antep'te bir sürü mültecilerle ilgili çalışan kuruluşlar var. türkü, yabancısı bir sürü insan çalışıyor. bu çalışanlar için ayda bir özel psikolog geliyor. suriyeli mültecilerden dinlediklerinden dolayı psikolojileri bozulmasın diye.

yani buradan oturup gönderilim de ne olursa olsun, ister ölsünler demek caniliktir. tabi bu dediğiniz referandum değil, ne yapsanız olmaz. çünkü gönderdiğiniz zaman orada nasıl bir insanlık draması yaşanacağını herkes biliyor.

sağlıklı bir birey olarak şunu yapabilirsiniz. hükümetinize bu oransız mülteci alımının nedenlerini sorabilir, baskı yapabilir, hükümetiniz de diğer ülkelerin daha fazla mülteci almasını sağlayabilir. almak zorundalar, yukarıda da dediğim gibi, suriyeli mültecileri oraya gönderirseniz, neler olacağı biliniyor. başta kendi ülkeniz dahil, diğer ülkelerin suriyedeki gruplara desteğini kesmesi için baskı yapmanız gerekiyor.not: bu bayramda 22 bin suriyeli bayramlaşma için geçmiş. yani ülkeden milyonlarca mültecinin sadece 22 bini. büyük ihtimal onlar da oradaki gruplarla organik bağı olanlar. öyle bayramlaşmaya gidiyorlar algısı kasmak boş. https://tr.sputniknews.com/...n-sayisi-7-bine-ulasti/

https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91667815

Above entry, for example, targets the one of the main presumptions of referendum supporters; Do Syrians go to their country during Bayrams? As seen, supported with facts, this entry can be considered one of the good examples of an online deliberative argument. It shows the *other* perspective to the readers or writers of the subject.

Table 23. Creating and Information Base –Quality of Deliberation- A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees

Creating an Information Base (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	15,63
1	33,93

Not surprisingly, the quality of deliberation in the indicator "creating an information base" shows huge difference. Entries that do not create an information base scored 15,63 while entries that create an information base scored more than the double of them, 33,93. This, again, proves that if arguments are supported with news, facts, or even historical information the level of deliberation increases.

Table 24. Values –Frequency- A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees

Values (Score)	Frequency
0	927
1	110
2	286

In the indicator values, we cannot say that we see a similar pattern to previous topic. In the "We Demand Public Toilets" topic, there was no strong emphasis on values; the majority of the entries did not specify any values. On the other hand, in the topic "A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees" we see a more equal distribution among scores. As expected, the majority of the entries, roughly 70% of them, did not mention any values. This percentage was 85% (entries who don't mention any value) in the previous topic. This means that in controversial and up-to-date discussions such as this one, people tend to emphasize values more. What is the main reason behind this? Why writers of Ekşi Sözlük ignored values on a gender-based topic and suddenly paid attention to the use of values on refugee subject?

Majority of the Ekşi Sözlük writers did not take the topic "We demand unisex public toilets" seriously. Most of them just wrote simple (bkz.) sentences or mocked with the suggestion. In this subject, writers faced with a more *serious* issue. All-gender use of public toilets is considered as a radical request which comes from the *elite* population of Turkey. On the contrary, refugee problem directly affects their lives. So, writers started to emphasize values again.

Table 25. Values –Quality of Deliberation- A Referendum
Call for Syrian Refugees

Values (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	18,81
1	30,12
2	38,96

It is also notable that the quality of deliberation increases dramatically in the high scores of the indicator values. This proves again that even in the controversial

subjects, sharing of values increases the quality of deliberation. However, it is important to present value-based arguments in order to reach a healthy deliberative platform.

When it comes to the indicator "proposal of solutions", we can say that the results are surprising. In a subject like this, one might think that writers would have lots of proposals on solution. However, 75% of them did not propose any solutions. In the previous topic, this percentage was 90%.

Table 26. Proposal of Solutions –Frequency- A Referendum
Call for Syrian Refugees

Proposal of Solutions (Score)	Frequency
0	996
1	324
2	3

Indeed, there is a decrease in this indicator – which means that more people proposed solutions related with the subject. But, most of the writers proposed same or similar solutions. Majority of them wants Syrians to be sent to their countries as soon as possible[62];

> Turkey needs to consider this proposal on its agenda and needs to conduct a referendum in 6 months. If Western countries whine for humanity, we could say "there you go take the Syrians" and that's it. We've spent 60 billion dollars to them, that's a pity.

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[62] turkiye'nin acilen gundeme almasi ve 6 ay icinde de sandiga gidilmesi gerekiyor. bati ulkeleri nerede insanlik diye mizmizlanirlarsa, buyrun suriyelileri siz alin dersiniz, olur biter. 60 milyar dolar harcadik, yazik degil mi? -https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91645507

But some of the writers propose peaceful ways such as they want to Turkish Government to act in order to establish peaceful conditions in Syria[63];

> I know that you wouldn't like it, but you cannot send Syrians back to their country, unless UN declares that war is over there. You'll break the international law. This will cost much more than sending Syrians back. You have a right to decline a refugee at your borders. You'll reprimanded in the international arena, that's all. But you cannot send a refugee back if his/her country isn't safe. Therefore, Turkey should establish peaceful and secure environment in Syria first. Then we can discuss whether we should send them back or not.

Lastly, some entries proposed solutions related with the subject of this thesis[64];

> I also support that some important decisions should be taken as a result of a referendum. But we need to do it on a digital platform. We can manage that via Turkish e-government system. People who cannot reach technological opportunities can be identified by this way. Some investments can be directed there. Sure, the participation might be low. But there is a solution for that; some municipal officials can assist people to use computer. Technology and credibility are essential here.

But does the level of deliberation also increase in the entries that proposed solutions? It is indeed. As there are only 3 entries which proposed a solution based on a previous entry (scored as 2), the decrease in the score 2 might not be considered at all.

As discussed, majority of the proposed solutions are same or similar. One might criticize the coding scheme from this perspective. Does the level of deliberation *really* increase when people start to propose same solutions to a problem? From the

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[63] beğenmeyeceksiniz bu söylediğimi ama birleşmiş milletler suriye'de savaşın bittiğini ilan etmeden hiçbir suriyeli'yi ülkesine gönderemezsiniz. uluslararası kanunlara karşı gelmiş olursunuz, bunun da türkiye'ye dönüşü suriyeliler'den masraflı olur. sığınmacıyı ülkeye almamak gibi bir hakkınız var. en fazla ulusal camiada ayıplanırsınız*. ama ülkeye ayak basmış sığınmacıyı kendi ülkesi resmi olarak güvenli değilse gönderemezsiniz. o nedenle türkiye'nin acilen suriye'de yaşanabilir şartların sağlanması için katkıda bulunup, uluslararası alanda suriye'nin güvenli olarak kabul edilmesini sağlaması gerekli. o aşamadan sonra suriyeliler'i göndermeyi tartışabiliriz. şu an bu konuyu gündeme taşımak anlamsız -

https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91647569

[64] ben de bazı önemli kararların referandumla halk tarafından alınmasını destekliyorum ama bunun artık güvenli bir dijital ortamda yapılması gerekiyor. e devlet üzerinden belirlenen satte belirli bir günde açılacak ve yoğunluğu kaldıracak bir sistemle bu iş olabilir. teknolojiye ulaşımı olmayan halk en azından belli olur. oralara yatırım yapılır. katılım tabi büyük çapta olmaz ama onun çözümü de her belediye binasında görevliler olur. bilgisayar kullanmayı bilmeyen gider görevliler ile kullanılır.tekonloji ve güvenilirlik en önemli esas tabi. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/91659740

perspective of content analysis, measuring this seems difficult. However, there are other ways for measuring deliberation such as discourse analysis. If we want to see whether the level of deliberation increase or decrease when same solutions are proposed, looking for other measurement analyses might be better.

Table 27. Proposal of Solutions –Quality of Deliberation- A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees

Proposal of Solutions (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	21,74
1	31,29
2	28,57

When we look at the indicator "weighing solutions" the numbers are as expected. Vast majority of the entries did not weigh the proposed solutions. Only 27 out of 1323 entries focused on the positive sides of a solution and 12 of them focused on the negative sides. None of the entries weigh the positive and negative sides of a proposed solution.

Table 28. Weighing Solutions –Frequency- A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees

Weighing Solutions (Score)	Frequency
0	1284
1	27
2	12
3	0

These numbers are not good in terms of quality of deliberation. In the previous topic, the number of entries scored as 2 under this indicator was 36; when we summarize entries that scored as 1 and 2 in this topic, we barely reach the previous number. One might expect that in a topic like this, people should propose solutions and/or weigh them. However, the opposite happened in this topic.

Table 29. Weighing Solutions –Quality of Deliberation- A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees

Weighing Solutions (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	23,67
1	36,35
2	42,64
3	0,00

When we analyse the correlation between scores and the quality of deliberation, we can also see that the deliberation level increases when people weigh solutions. Nonetheless, comparing and coming to conclusions from these small numbers might not be the best way when analysing the quality of deliberation.

The standard of "common good" also plays an important role in this topic. As Syrians are refugees and refugees can easily be considered as one of the least advantaged groups, a common good orientation should exist in the entries. However, the reality is completely different. Only 6 entries have an emphasis to common good out of 1323.

Table 30. Common Good Orientation –Frequency- A
Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees

Common Good Orientation (Score)	Frequency
0	1317
1	6
2	0

This statistic points out that the writers of Ekşi Sözlük did not consider common good orientation on Syrian refugees when discussing a referendum on Syrian refugees. The reason behind this situation, writers tend to focus on political and social sides of the refugee crisis. Unfortunately, rather than looking from refugee perspective, majority of the writers keep looking at the issue by their host community lenses. This represents a vital democratic problem. Some individuals demand a democratic process for other individuals; however, the targets of the democratic procedure (refugees in this case) do not have any right to vote about the subject. People who have right to vote, rather than including refugees to the discussion or at least considering their perspectives, completely ignores their rights and demands and ask for voting. As expected, this is very undemocratic and unfair.

In his relatively recent works, Habermas mentions paradox of tolerance in public discussions (Thomassen, 2006). One aspects of this paradox- paternalism can be discussed here. According to him, one group (or party) usually allows the other minority group to participate public discussion, if they (minority) do not violate the "threshold of tolerance" (Habermas, 2003:40). The paradox of tolerance then lies in the unequal relation between the sovereign (who tolerates) and the minority (who gets tolerated). Habermas claims that this is a paternalistic, and naturally a hierarchical relation. Similar problem can be seen under the topic "A Referendum

Call for Syrians". But in this specific case, people who gets tolerated (the minority) do not have right to vote or talk. Furthermore, there are only few voices that raise concern about this issue in the topic.

This proves that why deliberative democracy should be considered as a new form of democracy. Deliberative democracy, as it promotes equality more than anything, makes sure that the targets of a political decision have a right to speak during the decision-making process.

As there is no meaningful statistics in common good orientation, quality of deliberation of this indicator will not be shared.

In the indicator respect, we see a more optimistic table. Considering the attitude towards refugees in Turkey, it can be expected that disrespectful statements or prejudice might dominate the subject. On the contrary, only 25% of the entries include disrespectful or racist statements. Majority of them, 75%, considered as neutral statements.

Table 31. Respect –Frequency- A Referendum Call for
Syrian Refugees

Respect (Score)	Frequency
-1	350
1	973
2	0

Even though this topic did not receive high scores in the common good orientation, it is quite good that the topic is not overruled by disrespectful statements.

Table 32. Respect –Quality of Deliberation- A Referendum
Call for Syrian Refugees

Respect (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
-1	15,04
1	27,33
2	0,00

Above table shows the comparison between scores of indicator respect, and quality of deliberation. Compared with the previous topic, the quality of deliberation in the entries that have disrespectful statements rose from 11 to 15 in this topic. This means that the even the entries with disrespectful statements scored high points in solution, reciprocity, or creating an information base.

Last indicator of this topic is reciprocity. Similar to previous topic, entries are mainly monologues or simple express of opinions.

Table 33. Reciprocity –Frequency- A Referendum Call for
Syrian Refugees

Reciprocity (Score)	Frequency
1	1081
2	242

Approximately 20% of the entries quoted other entries or tried to initiate new discussions by giving "bkz." examples or asking questions.

Table 34. Reciprocity –Quality of Deliberation- A
Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees

Reciprocity (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
1	22,67
2	30,34

When we look at the quality of deliberation, the level of deliberation increases compared to previous topic. In the entries which received 2 points, the level of deliberation is quite high. The level of deliberation increases when writers try to initiate discussions or quote/refer other entries or topics. This means that writers who listen to each other (read each other in this case) tend to receive high scores in deliberation.

5.6.3. January 1st 2019 Plastic Bag Tax

On the Official Gazette dated December 27th, 2017, the Government of Turkey announced that the plastic bags -which were free of charge, will be due to tax as of January 1st, 2019. This regulation meant that the free plastic bags which are commonly used by Turkish people will be banned and they will due to a small amount of fee.

Even though the announcement of the regulation goes back to the 2017, approximately one year later, after an article has been published in one of the most popular online newspapers, it became a hot topic in Ekşi Sözlük. There were similar topics which have been posted in 2012 that proposes the ban of plastic bags, but they haven't received much attention from the writers[65]. When the topic "January 1st

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[65] https://eksisozluk.com/posetlerin-parayla-satilmasi--3337603?p=2

Plastic Bag Tax" is posted on August 7th, 2018, approximately 250 entries written under the topic in the first 72 hours. However, the real influx of entries started just before the January 1st, 2019.

This topic is selected because it can be considered as the *least* controversial topic among others and it focuses on a policy change which affects daily life in a quite mellow way. Compared to other studies, this topic is the closest to them in terms of the subject; for instance, topics that Klinger and Russmann (2014) focused are local energy consumption, traffic policies, traffic policies etc.

Table 35. Creating an Information Base –Frequency-
January 1st Plastic Bag Tax

Creating an Information Base (Score)	Frequency
0	357
1	1,341

When we look at the first indicator "Creating an Information Base" we can see that nearly 80% of the entries received 1 point –they have created an information base. Compared to previous topics, the percentage is quite high. This means that Ekşi Sözlük writers shared their experiences, news, and facts on this subject.

Most writers shared their experiences in different countries that already have this ban[66];

> People were carrying their own bags when shopping in Germany where I've completed my master's thesis nearly 9 years ago.

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[66] yaklaşık 9 yıl önce yüksek lisansımı bitirdiğim almanya'da, marketlerdeki poşetler paralı olduğu için, insanlar alışverişe kendi poşetleri ile gidiyordu. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/84950261

Some writers shared news and previous studies in order to demonstrate that the ban is good for environment[67];

> It is a right move, here is an example and a result; https:// the guardian …. – 5p-introduced.

It is remarkable that writers who are opposed to this regulation also shared more fact-based information rather their personal experiences[68];

> There is a YouTube channel named "kurzgesagt" and it addresses some misinformation about the refugee issue. It has Turkish subtitle support as well. I believe it is more useful to use this kind of information when forming the opinion of people. Here is the link: https://youtu.be/rs7izu2vjiq

And[69];

> I hope this regulation will be useful in order to raise awareness on environment. Personally, I don't want plastic bags when I shop from the local store, and I use large shopping bags that I bought when shopping at the supermarket. However, things are a little bit complicated. Here is the research that is conducted by Ministry of Environment of Denmark; (https://www2.mst.dk/Udgiv/publications/2018/02/978-87-93614-73-4.pdf).
> It shows that fabric bags should be used thousands of times to be more useful to the environment than plastic bags. However, I still think that it is an important regulation as it will support environment awareness and reduce consumption culture.

In the topic "We Demand Unisex Toilets" writers who oppose the suggestion mainly mocked the idea rather than providing solid reasons for why not to have unisex toilets –except the sexual harassment issue (and even in that writers did not provide any facts or news stating that use of unisex toilets increases the sexual assaults etc.), in the topic "A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees" writers who oppose the

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[67]Dogru hareket. Alin yapilmisi var, sonuc var: https://www.theguardian.com/…-5p-charged-introduced- https://eksisozluk.com/entry/84245284

[68] mevzu ile ilgili 'kurzgesagt' kanalının bir videosu mevcut. ezberden söylenen bazı konuların yanlışlığına değiniyor. türkçe altyazı da var. konu ile ilgili kanaat oluşturmada faydalı olur diye düşünüyorum. ahan da link:https://youtu.be/rs7izu2vjiq - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80003840

[69]çevre bilinci açısından faydalı olmasını umduğumuz uygulama. şahsen bakkalda aldığım iki parça şey için poşet istemiyorum, markete de aldığım büyük alışveriş çantalarıyla gidiyorum. ancak işler biraz karışık. danimarka çevre bakanlığı'nın yaptığı çalışma (https://www2.mst.dk/Udgiv/publications/2018/02/978-87-93614-73-4.pdf)
yine de özellikle ülkece zayıf olduğumuz bir takım duyarlılıkları kazanma ve israf kültürünü azaltmak için olumlu bulduğum bir gelişme. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80006159

referendum provided why the referendum is not the best way for dealing refugee crisis with facts and statistics but they were very few in numbers. On the contrary, in this topic, it seems that there is equality between opposition and supporters of the regulation both in terms of number and creating an information base. This means that the Ekşi Sözlük writers conduct a relatively civilized discussion when the issue is not *that* controversial.

Table 36. Creating an Information Base –Quality of
Deliberation- January 1ˢᵗ Plastic Bag Tax

Creating an Information Base (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	14,76
1	33,42

The huge difference in levels of deliberation between scores also proves that. As seen, entries who created an information base received 33,42 while entries that scored as 0 received 14,76 points in the quality of deliberation.

In the indicator values, we also see a different table than the previous topics. Indeed, most of the entries did not emphasize a specific value. But compared to other topics, the number of entries that scored as 1 and 2 is increased. As the value is more obvious in this topic (considering the environment) than previous ones, the increase is understandable. This means that Ekşi Sözlük writers tend to emphasize values more, if the subject can relate to a much obvious value.

Table 37. Values –Frequency- January 1st Plastic Bag Tax

Values (Score)	Frequency
0	1129
1	173
2	397

The quality of deliberation in the indicator values, received also higher results in this topic. Writers who tend to emphasize their values on the subject being discussed, received more scores in quality of deliberation.

Table 38. Values –Quality of Deliberation- January 1st Plastic Bag Tax

Values (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	24,07
1	34,84
2	42,63

However, there is another point that we should also consider. As mentioned, some writers support this regulation and when they are sharing values, they emphasize – usually- the environment[70];

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[70]güzel kuraldır, çevre temizliği için iyidir, mutlaka etkisi olacaktır, ben bez çantalarımı yaklaşık 1 haftadır kullanıyorum, deneme yapmış oldum, ne kadar sığdırabiliyorum, kaç kg taşıyor gördüm. her işin çakallığına kaçmayıp 2 tane az kullansak kardır. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/84976540

> It is a good rule, good for the environment, it'll have effects, I use my fabric bags for approximately one year, I've tested them how many products and how many kilograms they carry. It is more advantageous if we use less plastic bags.

But writers who oppose the regulation emphasized mainly the potential corruption issues. The interesting thing is that both sides take the environment as a constant. What does this mean? Even the opposition usually state the importance of the environment but claim that this regulation is not a way to protect it, rather it is a new way for government to gain more money[71];

> It is a good regulation for environment and the government. Everyone wrote why it is good for the government. Besides, the government always kills two birds with one stone. You haven't seen it in this plastic bag regulation, have you?

This point demonstrates that there is a shared value in this subject. When there is a shared value like in this topic, unfortunately online group coding scheme fails to capture it. Rather than content analysis, interviews or discourse analysis might be better to capture the effect of shared values in deliberative democracy.

In the indicator proposal of solutions, we see a similar table as it was in the previous topics. Majority of the entries (N=1122) did not propose any solution for the subject.

Table 39. Proposal of Solutions –Frequency- January 1st
Plastic Bag Tax

Proposal of Solutions (Score)	Frequency
0	1122
1	571
2	6

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[71] çevre ve iktidar için güzel bir uygulama. iktidar için niye güzel, onu zaten yazıyor herkes. ayrıca iktidar bu tip tek taşla iki kuş olayını ezelden beri iyi yapıyor. bunu ilk kez bu poşet uygulamasında görmüş olamazsınız. değil mi? - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/85005059

More than 30% of the entries (N=571), however, proposed a solution for plastic bags. Most of entries here proposed new ways which can be substitute for the plastic bags, such as net bags, or fabric shopping bags[72];

> We can just buy one of two shopping nets and fulfil our duties against the nature, to some extent at least.

Some entries, on the other hand, claimed that rather than charging the plastic bags, it would be better to enforce new regulations on factories[73];

Factories are polluting the environment more than people. First you have to set standards for plastic packages.

Table 40. Proposal of Solutions –Quality of Deliberation -
January 1st Plastic Bag Tax

Proposal of Solutions (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	25,15
1	37,84
2	46,26

And some writers proposed more scientific-based solutions[74];

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[72] bir iki tane sağlam file almakla atlatabileceğimiz, aynı zamanda doğaya karşı sorumluluğumuzu bir parça da olsa yerine getirebileceğimize neden olacak durumdur. - https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80002300

[73] çevreyi halktan önce fabrikalar kitletiyor. önce ambalajlara bir standart getireceksin.

https://eksisozluk.com/entry/84979774

[74]bu probleme çözümün çok daha iyi bir yolu var

poşetleri biyo çözünür üretmek. yani şuan sadece para alınıyor ama gene poşet doğaya çıkıyor engelleyemezsiniz insanlar onu çöp poşeti olarak kullanacak kaçarı yok.yıllar önce migros biyo çözünebilir market poşetleri yapmıştı çözümü budur. para alınsın ama biyobozunur poşet zorunlu kılınsın yoksa bu çözüm değil mafyacılıktır.

There are better ways to solve this problem. Producing bio-composable bags. People pay to buy plastic bags, but you still can't prevent them to use plastic bags as garbage bags. Years ago, a supermarket produced bio-composable shopping bags, that is the solution. You can still make plastic bags but bio-composable bags should be compulsory. Otherwise it is just playing the mafia.

When we look at the level of deliberation in this indicator, there is also an increase compared to previous topics. In the topic of "January 1st, 2019 Plastic Bag Tax" entries who received higher scores in the indicator "proposal of solutions" received higher scores in quality of deliberation. However, as there are only 6 entries that scored as 2, there is no reason to take them into consideration.

In the indicator "Weighing Solutions" the table demonstrates that the more than 90% of the entries did not weigh solutions which are proposed. 114 entries focused on the positive sides of the solutions, and only 14 of them focused on the negative sides.

Table 41. Weighing Solutions –Frequency- January 1st Plastic Bag Tax

Weighing Solutions (Score)	Frequency
0	1565
1	116
2	14
3	3

Like other topics, nearly no one focused on the positive and negative sides of their solutions or a proposed solution.

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https://eksisozluk.com/entry/85037935 (of course the use of bio-bags are still being discussed by the scholars; whether it is harming the environment or not)

Most of the entries that focused on the positive side emphasized the good practices when plastic bags are not used. Entries that focused on the negative sides of a solution, emphasized that this regulation might increase the waste consumption in households[75];

> So where should people throw their garbage now? Using plastic bags can be considered as cannibalism but it was establishing a stability for years. Now, if you ignore waste management, recycling, composite waste and directly ban the plastic bags it will not be useful. Lots of people, now, will use black plastic bags which is produced from the worst materials.

Table 42. Weighing Solutions –Quality of Deliberation-
January 1st Plastic Bag Tax

Weighing Solutions (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	28,05
1	45,40
2	51,83
3	54,28

The scores in the quality of deliberation are quite good in this indicator, even though we do not consider 3-pointers, as there are few of them. Entries that weigh pros-cons of a proposed solution are received much higher scores in the quality of deliberation. One might claim that in the non-controversial topics, people tend to evaluate proposed solutions more. On the other hand, in the more controversial subjects, people tend to jump into conclusions rather than listening or "placing themselves into others' shoes".

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[75] e insanımız evdeki çöpünü nereye atacak şimdi sorunsalını başlatır.

market poseti kullanma/yurutmece yamyamlik gibi gozukebilir ama yillardir bi dengeyi sagliyor/du.

simdi sen atik yonetimi, geri donusum, dogaya kazanim, kompost atik vs gibi bilinci getirmeden, market posetini ortadan kaldirirsan daha kotusu olur bu kafayla.

ucuza alinan/ satisi patlayacak en kotu hammadde siyah posetlere depistirilen nortopu gibi daglar gibi atiklarimiz.- https://eksisozluk.com/entry/80004937

Table 43. Common Good Orientation –Frequency- January
1st Plastic Bag Tax

Common Good Orientation (Score)	Frequency
0	1637
1	61
2	0

In the first indicator of social dimension, this topic –as it was in other topics has very low numbers in the common good orientation. This means that even in the non-controversial topics, Ekşi Sözlük writers prefer not to mention common good orientation in their entries. Nevertheless, when we compared the topics, this topic consists more entries that has common good orientation (N=61-plastic bag tax, N=6-Referendum call, and N=7 –unisex toilets).

It should be noted that some entries contain statements such as "good for everyone" or "everyone may benefit from it". However, these entries have negative meanings; they focus on the corruption side of the regulation rather than the common good[76];

> Everyone may benefit this regulation except costumers. People who don't want to pay the fee for plastic bags can go to the local bakeries, stores and local stores might earn money. You can forget your fabric bag when going to shop, you'll pay the fee and markets will earn money. You cannot use regular plastic bags for garbage, and buy garbage bags, and producers will earn money.

Therefore, even though the entry contains statements that *look like* a common good orientation, scores are distributed as per the general meaning of the entry.

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[76] müşteri haricinde herkese faydası olan uygulama. para almayan mahalle fırınlarına,marketlerine yönelinebilir. mahalle esnafı kazanır. markete giderken,bez çantanı unutursun ya da küçük gelir mecburen 1-2 poşet alırsın,vergiden devlet,kalanından market kazanır. çöp torbası bulamayacağın için çöp poşeti almak zorunda kalacaksın, çöp poşeti satanlar kazanır- https://eksisozluk.com/entry/85032694

As expected, the quality of deliberation increases in the entries that emphasize common good.

Table 44. Common Good Orientation –Quality of Deliberation- January 1st Plastic Bag Tax

Common Good Orientation (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
0	28,98
1	42,81
2	0

Entries that has neutral reference to common good received a high score of 42,81. Again, this proves that the quality of deliberation tend to increase when the elements of deliberation emphasize the common good.

Table 45. Respect –Frequency- January 1st Plastic Bag Tax

Respect (Score)	Frequency
-1	552
1	1133
2	13

In the indicator respect, we can see a positive table which most of the entries did not contain disrespectful statements. In the topic "We Demand Unisex Toilets" majority of the entries had disrespectful or homophobic statements. But in the last two topics, entries that do not have disrespectful statements became minority. Furthermore, in

the last topic, some entries received 2 points in the indicator respect; which means they explicitly made respectful statements (thanked to them, mostly) to other writers.

This topic, however, cannot reach the respectful entry frequency as it was in the previous topic "A referendum call for Syrian Refugees". While only 25% of the entries had disrespectful statements in the previous topic, more than 33% of the entries have disrespectful statements in this topic. But there is a "meaning" difference here. In both of the previous topics, disrespectful statements were mostly contains homophobic or racist elements. In this topic, disrespectful statements were mainly just swearwords. And if we consider the internet, swearwords are not *that* harmful. Indeed, a person feels offended, when an anonymous individual use a swearword against him/her. But a person feels much more terrible if another person online directly attacks his/her sexual orientation or nationality etc. In order to overcome this inequality, the scoring of the respect should be wider.

Table 46. Respect –Quality of Deliberation- January 1st
Plastic Bag Tax

Respect (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
-1	18,34
1	34,75
2	48,71

In the quality of deliberation of the indicator respect, we also see increased scores compared to previous topics. Majority of the entries that has neutral references or do not have any disrespectful statements scored as 34,75 while few entries that have

openly respectful expressions received 48,71 points. Disrespectful entries, on the other hand, received relatively low score of 18,34.

In the last indicator, reciprocity, we see a similarity between topics. As it was in the previous topics, most of the entries (N=1380) written as in the form of a monologue. 618 entries responded to other entries, provide *meaningful* (bkz.) sentences[77], or asked questions.

Table 47. Reciprocity –Frequency- January 1st Plastic Bag Tax

Reciprocity (Score)	Frequency
1	1380
2	618

As a good thing, in some entries writers edited what they have written before as per the comments from other writers[78];

> I just love the plastic bag talks in here. Let me combine them;
> 1- Some people think that not paying the fee for the plastic bag is shows that people are poor or losers. They feel embarrassed when carrying plastic bags.
> 2- Nearly everyone aware of that this is not a durable solution.
> Edit: User "scannegro" warned me on that we can use plastic bags which is produced from the materials that can be dissolves in the nature. We are not that desperate in terms of garbage bags.

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[77] In some cases, writers just use (bkz.) button for mocking. When coding the reciprocity only (bkz.) usage is considered that is related with the subject.

[78] bayılıyorum buradaki poşet muhabbetlerine. sentezleyeyim.

1- poşete para vermemenin fakirlik ya da eziklik olduğunu düşünenlerin sayısı oldukça fazla. cebindeki buruşuk poşetten ya da elde dikilmiş çantalardan utanıyor.

2- hemen herkes bunun çözüm olmadığının farkında.

…

edit: scannegro adlı kullanıcının uyarısı üzerine edit. doğada %100 çözünebilir materyallerden yapılma çöp poşetleri kullanılabileceğini söyledi. yani çöp poşeti konusunda çaresiz değiliz- https://eksisozluk.com/entry/85075555

This means that the writers, although there are few, are in some kind of an information exchange relation; which strengthens the reciprocity and of course, the quality of deliberation.

The table below which shows the relation between the reciprocity and quality of deliberation proves this point, as well.

Table 48. Reciprocity –Quality of Deliberation- January 1st
Plastic Bag Tax

Reciprocity (Score)	Quality of Deliberation
1	28,57
2	33,52

As seen the quality of deliberation increased in the indicator reciprocity, compared to the other topics. It seems that the writers of Ekşi Sözlük tend to be more reciprocal when it comes to non-controversial topics such as this one.

When we look at the overall quality of deliberation comparison between topics, we saw that the quality of deliberation is quite low in the topic "We Demand Unisex Toilets". Main reason of this score is that the writers mainly use disrespectful statements under this topic, and rather than participating in a meaningful deliberation, they've chosen to mock the suggestion.
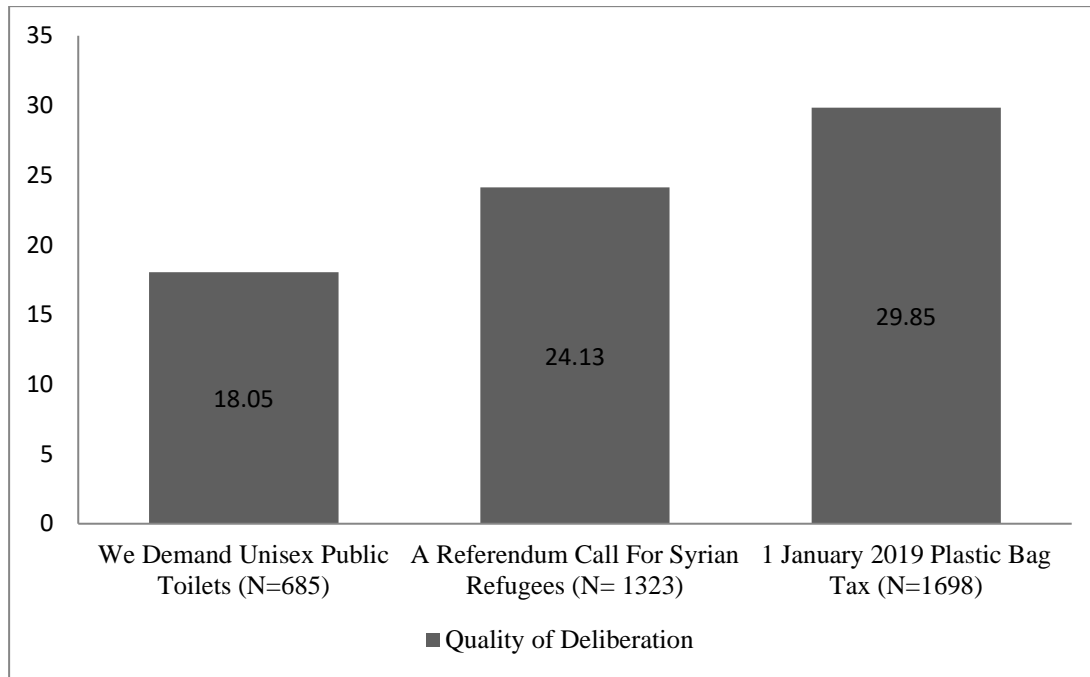
Figure 7. Quality of Deliberation in all topics

In the topic "A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees" the quality of deliberation increases compared to "We Demand Unisex Public Toilets" as writers of Ekşi Sözlük took this issue in a more serious attitude. The level of quality of deliberation is scored as 24,13 which we can consider as an average in the context of this thesis. Lastly, the topic "January 1st 2019 Plastic Bag Tax" received the highest score in terms of quality of deliberation. In this topic we saw that writers were; more respectful, more reciprocal, shared facts, news, and statistics more, and proposed more solutions compared to other topics.

As it was mentioned above, Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme is the main scheme that this thesis based on. The scheme is developed by Black et al. (2011). In Black et al.'s study, the quality of deliberation as follows;

Table 49. Scores in the Black et al. research

Black et al. – 2011	Information Base	Values	Solution	Pros-Cons	Common Good Orientation	Respect	Reciprocity	Average Score
Wikipedia Discussions (N=282)	66,3	22,51	35,81	16,54	N/A	40,60	N/A	29,15

Different than this thesis, Black et al. did not separate the topics in the Wikipedia Discussions and they did not take "common good orientation" and "reciprocity" as indicators[79]. In addition, their data only contains 282 Wikipedia discussion posts compared to 3000 Ekşi Sözlük entries.

Even though the user profile in Ekşi Sözlük and Wikipedia is quite different, we can see that the scores of quality of deliberation do not differ. Still, Wikipedia users tend to create more information base, and propose solution compared to Ekşi Sözlük writers. But the main difference is in the indicator respect. It seems that Wikipedia users have lot to teach Ekşi Sözlük writers in terms of respect. We can see that how respect is important in the online deliberative discussions.

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[79] They, however, expanded the reciprocity; rather than having one indicator they have expanded the reciprocity into three different indicators; clarification, understand, and consider (Black et al. 2011:613).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

There are two prominent concepts in democracy; first one is the rule of the people. If a city, polis, municipality, or a country requires people (citizens) to *live*, then those people should be the one who decide the *fate* of a country, city, or a polis. But the question remains on the characteristic of this decision-making process. Do elected representatives decide the fate of a country *for the people*? Or should decisions be taken *by the people*? The second concept might answer this question; any citizen can participate in the decision-making processes without any further precondition.

In the initial practices of democracy, citizens had freedom –and responsibility to participate in both judicial and legislative processes, citizens' assembly was the sovereign power, and all issues related to the Ancient polis were discussed and decisions were taken at that assembly. Furthermore, all citizens had right to participate in the civil servant duties. There were no fundamental distinctions between a regular citizen and a public administrator. Therefore, these leading concepts were not the *ideals* back then; they were *reality*.

Indeed, behind this reality, there were some facts including slave labour or limited citizenship. And in time, with the Enlightenment, while the *slaves* and non-citizens were gaining the citizenship status (they were being democratized), which is the core of the democracy, participation became something that can only be done via representation.

The principles that lead to representation were the principles that constitute the modern world; individual rights, liberty, or equality. When the population increases,

the need for representation of this population increases, as well. This is the main paradox of the liberal democracy.

Elections and controlling representatives by voting became more and more important in this context. If all individuals cannot participate in the democratic decision-making processes due to practical reasons (such as the number of citizens), then regular citizens should have a right to control their elected representatives through elections. Considering the context of the 18th and the 19th centuries, these ideas were quite revolutionary and *unorthodox*. Humanity that has been ruled by specific bloodlines for more than thousand years now had a right to *elect* their rulers.

Nevertheless, the idea of representation faced some challenges since the beginning, especially in terms of citizenship; should only property owner men have the right to vote, or all men –even women have the right to vote (universal suffrage). Even after the universal suffrage was *granted* to the all citizens who are above 18 (in general), the crisis in the representation became more visible instead of coming to an end.

In order to overcome this crisis new forms of democratic theories have been discussed and proposed by some scholars, politicians, and citizens. Deliberative democracy, in this context, is considered as a solid alternative for the representative democracy. Main purpose of the deliberative democracy (and its *predecessor* participatory democracy) is to demonstrate that voting and representation should not be the core or essence of the democracy.

If voting or elections does not at the core of democracy then, what is the essence of it? The answer given to this question by deliberative democracy is participation and communication. But where exactly this participation and communication should occur? The concept of public sphere becomes important at this point. As discussed, Habermas' perspective of public sphere originates from the 18th century public places such salons, coffee-houses. In these places critical discussions about public issues was held, free of any pressures (economic or political). And here, participants are equals in trying to reach an *agreement* on issues of common concern.

These small societies (some claimed that they are idealized) are lost when they grew into masses throughout the 19ᵗʰ century. Mass media and mass culture consumption assimilated the ideas that were the subjects of the public discussions. The revitalization of these public places can only be done through the "structural transformation of the public sphere". Deliberative public sphere, then, should be the concept in which a strong democracy can be pursued. Deliberative public sphere, as it endorses sovereignty of the public by not referring aggregation of the votes, but referring the inter-subjectively shaped public reasons, is considered as a solid democratic alternative.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, a deliberative turn in the democratic theory is evident. Deliberation, as distinct from other forms of communication, includes persuasion rather than deception or compulsion. Only closest thing to the coercion in deliberative democracy is that the "non-coercive coercion of the better argument". This act of persuasion points out an *interaction* rather than sole communication. Interaction is a concept that is ignored in the liberal/representative democracy. By reducing questions related with the common good or public to technical problems for elites (or experts), the need for public vanishes and the population becomes depoliticized (Habermas, 1971, Ch.6). But the core of deliberation lies in this interaction. The core of democracy is considered as the deliberation, rather than aggregation, and voting (Dryzek, 2000:1).

This is the point where *new* public sphere concept such as the internet begins. The Internet is widely considered as the most suitable platform for deliberative public sphere due to the reasons of; low cost, potential for global communication, easy interaction, and decentralization.

So, if the internet is seen as a deliberative public sphere and deliberation is at the core of *the* public sphere, deliberative democracy then should exist on the internet. The aim of this thesis has been to demonstrate "how and to what degree writers in Ekşi Sözlük accomplish the ideals of deliberative democracy online".

In order to find answers for the question presented above, three different topics of Ekşi Sözlük are measured by using a version of Online Group Deliberation Coding

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Scheme. Measuring the quality of deliberation in Ekşi Sözlük can support proving many things.

First, as the internet is becoming more and more important in our daily lives, it replaces *old* means of communication. Detecting deliberative democratic ideals/principles in the platform, which is not specifically designed for deliberative discussions, might show that this new means of communication endorses the deliberation. Results of the study prove this point. Even in a forum-like platform such as Ekşi Sözlük, the quality of deliberation is considerably high, especially in the topics of "A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees" and "January 1st Plastic Bag Tax". Only the topic "We Demand Unisex Toilets" received low scores in the deliberation.

Creating an information base is the first indicator of the Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme. In a deliberative discussion, if participants support their arguments with facts, data, statistics as well as their own experiences or stories, the level and quality of deliberation should be higher. It is seen that majority of the Ekşi Sözlük writers supported their arguments with such information in the topic "January 1st 2019 Plastic Bag Tax". Under this topic, writers usually shared articles, news, and data from various sources regarding the issue. Some shared their experiences in the Western countries. It is significant that both the opposition and supporters of the proposal tend to base their arguments on solid information bases. One might claim that daily political issues rather than controversial ones, is taken more serious by the writers.

In the other topics, score of the indicator creating an information base is quite low compared to the third topic. Ekşi Sözlük writers did not prefer to provide information base in these topics. In the topic "We Demand Unisex Public Toilets" majority of the writers mock the proposal. They simply stated that the proposal is an unnecessary and irrelevant thing and tend to commit "whataboutism" bias. This bias is a form of "tu quoque" fallacy and can easily be seen in the internet. In the topics of referendum and unisex toilets, "whataboutism" bias is seen in the created information base of the writers. This point actually shows us that logical fallacies are among the major problems when establishing an argument in the internet. Deliberative democracy has

some advantages and disadvantages in this context. First, as a result of equal participation to the deliberation, participants from any gender, identity, class etc. have a chance to raise their opinions in the discussed subject. This means a remarkable rise in the number of perspectives to an issue. On the other hand, if participants cannot establish their arguments with solid information base and commit logical fallacies, this causes a low deliberation in addition to misdirection of the other participants. One of the important points of Habermas' theory was the "non-coercive coercion of the better argument". If arguments are that vital in deliberative democracy, then they participants need to focus on creating "healthy" information base.

In the indicator values, writers shared their own values in the referendum and plastic bag topics but avoid stating values in the topic "We Demand Unisex Toilets". Values are another good point to strengthen people's argument on a certain topic. Yet, appealing to values can be more effective and less effective depending on the context. While some people prefer following arguments based on facts and statistics (more scientific), some people might prefer arguments which contains more values rather than *numbers.* Indeed, appealing to emotion and appealing to values can easily be mistaken. In the deliberative democracy, values (and even emotions) can be used to support arguments not basing arguments on them. Arguments may contain emotional aspects. But in the deliberative democracy, emotions and values cannot be used instead of a rational argument or to obscure the lack of reason. Unfortunately, most entries missed this point.

In the deliberative democratic discussion, identifying an alternative solution or weighing the pros-cons of an existing solution is important. As deliberative democracy is more than sharing opinions/arguments, solutions play an important role in it. Only few writers in each topic provided solutions for the discussion and fewer weigh the proposed solutions. This shows that the writers choose to express their opinions, rather than supporting them with rational solutions. Still, writers shared their solutions to some extent, if they take the topic seriously, as it was in the topic of plastic bags. In the studies which also measured the online deliberation, scores are usually low in the indicators of solutions, as well. This might be the result of the

nature of deliberative democracy. In the representative democracy, representatives take the decisions on behalf of people, and they are usually the direct responsible. If people elect a politician and he/she becomes unsuccessful, electors did not share the failure, naturally. Therefore, representative democracy actually lightens the burden of decision-taking responsibility. In the deliberative democracy, on the other hand, people are the *participants* and they are directly responsible of their proposed solutions or opinions. This might cause some people to avoid proposing solutions or take responsibility. However, the main question should be this; is giving *the responsibility of decision making* to the representatives at the cost of being less democratic worth it? Deliberative democracy is not the easy way in this context. It provides a chance to more democratic and even more direct ways of democracy, but it also means responsibility.

In the indicator of common good orientation, all topics scored very low points. Considering the subjects of the topics, common good orientation should be much higher. Ekşi Sözlük writers approach the issues in three ways; 1-they provide useful information, establish their arguments, propose solutions etc. 2- they just simply share their opinions, 3- they want to "win" the argument or just try to mock. Actually, these patterns might be observed in the other social media platforms as well. As stated, Ekşi Sözlük has a "şükela mode" which enables readers and writers to filter entries according to the most liked ones. Another mode of Ekşi Sözlük, similar to "şükela mode" is the "debe" which means "yesterday's most liked entries". In both of these modes, majority of the entries contains jokes, mocking with the government, and funny stories. Only few of them contain serious, useful information. Similar thing can be seen in the Twitter, most re-tweeted or liked tweets are usually contains funny stories or jokes. This situation causes people to do more jokes on any issue. In the research topics, it is especially seen in the topics of "Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees" and "We Demand Unisex Public Toilets". This means that *trying* to be funny, is much more important than realizing the standards of deliberative democracy such as common good orientation. Naturally, this damages the entire deliberative processes. On the other hand, humour and funny stories are usually seen as a part of the deliberation (as explained in the standards of deliberation section above). How the participants and the designers of deliberative

democratic platforms will separate whether a funny story is damaging the deliberation or supporting it? This question shows the place where content analysis became inadequate. Unfortunately, in the Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme (and in other deliberation measurements that uses content analysis), coders cannot separate whether humour is damaging or not. Therefore, more qualitative analyses should be done such as discourse analysis.

As seen, the quality of deliberation changes from subject to subject. Measuring the quality of deliberation by using various indicators helps one to see what affects the quality of deliberation in different topics. In the topic "We Demand Unisex Toilets" the subject is related with the identity and gender. In the study, it is seen that there are two main reasons for the low scores of this topic; the suggestion for unisex toilets has not been taken seriously, and there were more disrespectful statements in the gender-focused topic. Similarly, in the topic that is related with more daily life such as plastic bag tax, the quality of deliberation has increased, as people shared their serious opinions rather than mocking with the topic. These findings also related with the design of deliberative platforms.

Then, "to what degree and how writers of Ekşi Sözlük accomplish the ideals of deliberative democratic discussions online". Compared with other studies which uses same or similar coding schemes, Ekşi Sözlük received similar scores in the topic; "January 1st 2019 Plastic Bag Tax". The topic "A Referendum Call for Syrian Refugees" is not high as much as them but quite close. But only the topic "We Demand Unisex Public Toilets" received really low scores. One might claim that Ekşi Sözlük writers partially accomplish the ideals of deliberative democracy in online discussions. Considering the fact that Ekşi Sözlük is not a deliberative democratic platform, and the writers are not trying to achieve deliberation on purpose, these scores of deliberation is optimistic. For instance, in the study of Klinger and Russman (2014), Zürich city debate was measured in terms of deliberation. Participants of this debate were not trying to achieve standards of deliberative democracy, but they were aware that the city opened the debate for learning and applying what residents think. In Ekşi Sözlük case, writers shared their opinions without such "guarantee". Indeed, Ekşi Sözlük has provided some goo

practices in terms of influencing both the government and the public opinion, but its main purpose is not that. Considering this, most writers followed a similar pattern to the Zürich City Debate; they created solid information base, proposed solutions, respectfully express their opinions. This means that Ekşi Sözlük, and any other similar websites, has a potential to enhance online deliberative democracy.

There is a growing tendency to use e-governance or e-democratic platforms around the world. Rather than following the representative democratic procedures, deliberative democracy can be proposed as a new form of e-democracy. If online deliberation will be used in the future, then the design of these platforms may become more significant. This study points that why quality of deliberation is high or low in the discussions. For instance, if a designer or a moderator of an online deliberative democratic platform considers the importance of respect in the discussions, more deliberative results can be achieved on this platform.

Naturally, there are some limitations in this study. Deliberative democracy is in the agenda of the democracy theorists for nearly 30 years. It still receives lots of criticisms and feedbacks from various researchers. Although receiving this kind of an attention is a progressive thing for deliberative democracy, constant revisions or critics limits the empirical side of the deliberative democracy. As explained, indicators used in the Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme are derived from the standards and ideals of deliberative democracy. However, nearly all indicators are in continuous revision. There are two outcomes of this; firstly, choosing one set of standards and do the coding accordingly makes the study vulnerable to criticisms which also criticize the selected standards. Secondly, choosing a set of standards limits the possibilities of comparison with other studies. If a study chooses Bachtiger et al.'s (2018) standards, and the other chooses Klinger and Russmann's (2014) standards, it becomes more difficult to make a comparison between studies even though both try to measure the quality of deliberation.

Nevertheless, the internet has the potential of removing the contextual necessities of representative democracy such as representation itself. It can enable decision-making procedures to be more democratic. For both decision-making and forming public

opinion processes, one may expect the importance of online deliberation increases in time.

Lastly, this study demonstrates that there is a potential in online discussions that can be easily used for deliberation. If deliberative democracy is an alternative for aggregative representative democracy, then it should be in the core of a platform (the internet) which representation became meaningless. Considering the fact that the context is on internet's side, deliberative democracy can be the *only* form of democracy in the upcoming years.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Demokrasinin tarihi yaklaşık 2500 yıl öncesine kadar uzanır. Haliyle böylesine uzun bir süreyi kapsayan bir kavramın, yönetim biçiminin ve belki de bir idealin zaman içinde değişikliklerden bağımsız kalması mümkün değildir. Bazı kaynakların ileri sürdüğü gibi Antik Hindistan'dan İskandinavya bölgesine kadar demokrasinin çeşitli formları görülse de genel görüş, demokrasinin Antik Yunanistan, özellikle de Antik Atina'da yahut Atina *polis*'inde ortaya çıktığı şeklindedir. Antik Yunanca'da *demos* ve *kratos* kelimelerinin birleşmesinden ortaya çıkan demokrasi, sözcüğün basit anlamı ile halkın yönetimi demektir. Elbette söz konusu halkın kim olduğu ve halkın yönetiminin hangi aşamalardan geçerek ortaya çıktığı birçok çalışmada tartışılmıştır. Yine de eşitlik, hukuka saygı, katılım özgürlüğü gibi temel demokratik ilkeler öncelikle bu coğrafyada ortaya çıkmıştır.

Antik Atina'nın ayırt edici özelliği, onun toplumsal yapısı olan şehir devleti ya da *polis* yapısından kaynaklanmaktadır. Genel anlamda *polis* döneminin ve coğrafyasının egemen devleti, ülkesi olarak kabul edilebilir. Antik Yunan şehir devletlerinin ilk ortaya çıkışları, mevcut bir alanda korunma amacıyla bir araya gelen bazı kabilelerin yavaş yavaş şehirleşmesi ile mümkün olmuştur. Bu şehirleşmeyi takiben de, *kurucu* kabilelerin soyundan gelenler soylu diyebileceğimiz sınıfları oluşturup büyük toprak mevcutlarını elinde tutarken, sonradan gelen kişiler çeşitli sınıflara bölünmüşlerdir. Tarihin neredeyse her anında olduğu gibi, gücü elinde tutan sınıf/kişiler ile gücü elinde tutmak isteyen ya da yönetime dahil olmak isteyen sınıflar/kişiler zamanla çatışma haline girmişlerdir. Önceleri sağlam veya güçlü diyebileceğimiz hakları olmayan sınıflar, zaman içinde birçok hak ve ayrıcalığın sahibi olmuşlardır. Bunların en önemlisi de kuşkusuz bu kişilerin yönetime dahil olması, yani "halkın yönetimini" oluşturmaları ve vatandaşlık haklarına sahip olabilmeleridir.

Vatandaşlar, bazı isyanların sonucunda tasarlanan siyasal kurumlar aracılığı ile yönetme hak ve sorumluluklarını kullanmaya başlamışlardır. Antik Atina'da demokrasinin ayırt edici özelliklerinden biri de tüm vatandaşların, doğrudan bu görevlere katılmaya hakkı olmasıdır. Günümüzde olduğu gibi bir temsilciler meclisinden, görevinde uzmanlaşmış bürokrat, hâkim, yönetici gibi kişilerden söz edilmemektedir. Her vatandaş, bu görevlere katılma konusunda eşit fırsatlara sahiptir. Bu fırsatların başında da kura gibi yöntemler gelmektedir.

Yine de *polis* sosyal yapısında vatandaşlığın, her ne kadar belirli çatışmalar sonucunda yaygın hale geldiği gözlense de günümüzde olduğu gibi evrensel bir vatandaşlık halinde olması söz konusu değildir. Kadınların, dışarıdan gelen ancak şehirde mukim kişilerin, kölelerin ve genel anlamda "silah taşıma hakkı olmayanların" vatandaşlığından söz edilemez. Bu da aslında çoğunluğun yine de yönetme veya yönetime katılma konusunda bir hakkı olmadığını kanıtlar niteliktedir.

Ancak Atina Demokrasisi, tarihte bir ilk olması açısından hayati bir önem taşımaktadır. Günümüz demokrasisine temel oluşturan birçok felsefi ve siyasal kuram, bu dönemde ve bu coğrafyada hayat bulmuştur. Elbette demokrasinin hayata tekrar gelişi olarak tabir edebileceğimiz bu durum, uzun süren bir feodal dönemin sonunda, *sıradan* insanların yine güce ortak olmak için geriye dönük olarak yararlandıkları bir noktaya işaret etmektedir.

Modern demokrasiyi etkileyen iki adet önemli yol ayrımı bulunmaktadır. Bunlardan ilki cumhuriyetçi anlayış iken, ikincisi liberal anlayıştır. Cumhuriyetçi anlayışın kökenleri Roma İmparatorluğu'nun coğrafyasında ortaya çıkan İtalyan Şehir Devletleri'ne kadar gider. Orta Çağ boyunca ve hatta Aydınlanma Çağı boyunca da cumhuriyetçi anlayış gelişmeye ve etkilerini sürdürmeye devam eder. Cumhuriyetçilik kavramı, Aristoteles'in de etkisiyle yurttaşlık erdemi üzerinde durduğu kadar, Roma İmparatorluğu'nun etkisiyle meşruluk üzerinde de durur. Cumhuriyetçi gelenekteki vatandaş, belli başlı bazı erdemlerin yolunu izleyerek siyasi faaliyetlere katılma yükümlülüğünü de taşır. Ancak buradaki önemli konu, erdemlerin yönetime bir öncül olarak kabul edilmesidir. Siyasi faaliyetlere katılım, yani demokrasinin bir anlamda özü de siyasi özgürlüğü güvence altına almak ve onu korumak için işe yarar bir araç olarak görülmektedir. Özgürlük kavramı, her iki anlayışta da yani hem cumhuriyetçi hem liberal anlayışta da, bir değişmez olarak

kabul edilir. Rousseau'nun sunduğu şekilde de özgürlüğün gerçekleştirilmesindeki yollardan biri siyasi faaliyetlere katılımdır.

Buradaki temel nokta, kişilerin/vatandaşların eğer kendileri yönetime katılmazlar ise onların bir başkası tarafından mutlaka yönetileceği mantığıdır. Haliyle siyasal faaliyetlere veya yönetime katılım ile özgürlük arasındaki bağ burada hayati önem taşır. Cumhuriyetçi anlayışta vatandaşların bu tür faaliyetlere katılımı birçok anlamda korunmuştur. Günümüzdekilere benzer şekilde ifade özgürlüğü, toplanma özgürlüğü gibi kavramlar mevcuttur. Erdemliliğin, siyasal hayata katılım konusundaki bir vazgeçilmez olması ise kişisel çıkarların ve düşüncelerin toplumsal faydanın önüne geçmemesi ile ilgilidir. Hatta bu durumun engellenmesi adına cumhuriyetçi anlayış siyasal eşitliği olduğu kadar ekonomik eşitliği de göz önüne almış, ekonomik anlamda birbirine yakın olan kişilerin yönetime dahil olması gerektiğini vurgulamıştır. Bu elbette kimi yorumlar tarafından, alt sınıfların yönetimin dışında tutulması olarak algılansa ve birçok örnekte gerçekten bu şekilde kullanılsa da, buradaki asıl amaç kişisel çıkarların yönetimde önceliği almasından kaçınılmasıdır.

Cumhuriyetçi anlayış ve cumhuriyetçi örgütlenme biçimleri, temel olarak bahsedilen yurttaşlık erdemini ve aktif vatandaşlık olarak da tanımlanabilen siyasi faaliyetlere katılımı temel ilkeler olarak benimsemiştir. Cumhuriyetçi anlayış, siyaseti ve siyasetin sınırlarını tanımlamış, yurttaşlık anlayışını belgeler ile (anayasa gibi) kurmuş ve korumuş, bireyin devlet karşısında olan rolüne, haklarına önem vermiştir.

Günümüz demokrasisini en çok etkileyen anlayış ise liberal anlayış olarak tanımlayabileceğimiz anlayıştır. Liberal demokrasi, Antik Demokrasi'ye –ya da bazıları tarafından adlandırıldığı üzere Klasik Demokrasi'ye, benzer şekilde sınıflar arası bir mücadele sonucu ortaya çıkmıştır. Klasik Demokrasi'de soylu sınıflar ve *demos* arasında olan mücadele, liberal demokraside soylu sınıflar ve başta burjuvazi olmak üzere diğer sınıflar arasında görülmektedir.

Roma İmparatorluğu'nun çöküşü sonrasında Avrupa'da genel bir yönetim biçimi olarak ortaya çıkan feodalizmde toprak –ve tarım, asıl üretim aracıdır. Yani zenginliğin temel göstergesi öncelikle paraya değil, toprağa ve sonrasında o topraktan alınan vergilere bağlıdır. Buradaki temel konu, para getirici bir unsur

olarak ticaretin ön planda olmamasıdır. Ancak, özellikle 15. ve 16. yüzyıldan itibaren ticaretin gitgide daha önemli hale gelmesi, ticaret ile uğraşan burjuvazi veya kentsoylu denilen sınıfın başta ekonomik anlamda güçlenmesine neden olmuştur. Elbette asıl ekonomik gücü elinde bulunduran bu sınıfın yönetim anlamında da taleplerinin olması süreç dahilinde kaçınılmazdır. Feodal düzende üretimi elinde bulunduran köylülerin yönetime katılma taleplerinin sürekli bastırılmasından farklı olarak, burada bağlamda bir değişiklik göze çarpmaktadır. Özellikle, burjuvazinin şehirler ile bağlı olması, Rönesans'tan kaynaklanan düşüncelerin yaygınlık kazanması, reform ile mevcut güçlerin zayıflaması gibi nedenler burjuvazinin bir *devrimci* güç olarak önem kazanmasına neden olmuştur.

Buradaki temel nokta, burjuvazinin ve onun yöneldiği felsefi arka planın demokrasiye neden vurgu yaptığıdır. Her şeyden önce burjuvaziyi oluşturan kişiler *sıradan* insanlardır, soylu sınıfa mensup değillerdir. Yönetim soyluların elindeyse ve burjuvazi soyluların kandan gelen statüsüne doğası gereği asla sahip olamayacaksa (bu payelerin satıldığı durumlar sayıca az olduğu kadar istisnadır da) bu durumda yönetimin sıradan insanlara yani halka geri dönmesi gerekmektedir. Tam da bu nedenle demokrasi, burjuvazinin güçlenmeye başladığı 17. yüzyıldan itibaren, liberalizm etkisiyle ortaya çıkmıştır.

Liberalizmin ve onu takip eden liberal demokrasinin birkaç önemli kavramı vardır; birey, eşitlik, özgürlük gibi. Cumhuriyetçi düşünceye benzer şekilde, liberalizm de bireyin özgürlüğünden bahseder. Ancak ortada farklılıklar bulunmaktadır. Berlin'in kavramsallaştırdığı şekilde, cumhuriyetçi düşünce pozitif özgürlüklere atıfta bulunurken, liberalizm negatif özgürlüklere yani bireyin devlete karşı korunmasına yararı bulunan özgürlüklere atıfta bulunur. Bunun için geliştirilmiş ilkeler ve kurumlar da modern demokrasiyi tanımlar hale gelmiştir. Liberalizmin birey anlayışındaki en önemli nokta, bu hakların ve özgürlüklerin aslında doğal bir durumdan geldiği yaklaşımıdır. Doğal haklar konusunda ise Hobbes ve Locke'un toplum sözleşmesi fikirlerine liberalizmde atıflar vardır.

Liberalizm, sıradan yani soylu olmayan bireyin, haklarını ve özgürlüklerini tanımladığı ölçüde burjuvazi nezdinde büyük yankı bulmuştur. Liberalizmin temel ilkeleri, aslında burjuvaziyi monarşiye karşı güçlendiren *araçlardır* da aynı zamanda. Buradaki temel problem ise burjuvazinin güç kazanmasına neden olan erken

kapitalizm ile liberalizmin neredeyse eş anlamlı tutulması ve liberal demokrasinin bu eşlikten etkilenmesi olmuştur.

Kapitalizm-liberalizm-demokrasi arasındaki ilişkilere ek olarak, liberal demokrasinin ortaya koyduğu ve halen daha etkisinin sürdüğü bir başka önemli kavram vardır; temsil. Temsili sağlamak için bir yöntem olarak ortaya çıkan "oy" kavramı da bir başka kritik kavramdır. Oy ve temsil, teorik olarak John Stuart Mill'in eserlerinde görülür. Mill, Klasik Demokrasi'nin doğrudan niteliğinin o dönemin toplumlarında çeşitli sebepler ile uygulanamayacağını, bunun yerine vatandaşların yönetime dahil olacak kişileri oy işlemleri sonucunda seçmelerini ve kendilerini temsil yetkisi vermelerini öne sürmüştür. Her ne kadar Mill oy hakkının evrensel bir değer olduğunu ve herkese verilmesi gerektiğini öne sürse de oy hakkı birçok toplumda çok geç tarihlerde evrensel bir değer haline gelmiştir. Temsili demokrasinin temel mantığı seçimlerde ve temsilde yatar. Seçimler, eski çağlarda olduğu gibi bir azınlığın çoğunluğu yönetmesine engel teşkil etse de çoğunluğun tiranlığını da engelleyecek mekanizmalar ile donatılmalıdır.

Demokrasiler günümüzde aslında bu seçimler üzerinden tanımlanmaktadır. Seçim, genel olarak demokratik bir durum ve hak olarak kabul edilir. Hepsi eşit oy hakkına sahip vatandaşlar, rekabetçi bir seçim ortamında sandığa giderek, kendilerini en iyi temsil ettiklerini düşündükleri kişiye, partiye veya gruba oy vererek demokrasinin gereklerini yerine getirirler. Ancak seçimlerin, demokrasinin mantığını ve anlamını tamamıyla değiştirdiği bir gerçektir. Çünkü artık seçim ile demokrasi bir tutulur olmuştur. Kuşkusuz seçimlerin demokraside yer bulması kadar *demokratik* olan bir başka şey yoktur, ancak seçim ile demokrasi eş anlamlı iki kelime olmadığı gibi her zaman birbirlerinin tamamlayıcısı da değildirler.

Temsili demokrasinin Klasik Demokrasi'den farklı olarak, yönetimi ve iktidarı seçilmiş bir temsil edenler zümresine bırakması, Antik Atina halkının demokrasi anlayışından tamamen farklı bir demokrasi anlayışına işaret eder. Seçen ile seçilen arasında fark olmayan Antik Atina'da, vatandaşların kamu görevlisi olmasının şartları günümüzden farklıdır. Her vatandaş zaten kendisi bir *milletvekili* olduğu gibi, kamu görevine katılım şans haricinde başka bir ön koşula bağlı bile değildir. Bu durumun temsili demokrasi ile değişmesi, vatandaşların artık olası yönetici olma

koşulundan çıkması ile sonuçlanmaktadır. Vatandaşlar doğrudan yönetici olmak yerine, seçili kişilerin kontrol mekanizması haline gelmişlerdir.

Burada iki temel nokta vardır. Bazı görüşlere göre vatandaşlar halen potansiyel yöneticilerdir. Ancak şu kabul edilmelidir ki, yönetici olabilmenin kıstası Klasik Demokrasi'den farklı olarak doğrudan değil, çeşitli aşamalar sonucunda, hatta ancak belirli statülerin sonucunda olabilmektedir. Bunların en önemlisi de seçimlere seçilen olarak katılabilmek için ortaya çıkan başta ekonomik olmak üzere çeşitli koşullardır. İkinci nokta ise bahsedilen kapitalizm-liberal demokrasi eşliği ile ilgilidir. Artık vatandaşların asıl konumu yönetici değil, mevcut durumu ve üretimi sürdürücü konumlarıdır. Yani liberal demokrasinin içine yerleştiği kapitalizmde (yahut tam tersi) vatandaşlar öncelikle üretim ile sorumlulardır. Yönetim işi, her alanda olduğu gibi o işi en iyi şekilde yapmayı *bilen* kişilere bırakılmalı, ancak ve ancak belirli periyodların sonunda (seçimler) bu kişilerin başarılı olup olmadıkları belirlenmelidir. Temsili demokrasi bu durumda yalnızca, seçmenler ve seçilenler karşılıklı garantilerini yerine getirirlerse ayakta kalabilmektedir.

Her ne kadar temsili demokrasi uzun süre en iyi yönetim biçimi olarak kabul görse de aslen temsil kavramının kendisine içsel olan sorunlardan dolayı çeşitli eleştiriler ile karşı karşıya kalmıştır. İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası dönemde, temsili demokrasinin temsil anlayışı, katılım, geleneksel kurumlar gibi kavramlar sorgulanmaya başlanmıştır. Bu bağlamda temsili demokrasinin üç problemi kavramsallaştırılmıştır; 1- Temsili kurumlardan (meclislerden) yürütmeye doğru kayan yetkiler/güçler, 2- Ulus devletlerden uluslararası kurumlara doğru bir kayış, 3- Devletten pazara doğru kayış.

Meclisler ilk başta temsili demokrasinin direği olarak kabul edilirken, zaman içerisinde demokratik kabul edilen toplumların birçoğunda yürütme erki yasama karşısında güç kazanmıştır. Yani temsil kurumları, meclisler kadar siyasi partiler de, bireylerin taleplerini karşılamakta zorlanır hale gelmiştir. Buna ek olarak, hükümetler daha hızlı karar alma süreçlerini de bahane ederek geleneksel temsil kurumları karşısında daha fazla imtiyaza kavuşmuşlardır. Bu önermeyi en iyi karşılayan kanıt ise özellikle oy verme işleminin zorunlu olmadığı yerlerde ortaya çıkan seçimlere katılımın azlığıdır. Seçmenlerin neredeyse üçte biri, arka arkaya olan seçimlerde

farklı partilere oy vermekte, yeni oluşumlar aramakta ve daha iyi temsil edileceklerini düşündükleri yapılara yönelmektedirler.

Özellikle İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında daha da güç kazanan Birleşmiş Milletler gibi uluslararası kurumlar, temsili demokrasinin egemen devletinin sınırlarını karmaşık hale getirmektedirler. Yalnızca Birleşmiş Milletler değil, zaman içinde ortaya çıkan çeşitli finansal, askeri ve hukuki kuruluşlar da egemen devleti çoğu konuda kısıtlamaktadır. Temsili demokrasinin sorunlarından bir başkası da bu olarak görülmektedir.

Son olarak devletten piyasaya doğru bir akımdan söz etmek mümkündür. Özellikle neo-liberalizmin yükselişi ve Batı'nın refah devletlerinin çöküşü ile birlikte bu durum daha da açık hale gelmiştir. Meşruluk, cumhuriyetçi gelenekten gelen ve aynı zamanda demokrasinin merkezi ilkelerinden biridir. Temsili demokrasilerde meşruluğu sağlamanın yollarından biri de refahı sağlamaktır. Haliyle, iyi işleyen bir temsili demokraside bireylerin refahı ön planda olmalıdır. Ancak özellikle 1980'ler sonrasında kamunun genel çıkarı, bazı ekonomik elitlerin ve eşitlikçi olmayan kişilerin çıkarları karşısında bizzat devlet tarafından göz ardı edilir hale gelmiştir. Piyasa, devlet karşısında daha güçlü hale gelmiş, devletler piyasaların temel aktörlerini temsil ettikleri halktan daha çok dikkate almaya başlamışlardır. Yani, başlangıçta bile temsilden doğduğu için görece daha az demokratik kabul edilen hükümetler, temsil edilenlerin iradesini piyasa karşısında korumaktan giderek kaçınır olmuşlardır.

Bu üç temel noktadan yola çıkarak, temsili demokrasiye alternatif olan farklı demokrasi teorileri üretilmiştir. Bu tezin temel aldığı müzakereci demokrasi biçimi de bunlardan biridir. Merkezine iletişimi, müzakereyi, konuşmayı ve katılımı alan müzakereci demokrasinin temelleri ise Aydınlanma Çağında yani kapitalizmin artık yerleşik hale geldiği 18. yüzyılda, kavramsallaştırılan bazı ilkelere dayanır. Bunlardan en önemlisi de kamusal alan kavramıdır.

Kamusal alan kavramı sosyal bilimlerde en çok tartışılan konulardan biri olmuştur. Yalnızca kamu-özel arasındaki ayrımdan farklı olarak kamusallığı taşıyan bir alan olan kamusal alanı ilk kavramsallaştıranlardan biri de filozof Immanuel Kant'tır. Kant'ın anlayışında özel alan ailenin ve evin sahipliği ile ifade edilirken, kamu siyasi

faaliyet ile ilgilidir. Kant'ın teorisinde de aklın iki farklı alanda da kullanımından bahsedilir; aklın kamusal kullanımı ve aklın özel alan kullanımı. Aklın özel kullanımı bir kişinin kendisine ait hizmeti yerine getirmesiyken, aklın kamusal kullanımı bir kişinin düşüncesini –aklını, onu dinleyen/takip eden kişilere yararlı olacak şekilde sunmasıdır. Burada kamu, görevleriyle bağlı olmayan kişilerin fikirlerini ifade edebildikleri alana işaret etmektedir. Özel alan ise, kişilerin bizzat görevleri ile sınırlandıkları ve bu açıdan fikirlerini *kendilerine sakladıkları* alandır.

Fikirlerin özgürce ifade edilebildiği alan geleneksel anlamıyla ne bir evdir ne de devletin yönetildiği alandır. Tam tersine bu alan, iki geleneksel alanın arasında devletten otonom bir alandır. Kamusal alanın bu yüzden kendine ait ayırt edici, resmi olmayan *kurumları* ve bir söylemi vardır. O halde, kamusallık altında siyaset bizzat kamusal alanın içinde *gerçekleşmelidir*. Bunun için de kişilerin rollerini özel alanda bırakmaları ve tartışmaya *katılmaları* gerekmektedir.

Kamusal alan kavramının en önemli teorisyenlerinden Jürgen Habermas ise tam da bu noktada çalışmalarını gerçekleştirir. Şehirlerin artan önemi, tüccarların ve ticaretin güç kazanması her şeyden önce iletişimde ve onu takiben ekonomide değişikliklere yol açmıştır. Mevcut pazarlara karşı olan tatminsizlik, tüccarları (ve aslında onlara muhtaç kalmış devletleri), yeni pazarlar aramaya itmiş, yeni bulunan pazarlar mal dolaşımının artmasına neden olduğu kadar mesafelerin uzamasına neden olmuş bu da yeni iletişim tekniklerine ihtiyaç duyulmasını sağlamıştır. Tam bu noktada, öncelikle ticari amaçla başlayan gazeteler, giderek toplumsal konular ile ilgili hale gelmiş, kişiler burada çıkan haberleri belirli alanlarda tartışmaya başlamışlardır. İşte 18. yüzyılda gerçekleşen bu durum bildiğimiz anlamda bir burjuva kamusal alanının ortaya çıkmasına neden olmuştur. Habermas iletişim teorisini –ve onu takip eden müzakereci demokrasiyi, bu alanı temel alarak kurar. Ancak kamusal alanın bir çöküş süreci olmuştur. Zaman içerisinde giderek kitlesel hale gelen medya ve kültür, Habermas'ın toplumun yeniden feodalleşmesi adını verdiği bir durumu ortaya çıkarır. Bu durumda dergiler, gazeteler ve diğer medya araçları bazı elitlerin araçları haline gelir ve kamu Aydınlanmacı anlamından giderek uzaklaşır. Bu, kamunun medya tarafından manipüle edilmesine ve bilginin tüketim maddesi haline gelmesine yol açmıştır.

Müzakereci demokrasi ise benzer bir yapının üzerine kurulmuştur. Bahsedildiği gibi temsili demokrasi birçok eleştiri ile karşılaşmış, bireylerin yönetime ve karar alma süreçlerine katılımları asıl tartışma konusu olmuştur. Müzakereci demokrasinin de temel aldığı konu tam da budur; eğer kararlar demokratik olacaksa, bu ancak belirli bir müzakere süreci sonunda olabilir. Elbette müzakerenin mantığı da kamusal alanın belirlediği sınırlarda yatmaktadır.

Her şeyden önce müzakere, eşitler arasındaki bir tartışmadaki temel iletişim ve anlama durumudur. Buradaki eşitlik ise müzakereye katılım ve müzakere hakkı konusunda bir eşitliktir. Yalnızca iletişimden ya da konuşma eyleminden öte, ortak sorunları ilgilendiren konularda fikirleri, tercihleri, değerleri ve ilkeleri göz önüne alan bir müşterek iletişim halidir. Bu durum müzakereci demokrasinin meşruluk temeli oluşturmasını da açıklar. Müzakereci demokrasi, kişilerin bir araya geldiği, tartıştığı ve dikkatli bir izan sürecinden sonra karar aldığı bir demokrasi formudur. Görüldüğü gibi kararların alımında oylamaya sunma ilk seçenekte değildir. Müzakereci demokrasi, oylamayı dışlayan bir form değildir, oy ancak ve ancak müzakere ile sonuca varılmadığında geçerli olmalıdır. Demokrasinin buradaki temeli, eşitler arasında belirli ilkelere dayanan iletişimdir.

Liberal demokraside, bizzat demokrasi özel alan (çıkarlar) ile idari alan (devlet) arasında bir araç halindedir. Yani, siyasetin temel amacı bir tür çıkar iletimidir. Hâlbuki müzakereci demokrasi, demokrasiyi "kafaların" sayıldığı *toplamacı* demokrasinin aksine kapsayıcı bir kavram olarak görür. Kişiler arası diyaloğun önemi de burada yatar.

Müzakereci demokrasinin, müzakere sürecinde bazı ilkeler vardır. Bu ilkeler kimi zaman revize edilseler bile, müzakereci demokrasinin temellerini oluştururlar. Saygı, iktidarın yokluğu, eşitlik, uzlaşma (konsensüs) yönelimi, ortak iyi hedefi, kamusallık, hesap verilebilirlik, içtenlik bu ilkeler arasındadır. Bu tezin kanıtlamaya çalıştığı noktada da bu ilkelerden yararlanılmıştır.

Kamusal alanının artan kitlesellik ile birlikte çöküş sürecine girmesi, Aydınlanmadaki anlamı ile kamusallığın ancak ve ancak bu çöküş bittiğinde tekrar ortaya çıkabilmesi ile alakalıdır. Müzakereci demokrasinin gerçekleştirilme ihtimali

olan platformlar ise aydınlanmacı kamusal alanı tekrar diriltme imkânı olan yerlerdir. İnternet bu konuda potansiyeli en yüksek olan yerlerden kabul edilmektedir.

İnternet, 90'ların sonundan beri artan önemi ile birlikte yeni bir kamusal alan olup olamayacağı tartışılan bir kavram olmuştur. Her şeyden önce iki temel neden olan bilgiye erişim ve karşılıklılık sayesinde internet, yeni bir kamusal alan olma özelliğini taşımaktadır. Bilgiye erişim kamusal alandaki tartışmalarda önemli bir konudur. İlk örneklerinden beri kamusal alanda yapılan tartışmalarda, doğru bilgi ve bu bilginin yorumlanması önem taşımaktadır. Özellikle kamuyu ilgilendiren konularda yapılan tartışmalarda, bilgiye erişimin hızlı ve doğru olması kritiktir ve internet burada hayati bir rol oynamaktadır.

İkinci olarak ise internet, tarihte daha önce hiç olmadığı şekilde çok sayıda insanın bir araya gelerek belirli konuları tartışmalarına olanak sunan bir alan yaratmıştır. Özellikle bu etki, çevrimiçi tartışma gruplarında, forumlarda, yorum sekmelerinde görülebilir olmuştur. Sınıflarından, ekonomik durumlarından, siyasi görüşlerinden, kimliklerinden ve dil engeli hariç milletlerinden bağımsız olarak bireyler, yalnızca internete bağlanabilme önkoşulu ile bir araya gelerek farklı konuları farklı şekillerde tartışma imkanı bulmuştur.

İnternetin hızla artan önemine de demokrasi konusunda çalışanlar, devletler ve uluslararası kuruluşlar kayıtsız kalmamışlardır. E-Demokrasi adı verilen, elektronik demokrasi kavramı da bu noktada ortaya çıkmıştır. E-demokrasi iki farklı kavramda ifade edilebilir. Bunlardan ilki, devletlerin ve yerel yönetimlerin, vatandaşlara daha kolay hizmet verebilmek için elektronik sistemleri kullanmaları olarak tanımlanan e-yönetim veya e-devlet sistemleridir. İkincisi ve tezin kapsamını oluşturan kavram ise, kelimenin tam anlamıyla e-demokrasidir; kişilerin mevcut demokratik haklarını bilgi işlem teknolojileri yoluyla kullanması, oylamalara katılması, fikirlerini sunması ve tartışmalara katılmasıdır.

Bu noktada demokrasi kavramındaki tartışmalarda olduğu gibi, e-demokraside de benzer ayrımların oluştuğunu gözlemlemek mümkündür. Bazı durumlarda e-demokrasi, yalnızca mevcut temsili demokrasinin kolaylaştırıcısı olarak kabul edilirken, bazı durumlarda internet ve gelişen bilgi işlem teknolojileri, temsili

demokrasiyi ortaya çıkaran zorunlu nedenleri ortadan kaldırdığı için daha devrimci kabul edilir.

Temsili demokrasiyi ve onun yarattığı temsil krizini eleştiren ve yeni bir yapı öneren müzakereci demokrasi de tam da internetin yeni yarattığı daha eşitlikçi ortamda önem kazanır. Demokrasi, bağlamsal bazı zorunluluklardan dolayı temsili olmuştur. İnternet gibi yeni bir iletişimsel araç bu zorunlulukları ortadan kaldırabilir. O halde demokrasinin artık temsili olmaya ihtiyacı yoktur. Müzakereci demokrasinin ilkeleri, gerekleri ve kendisi, bu bağlamda internetin içerisindeki tartışmalarda mevcut olmalıdır.

Bu tezin odaklandığı nokta da tam olarak budur. Eğer internet yeni bir kamusal alan olma özelliği taşıyor ve temsili demokrasinin zorunluluğunu ortadan kaldırabiliyorsa, müzakereci demokrasinin *internetli* bir dünyada başat demokrasi formu olma ihtimali vardır. Bunun için de internet içerisindeki tartışmalarda, müzakereci demokrasinin ilke ve standartlarının ne ölçüde bulunabilir olduğuna bakılmalıdır.

Öncelikle, 2000'li yıllardan sonra müzakereci demokraside, deneysel (ampirik) bir etkiden söz etmek mümkündür. Temel olarak müzakereci demokrasinin deneysel araştırmalarında iki alt kategori göze çarpar. Bunlardan ilki müzakereci demokrasinin tasarımını incelerken, diğeri kalite kısmını inceler. Tasarımı inceleyen çalışmalar genellikle müzakereci demokrasinin olduğu alanların şartlarını ve gerekliliklerini göz önüne alırken, kaliteye bakan çalışmalar müzakeredeki iletişimsel süreci incelerler. İnternetin öneminin artmasıyla ve müzakereci demokrasinin çevrimiçi durumlara da yönelmesiyle birlikte, deneysel çalışmaların bir bölümü rotalarını internetteki alanlara çevirmişlerdir.

Tezin çalışma alanı, Türkiye'deki en büyük çevrimiçi forum-benzeri internet sayfası olan Ekşi Sözlük'tür. Özellikle müzakereci demokrasi için tasarlanmamış bir alan olan Ekşi Sözlük, müzakereci demokrasinin normal internet tartışmalarında ne derece mevcut olup olmadığını ölçme konusunda ideal bir alan sunmaktadır. Çalışma üç farklı Ekşi Sözlük konusunu, "1 Ocak 2019 Plastik Poşetlerin Paralı Olması", "Cinsiyetsiz Tuvaletler İstiyoruz", "Suriyeli Sığınmacılar için Referandum Yapmak", toplam 3,706 giri altında, içerik analizi kullanarak incelemektedir.

Analiz ve puanlama için, müzakereci demokrasi çalışan akademisyenler tarafından geliştirilmiş Çevrimiçi Grup Müzakeresi Kodlama Şeması (Online Group Deliberation Coding Scheme), hem Ekşi Sözlük'ün kendi yapısı hem müzakereci demokrasinin ilkeleri doğrultusunda revize edilip kullanılmıştır. Bu şema doğrultusunda, dördü analitik boyut, üçü sosyal boyut olmak üzere toplamda yedi adet gösterge (indikatör) belirlenmiştir. Bunlar, bilgi temeli yaratma, değerler, çözüm belirleme, çözümü tartma (analitik boyutlar), ortak iyi yönelimi, saygı ve karşılıklılık (sosyal boyutlar) göstergeleridir. Üç başlık altındaki her giri, bu göstergelere göre ayrı ayrı puanlanmış ve analiz edilmiştir. Sonrasında ise puanlara dayalı konular arasında ve aynı şemayı kullanan benzer çalışmalar ile karşılaştırmalı bir tartışma sunulmuştur.

Ortaya çıkan sonuçlar göstermektedir ki Ekşi Sözlük müzakereci demokrasinin çevrimiçi gerçekleştirilmesi bakımından güçlü bir potansiyele sahiptir. Tezin yararlandığı Çevrimiçi Grup Müzakeresi Şeması'nı kullanan diğer çalışmaların puanları ile Ekşi Sözlük konularının puanları büyük oranda benzerlik göstermektedir. Elbette burada dikkat edilmesi gereken nokta, Ekşi Sözlük'ün müzakereci demokrasi için özel olarak tasarlanmamış bir platform olmasıdır. Tezin ileri sürdüğü fikirlerden biri de özel olarak müzakereci demokrasi için tasarlanmamış platformlarda bile müzakereci demokrasinin ilkelerinin belli oranlarda bulunabileceği ve bunun ilerleyen zamanlarda, özellikle internetin daha çok yaygınlaşması ile birlikte, müzakereci demokrasiyi başat bir demokrasi formu haline getireceğidir.

Sonuçların da gösterdiği üzere, özellikle "Suriyeli Sığınmacılar İçin Referandum Yapmak" ve "1 Ocak 2019 Plastik Poşetlerin Paralı Olması" başlıklarında müzakere puanları Avrupa'da yapılmış çalışmalar oldukça yakındır. Yalnızca "Cinsiyetsiz Tuvaletler İstiyoruz" konusunda, yazarların konuyu ciddiye almamalarından ve saygılı girilerin azlığından dolayı, müzakere puanları oldukça düşük çıkmıştır.

Her ne kadar puanlar iyimser nitelikte olsa bile, indikatörlere ayrı ayrı bakıldığında hala aşılması gereken bazı sorunların olduğu barizdir. Özellikle ortak iyiye yönelim ve saygı indikatörlerinde, Ekşi Sözlük yazarlarının oldukça düşük puanlar aldığı, bunun müzakereye hem doğrudan hem de dolaylı yoldan zarar verdiği görülmektedir. Müzakereci demokrasiyi etkileyen bir başka etmen de yazarların sunduğu çözüm önerilerinin azlığı/yokluğudur. Bu durum, müzakereci demokraside önemli bir yer

tutan tartışılan konulara dair çözüm önerileri sunmanın internet ortamında çok bulunmadığını gösterir.

Çözüm önerileri konusunda müzakereci demokrasi ve temsili demokrasi arasında bir karşılaştırma yapmak daha doğru olacaktır. Bilindiği gibi temsili demokraside kararlar (ve haliyle çözümler) seçmenler tarafından seçilmiş karar verici/yasa koyucular tarafından alınır. Bu *uzmanlaşma* demokrasinin özü dikkate alındığında daha az demokratik gözükse bile, ortalama seçmene bir kolaylık sağlamaktadır; o da sorumluluğu eşit oranda paylaşmama kolaylığıdır. Temsilcilerin verilen kararlar konusunda yetkiye sahip oldukları kadar sorumlulukların da onların omzunda olması, seçmenleri bu konuda rahatlatan bir noktadır. Özellikle Ekşi Sözlük örneklerinde görülen "devletin adım atması gerekir, bürokratlar bu işin çözümünü bilir" gibi ifadeler, ortalama bir seçmenin çözüm önerisi sunmak konusunda çok istekli olmadığını göstermektedir. Bu noktada müzakereci demokrasinin daha *demokratik* olduğunu ancak daha *kolay* olmadığını söylemek de mümkündür. Bireylerin de bu noktada tercihlerini müzakereci demokrasiden yana kullanmalarını sağlamak önem taşımaktadır.

Müzakereci demokraside çok tartışılan moderasyon konusu da burada devreye girmektedir. Gerçekten de müzakereci demokratik bir moderasyon olmadan bile, Ekşi Sözlük gibi sitelerde müzakereci demokrasi kalitesi yüksek puanlar almaktadır. Ancak, bu konularda tartışmaları yönlendirecek, belirli bir düzlemde gitmesini sağlayacak moderatörlerin önemi tartışılmazdır.

Son olarak, internetin temsili demokrasinin az-demokratik olarak diyebileceğimiz özelliklerini ortadan kaldırma potansiyeli ile müzakereci demokrasinin katılımı, tartışmayı, iletişimi ve izanı merkeze alan yaklaşımı birleştiğinde, ilerleyen vakitlerin daha demokratik olacağını öne sürmek mümkündür.

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